

**NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2006 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE NCUHS LIBRARY**

**Board Members Present:** Arne Amalixsen (Chair), Steve Brochu, Ken Canning, Richard Cartee, Todd Durkee, Rick Geisel, Joe Gregersen, Rose Mary Mayhew, Harold Morse, Peter Moskovites, Muriel O’Gorman, James Privee, June Rosenberg

**Board Members Absent:** David Merrill (Holland), Morgan Rep

**Administrators Present:** Bill Rivard, Bob Fitts, Rod Weston, Bob Davis, Jennifer Kennison, Thomas Pound, Brian Cain, Brent Hilliard

**Student Council:** none

**Faculty Forum:** none

**Media:** Chris Roy: The Newport Daily Express; Robin Smith: The Caledonian-Record

**Guests:** Rick Burroughs, Frank Davis, others

A. Amalixsen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. **He asked for approval of minutes of July 18, 2006. The minutes were approved as submitted (R. Geisel/S. Brochu).**

**Administrative Reports**

**Principal, Bill Rivard**

Mr. Rivard reported members of the administrative team would share briefly with the board what their focus would be for the school year.

Mr. Rivard thanked the personnel committee for working so diligently with him this summer and finalizing staffing for this school year; adding they hired the best candidates they could to help the school move positively.

**Athletic Director, Brian Cain**

Mr. Cain distributed fall sports posters to the board and asked them to drop them off at the elementary schools. He reported he was improving the coaching staff; was holding seminars and practice planning to bring everyone together and have one team; he also increased communication with parents, students, coaches and the community. He stated he wanted to improve the image of students and NCUHS; and to have the NCUHS athletes seen in a more positive light. Mr. Cain reported he would be starting a weekly newsletter, which would include positive stories about NCUHS athletics. He added one of his goals this year was to get to know all the names of the 550 athletes.

**Associate Principal, Thomas Pound**

Mr. Pound expressed his appreciation to the board for bringing him in. He reported his focus would be to get the A&D department to focus on attendance and discipline; that he

would follow the truancy policy that currently exists and enforce it, and be in touch with parents when students are out too long. Mr. Pound stated thoroughly follow discipline procedures currently in place and work to tighten up those procedures. He stated he would also be looking at suspensions.

#### **Dean of Students, Bob Davis**

Mr. Davis noted tomorrow would be the first day for freshmen; that they would have an orientation day and distributed their agenda to the board. He noted that last year they had a pilot program with Lowell having a para-educator at the school for the first month to help students with transition to the high school; that due the success of that program Brighton would be initiating the same program. Mr. Davis stated it was an excellent program, as problems are inherent when students come from a class of under 20 to a class of over 260 students. Mr. Davis noted this would be the first year they would have the whole school taking part in the Teen Leadership program, which deals with school culture and let's students blossom a bit. Mr. Davis reported there would be 263 freshmen this year. He informed the board that each student would receive a planner, which includes the school calendar and policies.

#### **Director of Curriculum, Jennifer Kennison**

Ms. Kennison noted this district has already put the spotlight on instruction, curriculum and assessment. She stated she was pleased to have consultants working with them. She stated in terms of assessments they were very concerned about high stakes testing; that each department is in a slightly different place as far as what they have done for a written curriculum; that they were trying to make process on written curricula on each subject taught. Ms. Kennison reported she asked departments to rotate their department meetings so she can attend all of them. She added she hoped to be involved in K-8 curriculum meetings and had spoken to Ms. Boucher about that.

#### **Career Center Director's Report, Bob Fitts**

##### **Roger Cartee**

Mr. Fitts reported that Roger Cartee had been recently elected to the board of directors for DECA; that he would represent the North Atlantic region for 3 years. He noted that Roger Cartee had been at NCCC since 1980 and a Vermont state advisor since 2002.

#### **Construction Workers – CRC**

Mr. Fitts reported that at a recent Ad-Hoc NCCC Building Committee there was a conversation held about Criminal Record Checks for construction workers; noting he had included in the board packet Title 16, Section 255.3 for the board to review. He recommended the board follow what most school districts do under the same circumstances; adding the Doe considers students in school to be under the supervision of staff. He noted that this was up to the board to decide. S. Brochu stated he wanted to be sure that the contractor understood what the school's policies were; that they should screen their employees to be sure they did not have felons on the grounds; adding as long as the contractor understands that and screens their employees the board should be okay.

**P. Moskovites moved the board accept the recommendation of Mr. Fitts. The motion was unanimously approved (P. Moskovites/R. Geisel).**

### **Computer Repair Specialist Position**

Mr. Fitts reported they interviewed 5 candidates; that they offered it one and it was turned down; that they offered the position to the second choice candidate and they were waiting to hear. Mr. Hilliard reported he didn't have an opportunity to inform Mr. Fitts, but they did hear from that candidate today and he accepted and would start 2 weeks from today.

### **Adult Services**

Mr. Fitts distributed a report from Ms. Illuzzi and stated if there were any questions after the board reviewed the report they could entertain them at their next meeting.

### **Opening of Bids**

At 7:02 p.m. Rick Burroughs brought the bids to the table. He informed the board they received 3 bids: DEW Construction; Engleberth and H.P. Cummings. He stated the bids would be brought back to the state for review by the Building & General Services Department; that on Thursday night they would make a recommendation to the Ad-Hoc building committee, who in turn would make a recommendation back to this board. He noted that 4 pre-qualified, and only 3 were submitted. A. Amalixsen asked how they found out about this project. Mr. Burroughs stated they placed ads in newspapers and publications in magazines for contractors.

Mr. Burroughs opened the bid from H.P. Cummings: he acknowledged the bid was signed; that the fixed fee was \$26,191.50; the fixed percentage for construction costs was 3.75%; general conditions was \$353,220; that the bid appeared to be complete and 3 copies had been submitted.

Mr. Burroughs opened the bid from DEW Construction: he acknowledged the bid was signed; that the fixed fee was \$25,412; the fixed fee for the construction manager was \$420,000; general conditions was \$445,214; that the fees were fixed for 24 months; and that this bid also appears to be complete.

Mr. Burroughs opened the bid from Engleberth Construction: he acknowledged the bid was signed; the fixed fee was \$25,200; the fixed percentage for construction services was 3.27%; general conditions was \$486,936; that this bid also appears to be complete.

Mr. Burroughs stated they want to start construction as soon as possible; start on the land lab site and start on this site next spring; that they wanted to get the construction manager on board so they could get the land lab started.

**J. Rosenberg moved this board authorize the Ad-Hoc NCCC Building Committee to select a construction management firm and get a contract signed and ratify it at the next NCUHS full board meeting. The motion was unanimously approved (J. Rosenberg/R. Cartee).**

Mr. Burroughs reported he and Joe Aja would be working on this to see who the low bidder is.

### **Finance/Operation's Committee**

**S. Brochu moved the board approve the minutes of July 19<sup>th</sup>. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/H. Morse).**

R. Cartee reported they set a tentative date for the middle of September to start gathering information to begin working on the budget; adding all board members are welcome to attend their meetings. He stated this would be a thorough process, which would be time consuming; and asked if board members had a % increase in mind to please let them know. S. Brochu reported the new buses should be here about 2 weeks after school opens; and they were still working on the bus garage site. R. Cartee stated they were hoping to get the audit report; adding he would ask Mr. Hankinson to furnish an updated financial report as to how they finished last year. R. Cartee reported they met tonight to open bids for the arbitrage note; adding that Mr. Hankinson would bring them a recommendation and spreadsheet on where they should invest the funds. R. Cartee stated he would make a suggestion at the finance/operation's committee meeting tomorrow night.

### **Personnel Committee**

**S. Brochu moved the board accept the minutes of July 18<sup>th</sup>, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, seconded by R. Cartee. M. O'Gorman noted the July 18<sup>th</sup> minutes should reflect the culinary position as a .25 position, not 2.5 as recorded in the minutes. F. Davis stated the minutes of August 9<sup>th</sup> should reflect the Cooperative Education Coordinator job description as a 40% position. The minutes were unanimously approved as corrected.**

**M. O'Gorman moved the board ratify the hiring of Rachel Maxwell, as a math teacher. The motion was unanimously approved (M. O'Gorman/K. Canning).**

**M. O'Gorman moved the board ratify hiring Jesse Tatum, as a math teacher. The motion was unanimously approved (M. O'Gorman/K. Canning).**

**M. O'Gorman moved the board ratify hiring Kevin Smith, as a special education teacher. The motion was unanimously approved (M. O'Gorman/K. Canning).**

**M. O'Gorman moved the board ratify hiring Chad Thompson, as a teacher at the NCS Alternative Program. The motion was unanimously approved (M. O'Gorman/K. Canning).**

M. O'Gorman reported a letter of resignation was received from Brenda Durkee; that it was read and approved by the committee, at their special meeting on August 15<sup>th</sup>, and recommended to be brought to the full board for approval.

**S. Brochu moved the board accept the resignation of Ms. Durkee, with regret, seconded by R. Cartee. A vote was held: T. Durkee abstained; all others voted in favor. The motion carried.**

Mr. Rivard reported the plan was to divide the case load between the remaining guidance counselors; that they didn't want to rush into hiring someone; that they want to bring someone in who would be with them for some time. He reported he would put together a team for the hiring process. Mr. Rivard reported he worked a lot with Mr. Fitts this summer; that the guidance person in NCCC would work with some students on their post-secondary plans, resumes and college applications, which would relieve a lot of stress in the guidance department.

### **School Committee**

K. Canning reported they did not have a quorum at their last meeting, but they did have a few recommendations. **P. Moskovites moved the board approve the minutes of July 27<sup>th</sup>, seconded by H. Morse.** R. Cartee asked what the board considered to be a majority of board members at a committee meeting; adding a one board member committee was not satisfactory to make recommendations. A. Amalixsen stated that Robert's Rules of Order takes precedence when the board didn't have a policy covering the issue; adding it makes it all the more important for those on committee to show up to meetings, as it was difficult for a committee chair to conduct meetings like that. T. Durkee stated it was not necessary to approve the minutes, as there was no quorum. J. Rosenberg stated when the board worked with Ray Proulx they agreed committee meetings should have a quorum. R.M. Mayhew stated it needed to be defined and made very consistent. Discussion ensued. A. Amalixsen stated he would allow the minutes to be put forward to be accepted. **A vote on the motion was held: R. Cartee and J. Rosenberg voted against the motion; all others voted in favor. The motion carried.**

**K. Canning moved the board approve 1<sup>st</sup> reading of NCS/OENSU Common Board Policy F.6: Student Records/Family Privacy. The motion was unanimously approved (K. Canning/S. Brochu).**

K. Canning noted that procedures only need a review and approval; that they don't go for a second reading. K. Canning noted that the board received something in the mail from Mr. Hilliard reviewing the proposed changes to this procedure; Mr. Hilliard reviewed the changes with the board. **K. Canning moved the board approve NCUHS Board Procedure H.2: Rules & Regulations for Public Use of NCUHS and NCUJHS. The motion was unanimously approved (K. Canning/P. Moskovites).**

Mr. Hilliard reported an energy audit would be done for the entire complex during the upcoming construction project.

**K. Canning moved the student hearing procedure be referred back to the committee for further review. The motion was unanimously approved (K. Canning/S. Brochu).** A. Amalixsen stated the procedure would be referred back to the board's attorney for review; adding their next meeting was scheduled for August 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

### **Community Relations Committee**

R. Geisel noted they had a quorum at their meeting. He reported they reviewed a draft of what might be a policy or procedure, which would have to go to the school committee.

He stated it would be to cover basically what they do when someone come to a board meeting with an issue; that it was someone's responsibility to get back to them, which would be a legitimate function of this committee. He stated they also came up with a suggestion to ask committee chairs for some highly important ideas they felt should be communicated to the public. R. Geisel stated it would be good to support Mr. Rivard and the administration.

**R. Geisel moved the board accept the minutes of July 25<sup>th</sup>. The motion was unanimously approved (R. Geisel/M. O'Gorman).**

#### **Negotiation's Committee**

R.M. Mayhew reported they met last night with legal council; that it was their first meeting, with the next scheduled for September 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the NCS/OENSU central office.

**S. Brochu moved the board approve the minutes of the August 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, which were distributed to the board. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/M. O'Gorman).**

#### **Old Business**

Dr. Weston noted the board held a grievance hearing last night in open session; that the board did not take action; and that a letter had been prepared by the board's legal council based on discussion the board held in executive session. He stated the request would be that they authorize the board chair to sign the decision and forward it to the association. A. Amalixsen noted it was important for the board to sign the document.

**R. Geisel moved the board authorize the board chair to sign the document, seconded by S. Brochu. A vote was held: T. Durkee voted against the motion; all others voted in favor. The motion carried.**

#### **Superintendent's Report, Dr. Rod Weston**

##### **School Choice**

Dr. Weston noted there had been talk about limiting it to 10 students, but that it was left at 15; and he requested that the board continue the school choice agreements with Lake Region and Canaan, as well as Lamoille. Dr. Weston noted the agreements had been sent to the board members via email for their review. **S. Brochu moved the board continue with the school choice agreements as in the past. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).**

##### **Authorization to Sign Settlement Agreement**

Dr. Weston stated the agreement itself is confidential; that it had been worked out with attorneys on both sides. Dr. Weston stated if the board wanted more information they would need to discuss this issue in executive session.

**At 7:59 p.m. J. Rosenberg moved the board enter executive session for personnel and contractual issues, inviting the administration and Ms. Rubino. The motion was unanimously approved (J. Rosenberg/R. Cartee).**

**At 8:25 p.m. J. Rosenberg moved the board return to open session. The motion was unanimously approved (J. Rosenberg/R. Cartee). No action was taken.**

**At 8:26 p.m. S. Brochu moved the board return to executive session for a personnel/contractual issue. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).**

**At 9:01 p.m. R. Cartee moved the board return to open session. The motion was unanimously approved (R. Cartee/S. Brochu).**

**R. Cartee moved the board authorize the board chair to sign the settlement document presented by the superintendent, seconded by J. Gregersen. A vote was held: S. Brochu abstained; all others voted in favor. The motion carried.**

**There being no further business to discuss the board unanimously agreed to adjourn at 9:03 p.m. (J. Gregersen/M. O’Gorman).**

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Rubino  
Recording Secretary