

**NORTH COUNTRY UNION JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
NCUJHS Library**

November 25 at 6:15 P.M.

Present

Board Members

Le-Ann Tetrault, Jay
Corey Therrien, Newport City
Richard M. Nelson, Derby
Richard Cartee, Newport City
Kristin Mason, Morgan
Scott Boskind, Derby
Maggie Griffith, Newport City

Staff

John A. Castle, NCSU Superintendent
Liz Butterfield, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Glenn Hankinson, NCSU Business Director
Nicole Corbett, NCUJHS Principal
Colleen Storrings, Assistant Principal

Press

Ed Barber, Newport Daily Express

I. The meeting was called to order at 6:18 p.m. by Chair Richard Cartee, who led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

There were no Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda

II. Student Hearing

Motion to enter Executive Session at 6:20 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a student hearing, because doing so in open session would place “Student X” at a substantial disadvantage.

THERRIEN/TETRAULT APPROVED

Motion to exit Executive Session at 6:44 p.m. **CARTEE/BOSKIND APPROVED**

Motion to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent concerning “Student X”, as a result of the hearing. **NELSON/GRIFFITH APPROVED**

III. **Motion** to approve the minutes of October 28, 2014 (*Attachment A*) **TETRAULT/MASON APPROVED**

IV. Public Comments, Communication with Parents/Staff/Citizens

Mrs. Corbett shared with the Board the letter that had been sent home to all families concerning the discovery of a small amount of mercury in the art room, which was once the science room. (*See attached letter*)

V. Financial Report

Action:

A. **Approve the Warrants:** Richard Cartee and Rose Mary Mayhew have signed.

B. **Motion** to approve the Financial Report of October (*Attachment B*)

Glenn reported that Revenues look good. **THERRIEN/MASON APPROVED**

Discussion:

Budget 2015-2016 - Glenn distributed to the Board the first draft of the budget. He said that the biggest contributor to the increase is the Board of Ed Contingency that has been set aside pending the outcome of Negotiations. Also, on December 1st the VT Tax Commissioner will release the state-wide property tax rates, and Glenn is expecting a “healthy increase”. He suggested that the Board study the draft budget over the next month, talk to Nicole and Colleen, and contact him with questions. Richard Nelson requested data for the next meeting on what a 1% increase in salary would look like, as well as a projection of what health care will look like. In response to a question, Nicole said that she is not anticipating a reduction in staffing. She anticipates that two teachers will be retiring and will need to be replaced. Scott requested that Glenn provide an estimate for removal of snow from the roof. He also asked about repairs and maintenance for the parking lot and driveway. Nicole said that some money for that is included in the “projects” line.

Glenn clarified that the Board will be voting on the budget at their regular meeting on December 23rd, in time for the Annual Meeting in February. **The Board agreed to call a Special Budget Meeting on December 9th at 6:30 p.m. in the Library at NCUJHS.**

VI Committee Reports

A. Information: **Minutes of Oct. 28, 2014 Building Committee meeting** (*Attachment C*)

B. Building Committee Update – Scott gave an update on the building project and distributed handouts from DuBois & King and DEW. He reported that the girl’s lockers have been installed and that DEW provided the base at no cost. There have been some problems with hot water, and it was discovered that the wrong valves were installed. The issue has been addressed.

Richard Nelson congratulated Scott and the entire team that has been involved in the building project, stating that they have represented the taxpayers well. Scott added that there is a one year warranty on the project, once there has been a sign off on the completion, so any other issues that come up can be addressed.

Scott said that the flooring looks really good and has come a long way. The company took the Board’s concerns to heart and now the floors look fantastic. The second logo needs to be re-done, which will hopefully take place over break so it has time to dry.

DEW will be doing a lot of the ceiling/fire rating work over break, but will need the second week of January to complete that project.

C. Discuss Roofing Proposals – The proposals were distributed to board members at last month’s meeting. Scott reiterated that there is a problem with “ponding” on the roof that needs to be addressed. The options of temporary repairs vs. replacing and reinforcing the roof were discussed. Scott reported that he had asked the engineers if it was appropriate to make repairs now and institute a formal snow removal process, while waiting another 5 to 15 years to replace the roof and perform major structural work. DuBois and King told Scott that that is OK, but we must be sure that the weight on the roof does not exceed the original specs and we must implement a formal snow removal plan. The current roof has another 5 – 10 years under warranty. Richard Nelson would like to see the current bond paid off before the board asks for \$600,000.00 to \$800,000.00 for a new roof. Repairing the roof will cost \$50,000.00 to \$60,000.00. Richard Cartee suggested asking the voters in March to allow the Board to use money from the current bond to make the repairs, as the bond project will be completed at around \$400,000.00 less than the bond amount. Corey pointed out that the Board also needs to decide what to do with the current bond, such as using the extra money to pay down the bond.

VII. Principal’s Report – (*Attachment D*)

Corey asked Nicole about the large number of students listed in the newsletter who received awards last quarter. The Board agreed that a simple award can have a huge positive affect in a child’s life.

VIII. Superintendent’s Report – Mr. Castle reported that budget season is in full swing. He announced that this very day the rules of Act 166 had been suspended by the AOE, giving districts the option of delaying implementation of a PreK program for 1 year. John feels that the SU should move forward with the PreK changes as planned.

John shared that he has been very impressed with the work that Nicole has been doing on the budget, as well as the work that Bill and Eileen have been doing at the high school.

John reported that he had been invited to attend the Green Mountain Imperative, which turned out to be a summit on governance and funding. He said that there had been a good conversation about those topics at the SU meeting last week. John feels that we have a healthy balance between the SU and the local boards, and he is not in favor of consolidation – we need to work collaboratively across the SU and take advantage of the “social capital” that we have in the NEK. John said that Scott Boskind is a good example of “social capital”: it would have cost much more to hire someone to oversee the building project.

Richard Cartee stated that the boards need to send a strong message to Montpelier: “Leave us alone. We work good together. We work good with the Central Office. Just give us the money and let us run our schools”.

Richard Nelson stated that the SU and the Junior High work well because we have strong leaders, saying that it starts with John Castle, flows down to Nicole Corbett and Colleen Storrings and then to the board.

John responded to a question about consolidation by stating that Montpelier wants centralized governance by dispassionate people who are willing to reduce staff and close schools. John said that it should be local boards and townspeople making those decisions, that citizenship needs to be modeled to our kids so they can see parents and townspeople working together in a democracy to make these decisions.

Scott inquired of John what the VSBA's view is on this. John said that it is evident that the VSBA supports consolidation, evident by their use of the term "right-sizing of things". John pointed out that it could be difficult to put forward a 50 million dollar budget to a dispassionate public. Why would they support it?

Consolidation has the potential to polarize and to destroy the "esprit de corps" that currently exists in the SU. He stated that there is a certain amount of hypocrisy in regards to the push for equity: Will Burlington give up what they have to create equity with the NEK?

Kristin asked how the Board can send a message to the Legislature. Ed Barber suggested holding the Legislator Education Summit in January or February rather than in March or April, as has been done in the past. All agreed that it would be much more effective during the Legislative session, rather than after it has closed. John agreed that he would work on setting it up with OCSU.

IX. Unfinished/New/Other Business

A. Cost of Tuition Busing – Nicole said that this in reference to the fact that the Brighton Board is having a special meeting on December 9th to discuss the possibility of sending their 7th and 8th grade students to the Junior High next year. The Brighton Board has invited Nicole and Superintendent Castle to the meeting to answer questions that people might have about the Junior High.

B. Richard Nelson reported that negotiations are "trudging on".

X. Agenda Items/Date for Next Board Meeting

Richard Nelson reported that he has received some phone calls from people who are concerned with cell phone use in the schools.

XI. Executive Session – no additional session was necessary.

XII. Motion to Adjourn at 8:10 p.m. **THERRIEN/MASON APPROVED**

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Butterfield
Recording Secretary

<u>Meetings:</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
NCUJHS Special Budget Meeting	Tuesday	December 9	6:30 p.m.	NCUJHS Library
NCSU Special Budget Meeting	Monday	December 15	6:30 p.m.	NCSU A209
NCSU Policy Committee	Thursday	December 18	5:30 p.m.	NCSU A213
NCSU Full Board	Thursday	December 18	6:30 p.m.	NCSU A209
NCUJHS Board	Tuesday	December 23	6:15 p.m.	NCUJHS Library