

**NORTH COUNTRY UNION HIGH SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2007 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE NCUHS LIBRARY**

Board Members Present: Arne Amalixsen (Chair), Steve Brochu, Ken Canning, Richard Cartee, Tim DelaBruere, Rick Geisel, Rose Mary Mayhew, Harold Morse, Peter Moskovites, James Privee, June Rosenberg, Mary Roy

Board Members Absent: Lucy Cannon (Holland), Joe Gregersen (Newport Town), Muriel O’Gorman (Brighton)

Administrators: Bill Rivard, Bob Fitts, Rod Weston

Student Council: none

Faculty Forum: none

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

Guests: John Gunn, Brad Maxwell and the Boy’s Basketball Team; Boy’s Nordic Team, Frank Davis, Skip Gosselin

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 the minutes of February 6th and March 7th, 2007. The minutes were approved as submitted (S. Brochu/R. Cartee). R. Cartee abstained from voting on the March 7th, 2007 minutes. All others voted in favor.**

Recognition Presentation

Varsity Basketball Team & Coach John Gunn

Mr. Rivard introduced John Gunn, coach of the year, to the board. He stated he appreciated everything Mr. Gunn and the team had done for the school and community. Mr. Gunn noted they had a fantastic year; that they finished with the best record NCUHS had ever seen; adding that spending time with the team was a bigger part of the season. Mr. Gunn noted the community can be very proud of the team; adding they were not just basketball players but were overall the finest student athletes. Mr. Gunn introduced Coach Maxwell and the team to the board. All were present, except two. Mr. Gunn noted they were a small team, but very tight and dedicated; adding having the community support gave them a boost. Mr. Rivard thanked the team and coaches for coming before the board.

DECA Students and Advisor Roger Cartee

Mr. Fitts introduced Roger Cartee to the board, noting DECA participated in the state convention 2 weeks ago in Burlington; adding that he, Mr. Rivard and Roger Cartee were judges in that competition. He noted this was a great event, where they could observe their kids; adding as a judge he thought their kids shine and stand out in the competition; and that Roger Cartee does a good job with them. Mr. Cartee stated this was an opportunity for the kids to get out and be with kids from throughout the state of Vermont. He noted that many of the kids were out working and could not attend this meeting,

noting that Augie Kuron, also a basketball player, was in attendance. Mr. Cartee reported the students won approximately 120 awards; and received about \$50,000 in scholarships. He reported they won something in every category they participated in; that they had 4 state officers elected; in April they would have 15 students going to Orlando to compete; and they were ready to go and conquer the world.

New Board Members

A. Amalixsen introduced new board members Tim DelaBruere, from Newport City and Mary Roy, from Morgan, to the board; and asked them to give the board some information about themselves. T. DelaBruere stated he graduated from NCUHS in 2000; that he graduated from St. Lawrence University, with a degree in history and US Ethnic and Cultural Studies; that he works as an electrician with his Dad. M. Roy reported she also graduated from NCUHS; has a BA from UVM in plant and soil science; has a degree in library science and is currently the librarian at the Haskell Library; that she spent 19 years in Kentucky; and that she and her husband recently moved back to the area. A. Amalixsen reported that Lucy Cannon is the new representative from Holland, but that she wasn't present tonight.

Superintendent's Report, Dr. Rod Weston

Grievance

Dr. Weston noted the grievance had been delayed until the Union Association could have their representative present, which he noted was not an unusual circumstance.

2007-2008 School Calendar

Dr. Weston noted that if he prepared the calendar to start late, end early and have lots of vacation included, everyone would be happy with it. He noted that Ms. Poulin, the faculty forum rep, could not be present tonight but stated she forwarded some things the staff would like the board to consider regarding the calendar. He noted the association prefers when snow days are built into the calendar; that there are two built in scheduled for the 5th and 6th of June; adding he would leave word with his successor that one has to be used or it would violate the contract. Dr. Weston added if more than 2 snow days needed to be made up the in-service days at the end of the year would need to be moved around, as they were not built into holidays as they were this year. Dr. Weston noted this calendar needed to be as close to Lake Region's as possible, as well as the elementary calendar.

J. Rosenberg asked Dr. Weston if it had been communicated to him that the WDC Board wanted school to start after Labor Day. Dr. Weston stated it was; but was not done as it would have pushed them later into the next year and the major construction during that summer as well. Dr. Weston reported that all principals were in agreement to end school early in June, as June was not a productive month. Dr. Weston noted he could reduce vacation during the year, adding this would not be popular with the staff.

R. Cartee reported he heard the students would be requesting a change in the proposed April vacation. Dr. Weston stated that would give them 10 days not matching Lake Region; adding it would be less of an issue here, but more at Lake Region. Mr. Fitts noted NCUHS teachers would not be able to teach during those weeks at Lake Region.

R. Geisel moved the board approve the calendar as presented by Dr. Weston, seconded by R.M. Mayhew. S. Brochu asked why it would make a difference to when

April vacation was held; noting they can't satisfy everyone and the board is the one that sets the calendar. A. Amalixsen noted there was a strong argument that they match Lake Region's calendar. J. Rosenberg asked if the union could only give input into the calendar; Dr. Weston stated that was all they could do. J. Rosenberg asked if the calendar had to be approved tonight; Dr. Weston stated it did as it was due to the Commissioner by April 1st. He noted there were a ton of things that could be done; but that every time one problem was solved it would create another. J. Rosenberg stated her major concern was with the construction project; she asked Mr. Fitts if he had spoken to the construction manager; Mr. Fitts reported he had and that it was okay to begin as planned. **A vote was held: with all voting in favor. The motion passed unanimously (R. Geisel/R.M. Mayhew).**

Validation of March 6, 2007 Budget Vote

S. Brochu moved the board approve the numbers given to them in print by the clerk, which were included in the board packet. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/R.M. Mayhew).

Administrative Reports

Bill Rivard, Principal

Mr. Rivard distributed his written report to the board.

PowerSchool Training

Mr. Rivard reported staff members from NCUHS were having a training on the PowerSchool student management system, which was just implemented last spring. He noted they were fortunate to have this training; and informed the board they were sharing the cost with the Hazen Union district. He noted the next training would be April 2nd through April 5th; adding a consultant would spend a week at NCUHS to help them build their master schedule.

Action Planning Meeting

Mr. Rivard reported the focus areas revolved around student engagement and learning; curriculum instruction and assessment. He reported they set some timelines; and gave information to committee members to revise and update and then bring back to the education committee; then to the full board for approval. Mr. Rivard reported they hope to do this by the end of May or the first board meeting in June. He noted they had 16 people in attendance and that it was a very good day.

Mr. Rivard reported he had some other items to bring up under new business.

Career Center Director's Report, Bob Fitts

Mr. Fitts noted that a couple of board members visited the Land Lab site today. He reported they would be moving 5 programs into the building one month from yesterday; adding the building was impressive. He distributed pictures of the site for the board to review.

Faculty & Student council Representatives

They were not present.

Comments from Guests

There were none.

Finance/Operation's Committee

Donation

R. Cartee reported they received a letter from Cheryl Currier regarding a fund raising dance scheduled for last Friday, which had to be cancelled; it was to raise funds for a trip to London, Paris and Rome. She informed the committee she had dinner with friends on Saturday and when told about the fund raising issue they wrote a check for \$2,000 to help with the cost of the trip. **J. Rosenberg moved the board accept the generous donation of \$2,000 from the anonymous donor. The motion was unanimously approved (J. Rosenberg/S. Brochu).** The board thanked Ms. Currier for informing the donors of the schools' needs.

Audit

R. Cartee reported the auditors were still asking questions about the adult services department; adding they would have to wait to see how many more questions they had.

Land Lab Construction

R. Cartee reported that Mr. Fitts gave them an update on the construction; adding things are really going great and they were within budget. Mr. Fitts reported with contingencies taken into account the report shows they are still \$63,000 under budget; however the design estimate was changed to a higher number. He reported the bids had gone out; that they would be opened on March 27th and then be presented to the ad-hoc building committee for them to bring back to this board in early April.

Administrative Contract Issues

S. Brochu reported the committee decided to go ahead with the additional money in the contracts for some of the administrator's, which was in their contracts last year; that it was built into the budget and didn't need board approval.

Bus Garage Relocation Status

S. Brochu stated he didn't get a chance to ask Mr. Fitts about the absolute drop-dead date for the bus garage to be vacated. Mr. Fitts reported a class was scheduled to start after April vacation. S. Brochu noted they had been asked to approve spending some money to move to another garage temporarily. Mr. Fitts reported he had a meeting scheduled for tomorrow with the construction manager and could ask if they could put it off for a couple of weeks. P. Moskovites noted what the construction manager said they need, the board would do. S. Brochu said for him to give the board a date and they would go from there. Mr. Fitts stated the plans were to move by April vacation.

S. Brochu reported the site on Union Street is still a go; that the board approved signing an extension for 60 days for Tanguay Homes to continue with the permitting process with the City.

Skip Gosselin informed the board he had a repair shop on the Quarry Road that he could make available for a temporary bus garage at a cost of \$500 per month. S. Brochu asked him to give the board a written proposal. S. Brochu noted that Mr. Gosselin also offered the board another proposal in case the site on Union Street doesn't go through.

S. Brochu reported they needed a contractual issue to be discussed in executive session.

Items that are Concerns for the 07-08 Budget

S. Brochu reported they would review the budget carefully at their next meeting and would recommend freezing the budget if necessary.

Negotiation's Committee

R.M. Mayhew reported they met last week with the teachers; adding impasse was declared; that they also met today with the support staff and impasse was also declared. She reported they would be engaging federal mediator Ira Lobel and were just waiting for dates; adding it would probably not be until May or after. R. Smith asked what the major issues were and R.M. Mayhew stated they were monetary and language issues.

Boy's Nordic Team

Members of the boy's Nordic team dropped in to show the board their Division I runner up banner. The board congratulated them for their wonderful performances.

Old Business

R. Geisel noted on February 6th the board directed Mr. Rivard to remove the resource officer position from the budget; that on March 7th the teachers presented the board with a petition to keep the position in the budget; adding with new board members on the board and this new information, which had been received he would like the board to revisit this. He noted that a community policing collaboration at the school for it to be a safe and learning was brought to the board by Mr. Rivard and endorsed by the faculty; adding he felt the board made a mistake by not endorsing it. R. Geisel moved the board reconsider the position of resource officer for the school, seconded by R.M. Mayhew.

R. Cartee stated he read the petition that was submitted and that out of about a staff of 125 it was signed by 48 staff members; that it was not overwhelming support; that the finance/operation's committee thought hard about it and discussed it when working on the budget; that the finance/operation's committee had decided it would not be in the budget. He noted that Mr. Rivard also asked about using Title funds and was told he couldn't. J. Rosenberg noted it has been this board's policy to not fund non-educational issues. P. Moskovites stated this was a non-educational position; that the petition also stated it was for a resource officer and asked how many people really knew that it was a police officer.

Mr. Rivard reported he re-submitted the plan and was looking at using that \$15,000 for additional technology training. S. Brochu stated that not everyone who signed the petition were voters of the community; that just because they work here doesn't mean they pay taxes here. He noted this issue had come to the board 3 times before and had been refused; that this was the 4th time; adding the board had better things to discuss.

R. Geisel noted with the reaction this was not something the board supports; and explained that the officer would interact with students and be a part of the community; that they would not be here to bust kids but to be a presence; be a resource for kids who need a place to go; noting there were a number of roles this person could play; adding Mr. Rivard and Police Chief Duquette support the program. He stated they have a resource for the school and it was a shame for them not to take it. K. Canning asked what

the problem was they were trying to solve; noting they have a Dean of Students, an Associate Principal, teachers and staff; that they should be able to effectively enhance student behavior. He asked if they want to establish a more positive role with students why don't they pay for it; noting the board already hires the police for large events; adding he had never seen a written proposal and that there must be another solution.

T. DelaBruere asked if there ever had been a resource officer come to the board; adding he student taught in 4 schools in New York State and all had resource officers; that they used adaptive curriculum and went into the classes. J. Rosenberg stated a lot of small towns don't want this position. R. Cartee noted if the board was going to commit funding for the position they would want that person in the building; that the person would be carrying weapons and if an emergency came up their first duty would be to respond to the City of Newport.

P. Moskovites called the motion, seconded by J. Rosenberg. A vote to call the motion was held: R.M. Mayhew and R. Geisel voted against the motion; all others voted in favor. The motion carried.

A vote on the motion to reconsider was held: T. DelaBruere, R. Geisel, R.M. Mayhew and J. Privee voted in favor; voting against were: S. Brochu, K. Canning, R. Cartee, H. Morse, P. Moskovites, and J. Rosenberg. M. Roy abstained. The motion failed.

New Business

Graduation Platform Seating

Mr. Rivard distributed a form for board members to sign up for graduation platform seating; and asked that they return it to him.

Snow Day Make-Up

Mr. Rivard reported that at the principals meeting with superintendent yesterday they agreed to hold the last days on June 7th and 8th; adding that April 6th they would have no school unless they had a snow day between now and then. He noted that May 25th would become the NCUEA in-service day as opposed to holding it on June 18th. He added this proposed change to the calendar would need board approval. **R. Cartee moved the board accept the changes to the calendar as presented by Mr. Rivard. The motion was unanimously approved (R. Cartee/S. Brochu).**

Committee Structure

A. Amalixsen stated the groupings were pretty much the same as last year; adding that the formation of the education committee is significant and he thanked P. Moskovites for chairing it. He explained that he did not want members to have an excessive burden and arranged the committees accordingly.

J. Rosenberg stated committees should not meet on Fridays; S. Brochu noted they sometimes have things that can't wait or change; A. Amalixsen noted the precedent had been set and they would not do it unless necessary.

S. Brochu stated the finance/operation's committee would continue to meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday's of the month. K. Canning stated the school committee would meet on

the 1st Thursday of the month; adding they would need to meet very shortly as they had issues to deal with.

F. Davis asked A. Amalixsen to give brief description of Commissioner's visit. A. Amalixsen reported the Commissioner had been visiting schools; that at the meeting held at NCUHS they had administrators, board members, some teachers; adding a good cross-section of about 50 people showed up for the event. He reported they worked in small groups; that the big item that came out of it was the need for local control and the cost of education. He stated they need to keep this simple and understandable or the public won't be able to support education the way they have.

P. Moskovites noted the reorganization had been tabled by the legislature for now, as the cost savings would be minimal. R. Geisel noted that all responses from communities were on the VSBA website and were pretty consistent. J. Rosenberg informed the board that the VSBA website was www.vtvsba.org.

At 8:15 p.m. S. Brochu moved the board enter executive session for contractual issues inviting Dr. Weston, after taking a 5 minute break. The motion was unanimously approved (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).

At 9:06 p.m. R. Geisel moved the board return to open session. The motion was unanimously approved (R. Geisel/S. Brochu). No action was taken.

There being no further business to discuss the board unanimously agreed to adjourn at 9:07 p.m. (S. Brochu/R. Cartee).

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Rubino
Recording Secretary