**Present:** Beth McDonald, Russ Cumming, Carolyn Partridge, William Anton, Laurie Garland, Mickey Parker Jennings, Gail Wyman, Crystal Corriveau, Bridgette Blanchard, Howard Ires, Betsey Huffman, Emily Goyette, Mike Pelton. Abigail Pelton, Samantha Ruggles (Auditors RHR Smith & Co.), Ron Smith (Auditors RHR Smith & Co.), Joni Bertram (WCSU McKinney-Vento Liaison)

**Call to Order:** 6:02 PM

**Additions and Correction to Agenda:**

Bill Anton requested that the Audit Review and the McKinney-Vento update be moved up to just after the approval of Minutes and correspondence.

**Minutes and Correspondence:**

Carolyn moved to approve the minutes with corrections, Russ 2nd, motion passed.

**New Business:**

Audit Review: Ron Smith of RHR Smith & Co. addressed several questions Russ had raised in his review of the audit. Ron explained that all funds; Governmental funds, general funds, special revenue funds and capital project funds are all grouped together in the report. He also explained the best way to read the audit was from the back and move forward, which does seem odd but is the best way to understand the audit. Ron also addressed the accruedcompensation absences balance for employeesitem in the audit andconfirmed that it is a liability that is carried forward into the next fiscal year and if not expended is part of the surplus. Russ expressed his concern with allocating past surpluses to specific indebtedness without giving consideration to encumber some of the funds for targeted liabilities like the accruedcompensation absences balance for employees*.* Ron expressed that he felt the sum was not that significant and could be handled easily with future cash flows.

McKinney-Vento update: Joni Bertram, WCSU homeless liaison,

Bill A. introduced Joni as the assistant to the Special Education Director, and noted that she and her predecessor were instrumental in receiving a grant of $40,000 for services over the next few years. Joni and Bill sent out a package of documents on the McKinney-Vento legislation. It is also available at https://nche.ed.gov, the National Center for Homeless Education. Joni asked that the board adopt a policy at WES like the River Valley Unified School District policy C-13*,* concerning Homeless Students. The policy is included in the document package attached to the minutes.

**Bills and Pay Orders:**

Beth reviewed orders 35 to 40 with #39 void, Carolyn moved for approval, Russ 2nd, motion passed.

**Public Comments:** None

**Principal’s Report:** See attached report

**Superintendent’s Report:** See attached report

Bill raised the issue that Carolyn would not be available to attend the WCSU meeting on Wednesday evening and suggested that the board consider a motion to allow Russ to attend the meeting with voting rights. Carolyn offered a motion for Russ to be the second representative to the WCSU board meeting, Beth 2nd, motion passed.

**Old Business:**

Boiler cost update: Alliance Mechanical has submitted an estimate of $14,500 to replace the boiler at WES. The proposal is attached.

Residency Policy discussion: Bill pointed out that if a district has school choice they need to have a residency policy and an affidavit for the parents or guardians. A district like West River that is not offering school choice does not have a residency policy. Bill did feel it would be appropriate to adopt a residency policy as suggested by the VSBA (Vermont School Boards Association). Bill offered to provide both the residency policy and the C-13 homeless policy for the next board meeting in August. See attached.

Bill answered a question from a parent for more information on the affidavit issue. Bill stated that in his experience as both a principal and superintendent with several school districts offering school choice it is advantageous to have an affidavit that substantiates residency. He noted that certain documents, like a driver’s license, a lease or a homestead declaration to verify residency within the town are commonly used. He pointed out that there is both a policy and an affidavit that includes documentation of residency.

Budget Choices and Considerations: Laurie reviewed the statutes that pertain to school budget surplus: Cite 16 V.S.A. § 567. (See attached reference). Laurie pointed out that normally they are carried forward into the next school budget and could be used to reduce the next year’s tax rate. She noted there are exemptions such as using funds to reduce indebtedness or retire promissory notes or to meet specific funding requests (like the new boiler). Laurie referenced the funds could also be used for the food service facilities upgrade that Bill had sent as an additional item for discussion by the Board. She indicated that a motion to approve establishing either a reserve fund or to allocate surplus funds to a specific loan payment would need to be approved at a public meeting. Laurie noted several towns have established reserve funds.

A robust discussion of how to use the surplus followed. Carolyn expressed the need for verification, through the audit, of the amount of surplus funds before assigning specific payments to debt or establish reserve funds. She noted that many of these concerns may be deferred until the August board meeting. Laurie confirmed that the audit surplus for FY 2020 is at $41,000 and that the FY 2021 surplus is projected to be in the $40,000 range. Laurie did suggest that we have an operational reserve fund as other districts have established. Laurie has suggested that at our next meeting we have an article that states that if we have a surplus, we move some into an operational reserve fund or establish specific reserve funds for specific usages. Laurie noted that in the FY 2021-2022 budget there is an allocation of $21,000 for the Peoples loan that paid off the special education deficit. So if the Board uses some of the 2020 surplus to pay off the loan, that would create a surplus of the same amount in the 2022 budget.

There was a lengthy discussion concerning condition of the current bus. The bus is 5 years old and may need costly maintenance repairs. The discussion included purchasing a new bus or entering a lease agreement. Part of the consideration is the number of students that could occupy the bus being either elementary or high school students. Bridgett Blanchard added that she has been looking into the cost of various sized buses and felt there were additional options to consider. This subject will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 17th at 6 pm.

**Adjourned:** 7:12 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Russ Cumming, Clerk

Attachments:

Principal’s and Superintendent’s reports

McKinney-Vento document package

Food service for 2021-2022 estimates

Cite 16 V.S.A. § 567

Promissory note payoff estimates & WCSU FY 2022 summary

VSBA Admission of Residency