

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Held on April 13th, 2024.

The Annual Meeting was held in the gymnasium of Rivendell Academy in Orford, NH. Voters of Orford, NH, Fairlee, West Fairlee and Vershire, VT met for the purpose of holding the Annual District Meeting of the Rivendell Interstate School district pursuant to Article IV.G of the New Hampshire-Vermont Interstate School Compact. Approximately 400 voters attended the Annual Meeting.

David Hooke, Moderator of the Rivendell Interstate School District, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Hooke asked that those present stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Hooke read the Warrant, reviewed the meeting and voting procedures, Robert's Rules, and stated that the polls were opened at 9:30 a.m. and would remain open for one-half hour following the completion of business under the other articles. Mr. Hooke thanked all for their attendance and explained the voter card and the purpose of them in the meeting and had members of the press identify themselves.

Article 1: to elect by ballot four (4) members of Rivendell Interstate school district board as follows:

- 1 member from Fairlee for three-year term
- 1 member from Orford for three-year term
- 1 member of Vershire for three-year term
- 1 member of West Fairlee for three-year term

Results are attached at the end of these minutes

Article 2: to elect by ballot A moderator, clerk, treasurer and one at -large school board member each for one-year terms and an auditor for a three-year term.

Results are attached at the end of these minutes

Article 3: to hear reports from the school board and others relating to the construction/renovation, educational and financial issues facing the district. Kathy Hooke, Board chair, made a presentation, comments followed.

Article 4: Shall the voters of the district authorize the school board to apply \$500,000 from the unassigned fund balance (UFB) for the purpose of offsetting tax rates the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Discussion followed, concerning the total amount in the UFB (just under \$1,500,000) and various possible expenses (Westshire repairs) and the need for caution. John Burns of Orford moved to amend the amount to half of the total balance, or \$741,143. Tom Thompson seconded the amendment. Motion to amend failed on a voice vote. The original motion passed on a voice vote.

Article 5: Shall the voters of the district raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,714,750 for the operating budget for the district for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Moved by Clyde Blake of Orford seconded by Doug Tiff. Maurice Austin then spoke on the budget and requested an Australian ballot. Rules of Australian ballot processing and why we cannot go directly to an Australian ballot were explained by David Hooke. Debra Kingsbury spoke with favor on the decision to move the meeting to Saturday. Others spoke for and against the budget. When the question was called, at least 7 voters requested a paper ballot. 383 total votes 143 yes 240 No. **Article 5** budget failed.

Article 6: Shall the voters of the district raise an appropriate sum of \$50,000 to be placed in repair and maintenance contingency reserve. Moved by Clyde Blake of Fairlee seconded by Shannon Bradley. Ed Boquillen of Fairlee moved to postpone indefinitely. John Jenkins seconded. The motion to postpone indefinitely passed on a voice vote.

Article 7: Shall the voters of the district raise an appropriate sum of \$60,000 to be placed and repair and maintenance contingency reserve for the purpose of replacing the elevator at the Academy. Jane Green of Orford stated that the work is required and should just have been done, did not need to come to this meeting. Dan Storm of Orford moved to amend the motion, adding the phrase “to encumber the funds of two years after which time if not utilized for the purpose will by default be credited to the next fiscal year budget” and mentioned the generator which is still not installed after two years. Seconded by Michelle Massa. Motion to amend passed on a voice vote. Peter Dooley asked how much money is available if this motion passes. Nancy Murphy replied \$120,000. Barrett Williams clarified that the plan is to replace the current elevator with an elevator lift, but also have a stair chair so that there is redundancy. There were various comments on the acute need for some sort of elevator, and on the best system, noting the repeated problems with the current elevator, the possible difficulty of having a stair chair on that often-crowded stair, and Vershire’s satisfaction with the elevator lift at their Town Center. **Article 7** passed as amended.

Article 8: Shall the voters of the district raise and appropriate the sum of \$40,000 to be placed in repairs and maintenance contingency reserve for the purpose of ongoing safety and security measures district wide. Moved by Clyde Blake, seconded by Charlie Smith. Dan Storm of Orford moved to amend the motion by adding the phrase “to encumber the funds of two years after which time if not utilized for the purpose will by default be credited to the next fiscal year budget.” Seconded by Shannon Bradley. Motion to amend passed on a voice vote. Superintendent Williams stated that these funds would be used for upgraded security cameras that could be monitored by Hanover Dispatch, as well as window shades to enhance security if there was a need to shelter-in-place. Tom Thomson asked when will the generator be installed as this money was set aside in last year’s budget and the generators have still not been installed throughout our district. Barrett Williams said that the generators should be installed during April break. The article passed as amended, on a voice vote.

Article 9: Shall the voters of the district raise an appropriate sum of \$20,000 to be placed in the technology contingency reserve for the purpose of firewall replacement and upgrade to the paging system in the Academy. Moved by Clyde Blake seconded by Shannon Bradley. **Article 9** was passed on a voice vote.

Article 10: Shall the district’s annual meeting be held on the 3rd Saturday in March beginning March 2025 and each year thereafter. Moved by Clyde Blake seconded by Sophia Kosakowski from Fairlee. Charles Smith moved to amend the date in April. Moderator David Hooke ruled that this amendment was not germane, as outside of the scope of the article as warned. **Article 10** passed on a voice vote.

Article 11: Shall the voters of the district authorize the school board to apply for and expend without further action by the voters of the district all money from any governmental or private source which becomes available during the 2024-2025 fiscal year for their intended use. Moved by Peter Dooley seconded by Sally Tomlinson. Passed on a voice vote.

Article 12 to transact any other business which may lawfully properly come before the meeting Sandra Thompson addresses the board on the multiage classrooms stating that they had been tried in the past, could be beneficial, but is a lot of work. Meeting was adjourned at 1:36 PM.

Polls for election of officers were closed at 2:07 PM. Votes were then tallied.

Fairlee Board member (3 year):

Clement Powers- 60

Write-in candidates -7

Blank-1

Spoiled-2

Orford Board member (3 year):

Vanessa DeSimone-51

Charles Newton-94

Write -in candidates - 2

Blank-4

Spoiled-4

Vershire Board member(3year):

James (Nate) Thames-46

Write-in candidates -1

Blank -2

Spoiled-4

West Fairlee Board member (3year):

Monica Austin -6

Rebekah Cadwell-24

Blank-2

Spoiled -2

For At-Large Board member,1year

Mark avery-231

Write -in candidates -3

Blank-59

Spoiled-2

For Moderator, 1 year term

David Hooke-253

Write-in candidates-9

Blank-57

Spoiled-2

For district clerk, 1 year term

Write-in candidates -8

Blank-310

Treasure, 1 year term

Jon sands-237

Write-in candidates 2

Blank-69

Spoiled-3

Auditor, 1 year term

Write-in candidates-15

Blank-277

Spoiled-23

Monica Austin, Clerk

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