

Approved Minutes
TOWN OF STRATTON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

Present

Board:

Thomas Montemagni (Chair)
Allison Young (Vice Chair)
Lorraine Weeks-Newell (Secretary)

Administration:

Bill Anton (Superintendent)

Members of the Public:

Jessica Marullo
Candie Bernard
Betsy LaHue
Robert LaHue
Jessica Baron

Ashleigh Southworth
Andrea Fornier
Abbe Haber
Cricket Mikheev
Roy Neiderhoffer
Peter Barus (Recorder)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM.

Documents provided:

Weighting Study Committee (Appendix 1)
School Board Snapshot - Revenues (Appendix 2)
Stratton Transportation Form (Appendix 3)
Board Member Question & Answer from Dir Operations (Appendix 4)

Consider modifications to Agenda

1. Approve the minutes from both 7/7 and 7/21
2. State rep Kelly Pajala
3. Hear from any new residents
4. Report on the WCSU Meeting
5. New school board email schoolboard@townofstrattonvt.com
6. Discuss the creation of two more positions to make a 5 person board
7. Weighting Study Committee creation
8. Discuss Designation options going forward
9. Policy amendments
 - a. Tuition, transportation, updated affidavit and busing form on website.
10. Executive session for Superintendent evaluation

State Representative Kelly Pajala

Rep. Pajala introduced herself and discussed the coming school year, noting she is Town Clerk in Londonderry; and discussed real estate, student population, incoming families; that she is representing two non-operating school districts.

Rep. Pajala noted that for Stratton and Winhall there will be large Tax Rate changes, ultimately a good thing, but with short-term challenges, and discussed meetings with Randy Lowe (Superintendent, VRSU), Mr. Anton, the Joint Fiscal Office, Education Finance, AoE and Legislative Counsel to work out a way to mitigate the challenges; the possibility of counting unanticipated students in the current year count; the two year rolling average and Tax Rate swings; the possibility that budget differences could be covered by CARES Act money if the circumstances of rising population can be tied to the pandemic, which is not known but is being discussed; other more long-term solutions being discussed such as whether the Brigham Decision affects this; what would have to change in state law for this to happen; a suggestion that (in non operating districts only) when the residential Tax Rate reaches the non-residential rate, the two rates would go up in tandem to cover the same tax burden; changing the ratio so every resident would pay the same rate; that residents who don't file homestead but pay the normal rate might be relieved of this burden. Rep. Pajala noted that the issue of counting the students this year will come up in August, and January is obviously too late to be helpful; that ADMs and student count are being looked into across the board, statewide; that with so many remote and homeschooling, counts are "wonky."

Approved Minutes
TOWN OF STRATTON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

There was discussion; that statewide issues affect choice districts especially; that many people are looking at the same problem.

Ms. Young noted that questions may be emailed to the Board, and Rep. Pajala invited communications to kellypajala@gmail.com or (802) 770 4987 about any issue.

Approve School Board minutes for July 7, 2020 and work sessions held on July 9, 2020 and July 22, 2020.

It was noted that the minutes for July 7 and 21 had not yet been approved.

Ms. Weeks-Newell moved to approve the minutes for July 7, July 9 and July 21, 2020. Second by Mr. Montemagni. By roll call vote, **all in favor**.

The minutes for July 22, 2020 were corrected to change “tuition cap” to read “student cap.”

Ms. Weeks-Newell moved to approve the minutes for July 22, 2020 as corrected. Second by Mr. Montemagni. By roll call vote, **all in favor**.

There was discussion of a student count at 58, many inquiries about residency, no applications to date.

Communication from Treasurer

Ms. Peterson discussed a possible 12 additional students, noting a budget for 8 phantom students. Ms. Weeks-Newell asked if any had bought property. Ms. Peterson noted that many own second homes, some are renting. There was discussion of various invoices for tuition.

a. Approve Order

Ms. Weeks-Newell moved to approve the Pay Orders for July 2020 as presented. Second by Ms. Young. By roll call vote, **all in favor**.

b. Any other items

Address any correspondence brought before the Board.

One email to Mr. Montemagni was noted, in response to a request for a meeting with Carson Thurber.

Hear from any new residents

Roy Neiderhoffer introduced himself and two children, new first and second grade students planning to attend the Mountain or Maple schools; and noted property owned locally for 20 years, that they had considered a permanent move for a few years and made the decision six months ago; discussed the Residency Affidavit; and noted a third child who would be eligible to attend school next year.

There were no other new residents attending.

Report on the WCSU Meeting

Ms. Weeks-Newell reported attending with Ms. Young (voting member); it was a reorganization meeting; there was discussion of the Weighting Study with Ms. Sibilia, who had reported that the issue had been hard to move before and is now almost impossible. The Superintendent’s Budget and the Special Education Budget both showed a surplus; there were updates from each school district board; and there will be a new Zoom account for the SU, for use of the Board as a member district.

New school board email: schoolboard@townofstrattonvt.com

Ms. Bernard had set up the email address, schoolboard@townofstrattonvt.com; it was noted that emails to that address will go to all Board members. There was consensus approval. Ms. Bernard will have this displayed on the Town website. It was noted that microphones were on order for meetings.

Discuss the creation of two more positions to make a 5 person board

There was discussion of creating of two additional positions, to make a total of five seats on the Board; that it would be necessary to Warn a Special Town Meeting 30 to 40 days in advance; that the new seats would be for one-year terms, extended through March; that a candidate must be a legal voter in the district, not employed or

Approved Minutes
TOWN OF STRATTON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

affiliated with the Board or any district in the WCSU. Ms. Bernard noted that as Assistant Treasurer she could not be a candidate. Mr. Montemagni asked Mr. Anton about the number of seats. Mr. Anton noted that five is a good number, distributes the work for the many challenges to come; and that the Board must make sure all five show up regularly; that Marlboro had done this and liked it, that the pros outweigh the cons.

Ms. Weeks-Newell moved to increase the number of School Directors elected by the Stratton School District from the number of three to the number of five; that if so voted, the time period for the two additional School Directors shall be a one-year term, the first of which shall expire at the Annual School District Meeting of 2022. Second by Mr. Montemagni. By roll call vote, **all in favor**.

Ms. Young invited candidates to run for the new seats, noting that the Warning will be forthcoming.

Mr. Anton reminded the meeting that the Board must Warn the vote 30 to 40 days in advance, posting in the Paper of Record within five days, and should spread the word; that the appointments will be made from the floor.

Weighting Study Committee creation

Ms. Young displayed the document, "*Weighting Study Committee*" on screen (see Appendix 1). There was discussion of goals, attorney information, data, a stipend of \$150.

Ms. Weeks-Newell moved to create a Committee of three residents to review the Weighting Study with the particular Goals listed in the Weighting Study Committee document, including a stipend of \$150 payable on completion of the Goals. Second by Mr. Montemagni. By roll call vote **all in favor**

Discuss Designation options going forward

The Board discussed its annual duty to review all options; whether the cap for SMS can be extended for next school year; holding discussions with BBA as a possible designated high school; and about being in communication with heads of schools. Mr. Montemagni reported on the history of relations with schools, and the possibility of meeting to discuss a way to designate that would enhance, not minimize, School Choice with SMS and BBA; and noted that he had approached them last year and had been rebuffed, that the present effort is a return to that conversation.

Policy amendments

Tuition, transportation, updated affidavit and busing form on website.

Ms. Young noted that policies had been updated with some language changes, but no substantive changes; that the Affidavit was updated and posted online; that the Residency Policy was not yet posted, pending vetting of language by School Board Attorney Lynn; that the bus form, to be filled out every year, was updated. There was discussion; that it was revised but not materially changed.

Ms. Young discussed paying BRSU and Long Trail, awaiting specifics; and had communicated with Lori O'Hern (Dover Elementary School) about transportation costs, and received historical information about purchases, grants, driver salaries, maintenance, insurance, costs at about \$55,000 annually for two buses running routes to East and West dover, Newfane, BAMS, BUHS, and noted that this is comparable to the current transportation budget; there was discussion. Mr. Anton noted that there is no social distance protocol on the buses as of date. Ms. Young noted that parents are advised to communicate directly with schools about their bus services needs. Ms. Marullo offered to research and share information; there was discussion. Mr. Barus suggested inquiring with the current and former Bus Supervisors at Marlboro. Ms. Young noted that Mr. Medina (WCSU Dir. Operations) would also be an appropriate resource.

Ms. Lahue asked about updating the residency affidavit when new cars are registered, etc. Ms. Young recommended using the new school board email address as it reaches all members.

Address any other business that may legally come before the Board.

Approved Minutes
TOWN OF STRATTON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

Executive session for Superintendent evaluation

Kindness of Ms. Young:

The Board entered Executive Session at 7:19PM by unanimous consent, and returned at 7:31PM.
No action taken.

Adjournment

The meeting was Adjourned at 7:31PM by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, August 7, 2020

Approved Minutes
TOWN OF STRATTON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

Appendix 1

Weighting Study Committee:

The Stratton School Board is creating a committee of no more than 3 residents to complete the below listed steps.
The

committee positions will be appointed on a first-come-first-serve basis. The initial report will be discussed at the September 2020 School Board Meeting. A stipend of \$150 per person will be paid upon completion of the following

steps:

Committee Goals:

- Gain a better understanding of the Weighting Study, its origins (how Stratton's data was collected) and how it's to be applied.
- Provide Weighting Study impact projections on the Town of Stratton.
- Keep on top of Weighting Study on a state level.
- Create a linked group of similar school districts.

How this is to be accomplished:

1. Create a reference folder containing the summary as provided by the state. (Please keep receipts of all material purchases for reimbursement purposes.)
2. Complete a review of the email links provided to us by Pietro Lynn and provide a summary on findings.
 - a. How were Stratton's numbers obtained?
 - b. Are there any missing considerations or questionable data?
 - c. Is there anyway to find out the annual gross income of the Homestead Taxpayers in Stratton?

Here are the links provided by Atty Lynn's office:

[https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/WorkGroups/House%20Education/Education%20Finance/W~Tammy%20Kolbe%20~Summary%20of%20Findings%20from%20Study%20of%20Pupil%20Weights%20in%20Vermont%](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/WorkGroups/House%20Education/Education%20Finance/W~Tammy%20Kolbe%20~Summary%20of%20Findings%20from%20Study%20of%20Pupil%20Weights%20in%20Vermont%20)

[27s%20Education%20Funding%20Formula~1-8-2020.pdf](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/WorkGroups/House%20Education/Education%20Finance/W~Tammy%20Kolbe%20~Summary%20of%20Findings%20from%20Study%20of%20Pupil%20Weights%20in%20Vermont%20) p. 24

<https://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Legislative-Reports/edu-legislative-report-pupil-weighting-factors-2019.pdf> p. 74

<https://ljfo.vermont.gov/assets/Subjects/Equalized-Pupil-Weighting/31f695302d/FY20AnalysisProposedEqualizedPupilWeights-v2.pdf> p. 4

3. Provide information on how or when the Weighting Study will be applied. A report of Weighting Study movement at the state should be provided at every meeting.
4. Provide a projection of the potential impacts of this study on the town of Stratton.
5. Research all Vermont School Districts to locate those similar to Stratton. Some similar characteristics may be choice, non-operating, size, taxes, exclusive independent school, etc. Once these towns are located, we will have a committee meeting and make a plan for contact. No contact should be initiated at this time.

Approved Minutes
TOWN OF STRATTON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

Below is a list of 20 districts impacted negatively by the study. These districts were identified at the April School Board Meeting due to the tax rate increase they would see with the implementation of the Weighting Study.

Winhall S. Burlington Milton Rutland Town

Addison Fletcher Mt. Mansfield Harwood

Sandgate Georgia Fairfax Washington Central

Champlain Valley South Hero Vernon Barnard

Stamford Thetford Essex-Westford Ira

Approved Minutes
TOWN OF STRATTON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

Appendix 2

School Board Snapshot

August 5, 2020

REVENUES							
Account	Description	Budget	July	August	YTD	Balance	% Uncollected
41510	EARNED INTEREST	15.00	1.28	-	1.28	13.72	
41921	REC AREA RENTAL REVENUE	120,000.00	10,000.00	-	10,000.00	110,000.00	
42790	NATIONAL FOREST GRANT	10,000.00	-	-	-	10,000.00	
42150	STATE TRANSP GRANT	11,000.00	-	-	-	11,000.00	
43110	EDUCATION SPENDING GRANT	1,063,747.00	-	-	-	1,063,747.00	
44791	PILOT REVENUE FROM TOWN	37,000.00	-	-	-	37,000.00	
	SUBTOTAL	1,241,762.00	10,001.28	-	10,001.28	1,231,760.72	99%
	TOTAL	1,241,762.00	10,001.28	-	10,001.28	1,231,760.72	99%

EXPENDITURES							
Account	Description	Budget	July	August	YTD	Balance	% Unspent
PREK	5561	PREK TUITION TO PUB VT LEAS	10,335.00	-	-	-	10,335.00
	5593	SU ASSESSMENT - ECSE SERVICES	10,429.00	-	2,607.25	2,607.25	7,821.75
		SUBTOTAL	20,764.00	-	2,607.25	2,607.25	18,156.75
ELEMENTARY	5561	TUITION TO PUB VT LEAS	59,990.00	-	-	-	59,990.00
	5562	TUITION TO PRIV VT LEAS	205,672.00	-	8,000.00	8,000.00	197,672.00
	5591	TRANSPORTATION EXPENSE	10,000.00	-	-	-	10,000.00
	SUBTOTAL	275,662.00	-	8,000.00	8,000.00	267,662.00	97%
SECONDARY	5561	TUITION TO PUB VT LEAS	48,822.00	-	-	-	48,822.00
	5562	TUITION TO PRIV VT LEAS	742,558.00	-	-	-	742,558.00
	5564	TUITION TO NONVT PRIV LEAS	49,233.00	-	16,233.00	16,233.00	33,000.00
	5591	TRANSPORTATION EXPENSE	15,600.00	-	-	-	15,600.00
	SUBTOTAL	856,213.00	-	16,233.00	16,233.00	839,980.00	98%
LOCATION WIDE	5191	SCHOOL BOARD SALARIES	10,000.00	-	-	-	10,000.00
	5220	FICA	765.00	-	-	-	765.00
	5344	ATTORNEY'S FEES	3,000.00	-	-	-	3,000.00
	5581	MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT	100.00	-	-	-	100.00
	5593	SU ASSESSMENTS - ADMINISTRATIVE	33,079.00	-	8,269.75	8,269.75	24,809.25
	5342	AUDITING SERVICES	10,500.00	-	-	-	10,500.00
	5810	DUES AND FEES	700.00	-	-	-	700.00
	5593	SU ASSESSMENTS- SPECIAL ED SECONDARY	30,979.00	-	7,744.75	7,744.75	23,234.25
	SUBTOTAL	89,123.00	-	16,014.50	16,014.50	73,108.50	82%
	TOTAL	1,241,762.00	-	42,854.75	42,854.75	1,198,907.25	97%

Current Student Count: 58

Approved Minutes
TOWN OF STRATTON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

Appendix 3

TOWN OF STRATTON – SCHOOL DISTRICT

STRATTON TRANSPORTATION FORM

Dear Parents/Guardians,

If your student will be requiring bus services for this coming year, please fill out the following information. This form can be mailed or emailed to the addresses above. Kindly return this form by August 10.

<input type="text"/> Student's Name	<input type="text"/> School Attending/Grade	<input type="text"/> Bus Y/N
<input type="text"/> Student's Name	<input type="text"/> School Attending/Grade	<input type="text"/> Bus Y/N
<input type="text"/> Student's Name	<input type="text"/> School Attending/Grade	<input type="text"/> Bus Y/N
<input type="text"/> Student's Name	<input type="text"/> School Attending/Grade	<input type="text"/> Bus Y/N
<input type="text"/> Parent/Guardian Name	<input type="text"/> Date	

The Stratton Transportation policy can be found at www.townofstrattonvt.com.

Stratton School Board
9 West Jamaica Rd.
Stratton, VT 05360
strattontax@townofstrattonvt.com
(802) 896-6184

Approved Minutes
TOWN OF STRATTON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

Appendix 4

Board member Question:

Can you all tell me what air exchange rate is in all the rooms we will have Students and Staff in?

Answer from Director of Operations:

We do not have a solid answer to that question at the moment. We have jumped on the HVAC grant through Efficiency Vermont. Although this grant has not yet been approved at the state level, we have started pre work by engaging an EVT approved engineer and HVAC contractor to tour the buildings and review our systems. One of my goals is to get a baseline and better understanding of the indoor air quality (IAQ) and air changes per hour (ACH) in our building classrooms.

I know there is a simple calculator to determine ACH but in a commercial building it is harder to calculate. Would need to locate which rooms are serviced by which units, if they heat air or not, and other factors. I am hopeful our contractors can help us further explore and approve our ventilation at all schools. We are also exploring grant funding to procure air purification units to assist in some spaces. Once the grant gets finalized I can navigate further with Alexandra Rowe from Efficiency Vermont on what funding we will be eligible for. In the meantime I am continuing to work with administrators and contractors to make our buildings as safe as possible for return.

We are following the Vermont Department of Health Guidance (attached) specific to Ventilation on pages 17 and 18.

With regard to ventilation and HVAC, follow these recommendations:

- o Prior to re-occupancy, ensure school ventilation system is properly cleaned and meets all required operating standards per manufacturer.
- o Prior to re-occupancy, operate HVAC systems in occupied mode for a minimum period of one week while assuring the outside air dampers are open.
- o Encourage staff to provide additional outside time and open windows frequently when air conditioning is not being used. Do not open windows and doors if they pose a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, noise or triggering asthma symptoms).
- o Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor Air.
- o The following modifications to building HVAC system operation should be considered, as recommended by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE):
Increase outdoor air ventilation (disable demand-controlled ventilation and open outdoor air dampers to 100% as indoor and outdoor conditions permit).

Improve central air and other HVAC filtration to MERV-13 (ASHRAE 2017b) or the highest level achievable. Change filters every 3-4 months. Keep HVAC systems running longer hours (24/7 if possible, but a minimum of two hours prior to occupancy and through the duration of occupancy). Keep bathroom exhaust fans operating 24/7 on school days.

Ensure staff understand the importance of ventilation fans – they must run all day.

Add portable air cleaners to classrooms. Use HEPA or high-MERV filters with due consideration to the clean air delivery rate (AHAM 2015). Maintain temperature and humidity as applicable to the infectious aerosol of concern. Typically temperature should be maintained between 68-78°F and humidity between 40-60%.

- Take appropriate precautions when servicing HVAC Systems and replacing filters (wear

Approved Minutes
TOWN OF STRATTON SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 6:00 PM

appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), bag and dispose of filters in regular trash, immediately wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer).

• Where feasible, the school nurse's office/isolation room should have:

o Dedicated HVAC system

o Dedicated restroom (ideal)

o Exhaust directly outdoors

O Maintain negative pressure to adjoining spaces

o Nurse office suite design should follow health care facilities design practices as described in standards such as ASHRAE Standard 170 and other applicable guidelines and design information.