

**THETFORD TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Wednesday, April 24, 2019**  
**Thetford Elementary School**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

Shannon Darrah convened the meeting at 6:34 p.m. The following were present: Julie Acker, Charlie Buttrey, Shannon Darrah, Megan Snider, School Board; Colin McLaughlin, Interim TES Principal; Bruce Williams, OESU Assistant Superintendent

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** Donna Pluta

**AGENDA REVIEW:** Agenda approved with amendments.

**MINUTES REVIEW:** MOTION: (Acker/Buttrey) moved/seconded to approve the minutes of the February 26, March 21, and March 26, 2019 Board meetings (Snider abstained; unanimous approval).

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ORDERS:** MOTION: (Acker/Snider) moved/seconded to approve accounts payable order # 7025 and payroll warrant dated 4/9/19 (unanimous approval).

**PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE:** Acker received correspondence from Melissa Parker of Community Bank. Cynthia Odell has been working with Tracy Borst to update the signatories on the TES account. The bank indicated the Board must motion to make the changes. There is a personal information form for McLaughlin to complete. MOTION: (Acker/Buttrey) moved/seconded to remove the following individuals from Community Bank account ending in 2947 as they are no longer employed by the district: Jill Graff, Darla Sterett (LaRoche), Kevin Petrone (unanimous approval). MOTION: (Acker/Buttrey) moved/seconded to add the following individuals to Community Bank account ending in 2947 as they are currently authorized to sign for that account: Tracy Borst, Cynthia Odell, Colin McLaughlin (unanimous approval).

**TA REPORT: (Darrah)** – Much of the last meeting was spent in executive session. Some policies were passed. After enrollment for the upcoming school year was expected to be lower than projected, enrollment is now looking closer to original predictions of about 312 students. There is a precipitous drop off predicted for Fall 2020 partly due to a small entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade class. The new Head of School will live in Slafter Hall. There will be a lot of preparation for her arrival. The business office sent Darrah a contract agreement for custodial services. Buttrey and OESU's insurance company have reviewed the contract. MOTION: (Buttrey/Snider) moved/seconded to authorize Darrah to sign the contact whereby TA will provide custodial services for TES (unanimous approval).

**OESU REPORT:** Snider and Buttrey attended the last Board meeting and had no updates.

**PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Colin McLaughlin):** This week is bike week. PE teacher Phil Chapat borrowed 30 bikes that arrived in a bike trailer from a non-profit and many kids bring their own bikes from home. The new bike trail did suffer some winter damage, and parent volunteers will reshape it. Literacy week was earlier in April. Author Natalie Kinsley visited. A used book sale raised \$180 for the library. TES has been under-staffed for custodians. Subbing was not sustainable. McLaughlin tried to staff the position temporarily with TA staff but that didn't work out. McLaughlin hired an outside agency, Right Way Cleaning of Enfield, until June. The contractors are not at TES during school hours. They are having background checks. TES custodians Scott and Barb have been in contact with TA because of the new partnership. Williams stated OESU is working with the TA business office. McLaughlin received a letter of retirement from para-educator, Linda Gerlach, effective at the end of the school year. She has been at TES for 12 years. Her position has been posted.

**REVIEW OF NEW SCHOOL WEBSITE:** Michele Hastings presented TES's new school website, [thetfordschool.org](http://thetfordschool.org). It is not live yet. It will be a great marketing tool. The website is smart phone friendly. Hastings developed the website using the free version of Google Sites. There are some limitations with creativity, such as cropping photos and font options. Hastings has been taking most of the photos. She posts them on instagram and facebook, and these photos connect to the website. Past newsletters are archived. There are links to TA, Latham Library, Town of Thetford, and TTSD from a "community" page. Discussion followed about adding a video. The website going live is pending the possibility of OESU having a website that directs to the TES website. The Board agreed to go live as soon as possible. McLaughlin commented it will take time to update and maintain the website. Hastings would like to maintain it; she does this anyway as it interfaces well with her office work and social media updates. Acker suggested a stipend for Hastings. Hastings stated she works on the website around her daily duties, and although she has notes on the time it took to create the website, time for maintaining it is hard to estimate. A stipend is probably in the 19/20 budget already; this needs investigation. Hastings added that paying online for lunch accounts is being investigated.

**SCHOOL SECURITY SAFETY GRANT DISCUSSION:** Chief Evans approached McLaughlin about a federal grant opportunity. They had discussed two main ideas: cameras outside of the school and safety glass on the ground floor windows. Darrah stated the grant is available until the end of May. There may also be state grants. TA received money for safety glass and cameras. It is unclear who would be writing the grant.

**REVIEW OF TA-TES PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT FOR COMMENTS, UP FOR RENEWAL:** Buttrey stated the names of the schools need to be consistent throughout the document. Darrah noted Buttrey's additional edits and will share them with TA. Acker stated that specification of representation on the TA board has been changed. The current agreement specifies the TTSD representative has a seat on the resource committee. Acker thinks it is very important to have a TTSD member on that committee. Board members agreed. This is also important to represent Thetford taxpayers. The plan for joint board meetings was changed to "representatives" meeting, instead of the full board. This might be acceptable during budget season when

both boards are so busy, but the full boards should meet annually. McLaughlin reiterated that communication between TA and incoming TES students and families needs to be put into practice. This is stated in the partnership agreement but meeting that goal could be improved. Representatives from TA should come to TES for a TES parents information meeting. TES kids visit TA and there is an open house for all prospective students, but it is not exclusive to Thetford families. TA visits other sending schools. Even though TA is the designated school, Thetford students and families need to feel included. Acker raised the possibility of a community forum regarding the partnership agreement. The target date for signing is July 1. Discussion followed and settled on a communication to be sent to the listserv and Thetford parents describing the renewal process. Darrah reminded the Board that a partnership agreement is actually not required because TTSD has designated TA.

**PRINCIPAL SEARCH UPDATE:** Acker is the chair of the search committee and reported the committee has been meeting often due to an aggressive time line. The committee is diverse and robust. A remarkable pool of thirteen applicants applied on SchoolSpring. All applications were reviewed and six were invited to interview with the committee. One candidate accepted another position, resulting in five interviews that concluded last night. Three candidates have moved forward for reference checks. By Friday the candidates will be announced. Up to three finalists will be interviewed at TES on May 1. Students and staff will help host the candidates, who will be interviewed by Superintendent Knisley and will have time to meet with faculty and staff after school. A community forum will follow. Darrah will be away May 1 but may be available by phone. Discussion followed regarding logistics. May 2 the Board will meet with Knisley. Perhaps Darrah will join by phone. The superintendent should be making the recommendation to the Board. The Board does not have to accept the recommendation. Contract negotiation with the Board chair often follows. Williams will investigate the budgeted salary.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**SICK BANK REQUEST AND NEW BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:** MacPhee was the previous representative. Buttrey volunteered. There is a current sick bank request which will be forwarded to Buttrey. Under the contract a teacher may request to withdraw from the sick bank once his/her sick time is used. MOTION: (Acker/Snider) moved/seconded to nominate Buttrey to be the TTSD sick bank representative (unanimous approval).

**INTERVIEW CANDIDATE FOR SCHOOL BOARD:** Donna Pluta is interested in filling the Board vacancy until the next election. Pluta stated she has lived in Thetford since 1984. She has volunteered in many capacities at TES and TA when her children attended Thetford schools. She was on the TASP Board but never the TTSD Board, because she worked at night which conflicted with meetings. She now has grandchildren at TES and is volunteering again. She is retired now and has time. Pluta is Snider's mother. Acker asked if Snider and Pluta would be able to get along if they were disagreed on an issue. They agreed they do have a personal relationship but feel confident they would be able to keep that separate from Board duties. MOTION: (Buttrey/Acker) moved/seconded to appoint Donna Pluta to serve on the Board until the next election (unanimous approval). Pluta will go to Town Hall to be sworn in by Borst.

**ADJOURNMENT: MOTION:** (Buttrey/Snider) moved/seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m. (unanimous approval).

**FUTURE MEETINGS:**

04/30/19	OESU Meeting	6:00 p.m.
05/14/19	Thetford Town School District Meeting	6:30 p.m.
05/28/19	Thetford Town School District Meeting	6:30 p.m.

Minutes Prepared By:  
Amy Bosco, Minutes Clerk

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,  
Julie Acker, Board Clerk