

Washington West Supervisory Union Executive Committee
"OFFICIAL" Meeting Minutes for October 8, 2014
Washington West Central Office

WWEC Members Present: Doug Mosle (Fayston), Deb Hunter (Harwood, arrived at 5:44 p.m.), Dale Smeltzer (Harwood), Jim Burmester (Moretown), Eve Frankel (Waitsfield), Rob Rosen (Warren, arrived at 6:55 p.m.), Steve Odefey (Waterbury-Duxbury, arrived at 5:36 p.m.), and Ben Smith (Waterbury-Duxbury)

Administrators Present: Brigid Scheffert, Sheila Soule, Donarae Dawson, Michelle Baker

Eve Frankel called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

1) Action Items

- a) **Approve minutes** - Eve noted that there were two sets of minutes to approve. Ben Smith moved to approve the minutes of May 14, 2014 as written. Doug Mosle seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Ben Smith moved to approve the minutes of September 10, 2014 as written. Doug Mosle seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

2) Discussion Items

- a) **Bus Contracts** - Michelle Baker explained the recent bidding process, which had only two bidders which were very close in cost. We stayed with our previous contractor, and the service has continued to get better. She noted that we have the option to rollover the contract under certain conditions, and she is recommending that a rollover is preferential to going out to bid. *(Steve Odefey arrived at 5:36 p.m.)* She asked for direction from the WWEC about whether to pursue this option as the next step. *(Deb Hunter arrived at 5:44 p.m.)*

MOTION: Ben Smith moved that the WWEC authorize a rollover of the transportation contract under the terms of the rollover conditions for the next two years, and if that does not happen then authorize Michelle Baker to go out to bid for a new contract. Deb Hunter seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

- b) **Finance Report** - This was in the board packet, and Michelle noted they are on budget with a \$7,932 projected fund balance.
- c) **Curriculum Equity and Opportunity; Funding Professional Development** - Sheila Soule gave a presentation giving information about the important issues, including proficiency based graduation requirements which are important not just for Harwood but for all ages of students. She provided a handout of Vermont Law provisions related to these issues, and also the new responsibilities of the supervisory union board to oversee that the alignment and delivery of the curriculum is ensured. She then provided an overview of the steps that have been designed to accomplish this alignment and implementation. One step is to use "teacher leaders", who are responsible for working as part of a standing committee to develop the needed professional development within the schools, in a more systematic way. Some grants have been covering this work, but funding is declining so they are recommending that professional development funds be added to the WWSU budget. One proposal being considered is for 4 teams, 10 teachers each, \$15,000 per team for \$60,000 total (on the 1.5 million WWSU budget this is a 5% increase).
- d) **Preliminary Budget Conversation and Potential Shared Resources** - Brigid Scheffert noted that given the limited number of meetings that WWEC will have before this budget needs to be moved forward for approval, she needs to get some direction regarding the changes to consider. One change to consider is the proposed professional development as just discussed. Some changes will have to occur, and that is the Special Educators and the SLP Teachers, plus the SpEd Director at HU, need to be moved onto the SU budget according to state law. *(Rob Rosen arrived at 6:55 p.m.)* Another type of staff that is being considered as being more efficient to deliver as SU level resources rather than the local level is the School Nurses, Health Educators, and ELL (English Language Learners) Teachers - all these needs ebb and flow

from year to year at all the schools in terms of the staffing skills needed which makes it difficult to retain quality staffing. This would be more than the law requires, but might be easier to explain and implement if done in the same year. These recommendations come after a full review of all the potential spending categories and whether they make sense to be done at the SU level and assessed out based on student count. Some efficiency could be gained for categories of “in/out” spending (software, insurance, for example) since the step of billing these specific services back out to the local level would be removed. Another option is to consider any changes as part of a several year plan, and do the simpler parts first. There was agreement that the staffing shifts, in/out spending, as well as the professional development proposal of additional spending should be included in the first budget draft. Eve noted that WWEC members should start informing their local boards about all these changes and invite any local board members who have questions to come to the next WWEC meeting to learn more.

- e) **Discussion Point from June Meeting: Setting a Very Aspirational Goal for the SU** - Eve noted that the presentation by Rebecca Holcombe at the recent regional VSBA meeting was very inspirational, and Brigid noted that she will send on the link when it is ready and perhaps WWEC could watch it as a group. Ben gave a brief description of his idea - an inspirational mission/goal that fires people up (such as “our SU will become the model for rural public education delivery in the 21st century”). There was discussion of the ideas presented by Brigid, which focused on the idea of integrating the grade 7/8 programs due to the low enrollment and resulting program limitations. It was noted that this would provide flexible pathways and more enriching opportunities plus set students up to move into the evolving high school programming. What level would this goal be? An overarching visionary goal. Next steps - talk to local board members and continue the discussion at the next WWEC meeting; Brigid will talk further with the middle school administrators to develop ideas on what it might look like.

3) **Other Business** – There was none

4) **Adjournment** – Ben Smith moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. Doug Mosle seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Dale Smeltzer