

Thetford Academy Board of Trustees Meeting

Lyme Elementary School

November 4, 2008

Minutes

Meeting Participants: The following TA trustees were present: Faith Alexandre, Vice-President; Peter Boyd, Alumni Representative; Tim Briglin, President; Charlie Buttrey; Denise Froehlich; Peter Herman; Gene Kadish; Karen Kaliski, Thetford Representative; Therese Linehan; Barbara Mason; Stephen Page, Clerk; Conrad Reining; Curtis Richardson, Treasurer; Bill Weyrick; Jim Wilson. A quorum was present.

Representing the school: Sarah Clarke, Development and Community Relations Director; David McGinn, Assistant Head of School; Keith Merrick, Business Manager; Martha Rich, Head of School.

Also in attendance: Joel T., Dawn Deibler, Teacher; Indie Scopetti, student; Sam Rondeau, student.

These trustees were not present at the meeting: Kevin Kerin, Lyme Representative; Chip O'Dell; Barbara Truex.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05.

1. There were no minutes to approve from September.

2. The new recording secretary, Tom O'Quinn was welcomed.

3. Discussion Items

a) Capital Project Update. Steve Page reported that there will be no water permit for a few weeks. Often the State Water

Supply Permit does not require a 30 day waiting period.

However, this time, for TA there is a waiting period.

It appears there will be no Act 250 approval until February.

The following needs to be in place: First, the Water

Supply

Permit. Second, the Septic permit. Third, the Waste

Water

Permit. Fourth, the Act 250 Permit.

The plan at present is to start in the winter with the demolition of the interior of the science rooms.

*"Have we supplied all paperwork?" Ans : "Yes."

*"Is this a political situation?" Discussion ensued.

* Information from Trumbull Nelson...\$1.5 million.

.. .get down to \$8 million.

*will look at cut back of square footage.

*We are probably 6 or 8 months away from starting, why go forward?

*Steve: "Rebid."

*Will the bid offered now be accurate then?

"We've narrowed down steel to 3 contractors. We won't sign on the dotted line."

Keith: "These are figures to guide us."

Steve: "There can be "\$600,000 in savings by going line by line.

The Development Office reports that they keep plugging along. It is okay. \$15,000 or \$20,000 is coming in, not millions.

If we are going to have a discussion, shouldn't all people be up to snuff with information so that some can offer questions or suggestions?

The Academy intent was to hold a public meeting. Maybe when the Act 250 permit is approved.

The last meeting was in July. Maybe a meeting in December? Not a 5 hour, let's talk about everything meeting.

Do we let people know that we are reducing the scope of the project? Will a reduction, in effect, occur? Should we wrestle with issues before town or public meeting? A time line is important to bring everyone on board. Let's not get the cart ahead of the horse.

There's been no look at costing of Phase II. Trumbull Nelson will work with Lauren.

b.) NEASC Student and Faculty Survey results. Math teacher Dawn Diebler and students Indie Scopetti, and

Sam Rondeau gave a presentation. When the Accreditation Committee came they gave out 2 surveys that dealt with the thought, "Do students enjoy going to TA?" Statistically, students answered favorably. There was discussion. Why a high response rate to "no opinion." Results were warmly received. A round of applause.

c.) Parent Survey Report. Gene Kadish spoke of the survey.

*The same format was used as in '98 and '03.

*In going forward, it wouldn't help to have a format that makes the parent survey similar to the student survey.

*Courses are challenging.

*Discussion around the response "don't know."

*The Parent Survey did not place "don't know" as a mid answer.

*from '05 - more agree, strongly agree and more disagree, strongly disagree.

*Parents -vandalism, drugs and alcohol. Parents thought it would be the same as '05.

*Not much parent attendance at the drug and alcohol counselor's meeting.

*A first survey was done in '98 by Rufus Winsor.

*There was one question about guidance. Was this an accurate survey for guidance?

*Martha was asked, "was there any surprises?"

*Guidance.

*Pleasing to see enthusiasm about scheduling. After much struggle, there appears to be a smooth block schedule for students. Parents don't appear to be concerned with scheduling.

d.) Partnership Agreement and Act 82 Update.

(Tom can e-mail Faith for notes.)

*Act 82 attempts to rein in, limit school funding. Schools have to propose budgets according to... Legislature passed this 2 years ago.

*This is onerous to schools who are above average in spending.

*We are charged with telling the community they choose to support education even though...

*When we calculate our budget, how can we know what levers to pull in regards to Act 82?

e.) Academic Update and Head's Report.

Martha has received the NEASC report. She has made comments and then returned it. She can report to the Board in January. Impressed with the positive comments. NEASC found that communication was excellent. Martha reported on the Faculty Questionnaire results. She will survey the faculty again in midyear.

* Tim- Martha has a strength of working with teachers.

*In the future, maybe add for the faculty, "Is TA a good place to work?"

*Has the faculty seen the results of the NEASC student survey?

*High School Transformation Initiative.
(notes)

*Sarah. There really has been a movement towards academic excellence at TA.

f.)Reports.

David: We've finished first Quarter. Students had a real good first Quarter. The bar has been raised in order to earn privileges.(One, the GPA expectation has gone from 2.5 to 3.0 necessary. Two, effort and attitude comments must include at least one "exceeds the standard.")

On 3 absences, if no problems, teachers just report the absences to Gloria. (no letter home.)

There are 21 girls out for basketball for two teams.

Explanation of David's choice to coach the varsity boy's basketball team. Secondly, there are 35 students out for boy's basketball. He asked for ideas on how to best serve the needs.

*Tim - how much for a second J.V. team? Ans. \$5,000.

Discussion.

*Keith discussed the budget. (notes?)

*Martha was asked what happens to the scholarship money in times of economic fluctuation. She responded, "the scholarship is based on what is available.

*Faith - start to plan for a Board Retreat. The Head's Replacement Task Force will start to strategize.

*Barbara, Staff Committee. They are waiting to hear from the teachers.

*Sarah - (notes?)

A motion (Buttrey, Page) to adjourn the meeting was made and adopted at 10:00.

Minutes prepared by Tom O'Quinn.

