

**NEW HAVEN TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 2, 2015**

The legal voters of the New Haven Town School District are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Town Hall in New Haven, Vermont on Monday, March 2, 2015 at 6:30PM (town to follow school district) to discuss and transact the following business. Articles 2 and 5 require a vote by Australian ballot to take place on Tuesday, March 3, 2015 at the New Haven Town Hall between 7:00AM and 7:00 PM.

Moderator, Pam Marsh opened the meeting at 6:30 pm, she introduced Senator, Chris Bray.

Moderator, Pam Marsh opened the School meeting at 6:40 pm, and read the Warning. Pam Marsh introduced the School Board members: Chair, Brad Bull, Phyllis Smith and Ed McGuire, as well as Beeman Principal, Kristine Evarts- Bouvier and Susan Bruhl, Director of Special Education and Director of Pre-Education for the Supervisory Union.

ARTICLE 1. To elect a Moderator following nominations from the floor.

Chris Granstrom made a motion to nominate Pam Marsh as Moderator, seconded by Bev Mayer. There were no more nominations.

All in favor.

Passed.

ARTICLE 2. To elect all Town School District Officers for the ensuing year by Australian ballot.

Moderator, Pam Marsh let the audience know Brad Bull and Phyllis Smith are both seeking re-election.

No further discussion.

ARTICLE 3. To act upon the reports of the Town School District Officers.

Beeman Board Chair, Brad Bull thanked everyone for coming. He announced the Beeman School Board meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month at Beeman Elementary School, beginning at 5:30. Agendas and minutes are posted on the Beeman website. Brad talked about the struggles of small town schools across Vermont. Last year there was a 12% increase in the tax rate, largely in part to the bump in the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) and the State increase. He referred to the Town Report on page 101, line 32 which shows a slight decrease in the projected district homestead tax rate. The School board has been working hard to find a balance

in the budget, and affordability for towns' people. Primarily, the declining enrollment is the driving force, New Haven's enrollment is down by 4% overall. And it's not just in New Haven; enrollment is down across the State by 20% in about 15 years. The trend is expected to continue for the next several years. Again he directed attention to the Town Report, page 101, line 16 shows per pupil spending. Spending will go up along with the tax rate in the future primarily due to salaries and benefits. The Board is striving to keep the spending at a level similar to last year's figures. They feel that keeping the spending level will not affect the children's education. Policy Governance was adopted by all of the school districts of ANeSU in 2010. Within this policy, the Superintendent acts like a CEO; largely giving him executive powers and operational authority, but it is carefully controlled through Schoolboard policies. Beeman is a great place to go to school, with a great staff and faculty. Kids are leaving Beeman well prepared.

Al Karnatz made a motion to adopt the reports of the Town School District Officers, seconded by Paul Horn.

Deborah Young – Offered a big thank you to the school board, as it is a tough job.

Julie Olson – All 4 of her sons attended Beeman, and she has worked at Beeman. She is concerned about the changes at the school over the last several years. The three top things she is concerned about are: technology, the food service and Special Education. The technology is now outsourced to the Superintendent's office. The food used to be amazing; kids were planting a garden and learning from this. Now by trying to save money, Beeman has become this satellite program. Food is cooked off-site and brought in. The food is ok, but not like it used to be. The deficit for this program continues to grow. It is concerning. What is being done to monitor these things; is there a monitoring report from the Sups office.

Brad Bull – The Schoolboard evaluates performance. It is critical to get feedback, there has been sparse attendance at the schoolboard meetings, the board encourages folks to attend and let them know of their concerns. He heard the food service is great. They have monitored the compliance with the food service, they have achieved a level of compliance and participation is up. The deficit has not increased that he is aware of.

Denise Martin – She has been to the schoolboard meetings. She that feels since the new Policy governance has been initiated, that the public has no voice. You tell the Board why you are there, but nothing happens that night; no decisions are made. The decision is being made by someone else – it's very frustrating. She too is frustrated with technology at Beeman. Computers will sit for a week or more before a tech from the district takes a look at it. Many computers were donated by Middlebury College, which saved the school money, but the tech person would not work on them to bring them up to speed for the kids to use because they were not purchased by the school. She has approached the schoolboard, but is not getting any answers. She has worked in Special

Education and feels the services have gone way down. She asked the folks in attendance to look into what is happening at Beeman.

Chris Granstrom – The ongoing service review on the Superintendents performance, what are the results of the Beeman Boards review.

Brad Bull – The Superintendent is employed by the Supervisory Union. The Beeman Board has given him satisfactory reviews. He heard there was a petition going around about the Superintendent, but you can't fire someone for personality conflicts. You have to act on facts and investigate.

Julie Olson – She appreciates that you can't act on the personality conflict issue. But she would like to see some action taken by the school board members, they are elected officials. They should be able to conduct business like the Selectboard does. The reason attendance is down at the schoolboard meetings is because no one is getting any satisfaction.

Larry Maier – asked the schoolboard to define Policy Governance.

Brad Bull – This was voted in in 2010, it allows the schoolboards more room without getting bogged down by micromanagement. Policies now limit and define the duties of all the parties involved.

Discussion on the petition that is circulating among the 5 towns in regards to removing the Superintendent.

Michaela Granstrom – Also feels no one is heard at the School Board meetings. Even the Principal is not always allowed to speak.

Doug Tolles – Asked for numbers grade by grade, and the number of staff members in ratio to kids in each classroom.

Principal, Kristine Evarts – For 2016, Kindergarten – 10 students; 1st grade - 8 students; 2nd grade – 16 students; 3rd grade - 13 students; 4th grade – 15 students; 5th grade – 19 students; 6th grade – 14 students. These classrooms are multilevel, and the numbers of students will fluctuate. Each classroom has one teacher, with the exception of the 3rd & 4th grade classroom that is job shared by two part time teachers.

Moderator, Pam Marsh – There is a motion on the floor to accept the Town School District Officers report.

All in favor.

Passed

ARTICLE 4. To establish salaries for the Town School District Officers for the ensuing year.

Paul Horn made a motion to keep the salaries the same, Chair \$1,250; other members \$1,000; Treasurer \$1,000 and Moderator \$100.

Kathy Barrett made a motion to amend the motion to include the Clerk who takes the minutes, at \$50, motion seconded by Al Karnatz.

All in favor.

Passed**ARTICLE 5. For discussion only: VOTE TO BE TAKEN BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT ON TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2015 BETWEEN 7:00 AM AND 7:00 PM.**

Shall the voters of the New Haven Town School District appropriate \$1,821,607 necessary for the support of its school for the year beginning July 1, 2015?

Barb Torian – Explain how the money goes from the Supervisory Union to the School District.

Brad Bull – The Supervisory Union is comprised of several areas. Money is allocated by average daily membership by the 5 towns.

Susan Bruhl – When you think historically about how services were delivered across Vermont was town by town, and what the town raises in taxes is how the school is governed. Small schools like Beeman, struggle over time. There is a Vermont Principals Association handout on the back table.

No further discussion.

ARTICLE 6. To see if the voters of said New Haven Town school district will authorize the New Haven Town School District Board of Directors to borrow money by issuance of bonds or notes not in excess of anticipated revenue for the school year, as provided in 16 V.S.A. ' 562(9)

Larry Maier made a motion to approve the Article, seconded by Margaret Carothers. All in favor.

Passed

ARTICLE 7. To hear and report on any further business which may legally come before this meeting.

Susan Bruhl – Legislation on hold for another year for funding universal Pre-K. There will be funding for many Pre-K's all along our District.

Brad Bull – New Pre-K education adds to the education system, it costs \$3000 to educate these kids. Each one of the kids cost \$.04 per pupil. This is funded by the State tax rate.

Tim Bouton made a motion to adjourn the School meeting at 7:40 pm, seconded by Kathy Barrett. All in favor.

Adjourn: 7:40 pm

Respectfully submitted:

Pam Kingman

Approved:


