



Voyageurs Expeditionary School Board Meeting Agenda

November 13, 2023

4:30 pm

4:30 PM Call to Order by Jess

In attendance: Kathy, Gene, Chari, John, Ryan, Jess, Kari, Heather

John motion to Approve Meeting Agenda.

No Declaration of Conflict of Interest

4:32 Consent Agenda open for discussion.

Chari: the evaluation says we should discuss financials monthly.

Jess: draws our attention to the current meeting folder. So we can take a look.

Kari asks about evaluation, mentioning lunch fees.

Do we need to have a policy if we don't charge for lunches? Kathy says yes. School districts get compensatory revenue via the free and reduced lunch program.

John asks for an explanation of the endowment fund. Kathy says it is a set amount given to the school by the state once per year. John asks what fits in the 'administration' category of the budget. Kathy says that's Ryan's salary and board needs.

John asks about the school's CDs. How are they looking and what do we earn? Our CD's are through Riverwood Bank. We are at 4.9%.

- Minutes 10-9-2023 Board Meeting
- Minutes 10-30-2023 Special Board Meeting
- 10-31-23 Financials

4:41 PM No further questions. All in favor of approving the Consent Agenda.

4:42 PM Director's Report. Enrollment at 116 and adding new 6th graders.

Celebration of Learning, Haunted House fundraiser at Rail River Folk School. VES students made \$1400 and much fun was had. There were no major issues. There is already discussion of doing the haunted house next year. Rail River has the ability to do screen printing so there will probably be collaboration in the future. We had conferences last week. There was an e-week early in October. Some students made pizza, others toured colleges, fall colors did art, sanding, Ponemah Round House, Hocus Pocus. One VES class AI Education Field Hearing at Cedar Lakes in Cass Lake. Heather & Kwe brought Civics/Student Govt students. John asked about student comments about the meeting and Heather explained that our class is going to run a field hearing with the rest of VES. Kathy took Shay Ostlund to MAAP Stars officer training in Roseville last weekend.

Kathy explained: Students practiced speeches and bought students black suits to wear at formal events. They planned a legislative day in February. Met the person who started the first alternative school in Minnesota. Today someone came from the Bemidji Pioneer to interview Shay.



Ryan: “We also hired a dean of students.” David Hogetvedt? He used to work for Choice Therapy and did speech with our students. He started Oct 27 and has been getting to know students.

We will have Student Recognition Awards on Thursday.

Some students will attend Brigadoon at the Bemidji Community Theater tomorrow.

This week is Native American Heritage Spirit Week, so staff and students will be participating in that.

Middle School Creativity Festival will be the day before Thanksgiving Break at BSU. Kari says they do art, science, cartooning, etc. Students come from around the area-with roughly 500 students in total. Students will choose their activities in advance by grade level.

John talks about Wayne Jennings (MN Open School) in the 1970s. He was the model for schools in Minnesota.

Jess brings up how the board can monitor academic achievement on a monthly basis. Is there some sort of metric that the board could use? Jess says it doesn't need to be monthly, but Ryan and Kathy agree that we could track per grading block. Does attendance play into this metric?

No Public Comments:

5:07 PM Discussion Items

Credit Card Policy 7.2.4

Jess asked Kathy if there were changes based on the evaluation report. Kathy said nothing changed, but we need to clarify the policies for the authorizer.

Jess says it is pretty standard operations and Kathy mentioned that the Finance Committee has already viewed them. Do we need to read them out loud? Are there any necessary changes?

Chari would like to know if there is a time when a staff member used the card for personal use and it wouldn't be up for punishment.

Ryan implies that emergencies may be an exception. Kathy says the school credit card is connected to her social security number. John asked how often card is used. The general consensus is that it is almost daily. The credit card is with Capital One. Kathy, Kari, Kelly, and Ryan have credit card with their names on them. Any other credit cards are in Kathy's possession.

Jess: suggests that we may need to clarify the wording of the Credit Card Policy so that it reads more clearly about what happens if someone makes an unauthorized use of the credit card.

John says the board doesn't approve of expenditures. That is more on Kathy and Ryan.

Kathy says she and Ryan usually know in advance of anyone using the school credit card, so there are no surprises.

Chari says she wanted to make sure there are internal checks and balances with spending.

Purchasing Policy 7.2.3 is currently board approved, but it needs to be reviewed since the last time was 2013.



This policy was used when we purchased the vans. We were only able to secure one quote from a dealership that was willing to work with us. Ryan signs most of the purchasing orders, if his card is used then Kari will sign off on them. John asked where most of our supplies are purchased from, Kathy states Amazon is the most cost effective.

Osprey Wilds Renewal Evaluation: Jess says we are eligible for renewal. The report contains a list of action items. The report is 83 pages long. Most of the action items are minor and easy to fix, like board background checks. Some policies might need to be reviewed. We need to approve a policy for who gets health benefits. There is nothing in the bylaws that speak about dissolution. We need to add a line to the board election policy about elections being on a day when classes are in session. It appears Jess has a second packet about World's Best Work Force that others do not have.

The evaluation was put together by Ryan, Kathy, Kari, Kelly, Becky.

Kari asks what we will do about physical education and health education requirements that will be in effect for the next school year.

Jess: How does the board support the staff with making adjustments listed in the evaluation.

Kathy says she and Ryan need to get together and discuss.

Chari: How long do we have to respond to the authorizer?

Kathy and Kari say there is a timeline. After we respond it will be time for new goals.

Jess: We will need to clarify the differences between "recommended" and "required" in the evaluation.

Kathy: We used to do regular policy reviews as a board. Often 1-2 were reviewed per meeting. We also need to review bylaws. There should be a policy committee.

Jess: We probably need a policy review committee with Kathy, Ryan, and someone else. Perhaps a formal plan for a meeting in the next 1-2 months.

Ryan: It looks like the renewal evaluation comments are due in February.

Kari: The question will be whether we will be renewed for 3 or 5 years. So we can make some preliminary goals.

Kathy expects to get a 3 year renewal, which may be extended at the end of year 1.

John: What's the status on the evaluation?

Jess: We need to create a policy review committee to address.

Dropout Prevention Hotline

John has a plan for a dropout prevention hotline. Talking with Charles Grolla, they discussed need for a dropout prevention hotline. Clemson University is laying groundwork for this type of work. John went to Paul Bunyan and worked out a hotline and got 444-STAY as a phone number reserved. He's looking at sponsors to promote the hotline and help pay the \$1500 cost for a year. We would need 7 volunteers to man phones for one night a week from 5-10 PM. They would be trained in how to address a list of specific questions. John says if VES sponsors the line, it would fit the school mission of "service to others" and put the school on the map in terms of innovating a stay in school hotline.

Jess: We will need to take a look at implementation and operations. Would youth today actually make a phone call? They text more than they speak. Could it be an automated response system?



John: This could be a service project. If VES sponsors the program, anyone could volunteer.
Kari: We should consider giving kids a text option, too.

6:05 PM Board Committees

Financial Committee: Kari reviews recent meeting. Last week they reviewed the CD at Riverwood. The new rate is 5% up from .25%. We are on track for renewal. Auditor will be here next month to review findings. One fix is an outside accountant. Need to check with Trek about their policies. Ryan applied for grants for discipline, MTSS, David, and Kelly.

Scholarship Committee-Present Notes. Hasn't had a formal meeting. Jess got feedback from the accountant about some questions. She is also working with the NWMN Foundation on an endowment fund that could help with honorariums. The accountant's final audit will include information about a scholarship fund.

Director Evaluation Committee: Rubric and Eval Tool -Chair Summary. Jess says we should formalize board goals and use board meeting retreat decisions to discuss. Kari has a suggestion for a teacher retention goal, as well as attendance. Work on continuity is included with teacher retention goal. Kari will review.

6:15 PM Action Items

Kari motions to approve Approve Purchasing Policy 7.2.3, Gene seconds. No discussion. All approve. Motion carries.

John motions to approve Approve Credit Card Policy 7.2.4. Jess seconds, no discussion. All in favor. Motion carries.

6:17 Jess reminded the board of Board Training

"What Boards Need to Know about Charter School Audits," (Tuesday, November 14) from 4-5:30 PM. [Register online.](#)

6:17 Kari motions to Adjourn the meeting. John seconded. All in favor. Motion carries.

**Next Board Meeting
December 11, 2023 @ 4:30 PM**