

Orwell Village School Board  
Regular Meeting  
October 20, 2009

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

Members Present: Glen Cousineau, Judy Fyles, John Tester

Administration: Penny Lienhardt, Sue DeCarolis

Others: Mark Young, Rusty Young, Sally deLancey, Peter Ochs

John Tester called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

Glen moved the Board to approve the minutes of September 15, 2009, seconded by Judy. Glen changed the Public Comment, 4<sup>th</sup> sentence to read "the intent is to reduce the cost." The motion passed.

There was no public comment.

Correspondence – Two letters were received. One letter was from Karen Abbott stating that she does not plan to start an after-school program this year.

The second letter was from Mr. Helmer with regard to the baseball field and having the access chained off. Sue indicated that they will install two new posts and a guy wire. She will have Richard contact Mr. Helmer to make sure the position of the posts is correct. Discussion followed on putting up a do not enter sign and blocking two areas. John will meet with Richard tomorrow.

Sue informed the Board that there is a transportation issue regarding the model of the first student picked up is the first student delivered home. This year one of the buses wasn't quite doing that. One of the buses in the afternoon is taking a student directly home, and some students are going by their homes. She spoke with the bus drivers and would like to explore the idea that we look at this from year to year. Some years it could be an issue. We don't have that right now. John and Judy were okay with that.

Another issue the bus drivers addressed was a very difficult turn-around; the driveway is too narrow, not level. In the winter the bus has gotten stuck six or seven times. Sue called John, and he looked at it. John felt that it wasn't feasible; we shouldn't continue to do it. Sue said that the options are to have the parents bring the student to the Russell pick-up or go to the Ruby farm. Sue asked for direction on this. Discussion followed. Judy moved the Board to have the bus stop at the Ruby farm, seconded by Glen. The motion failed 2 to 1. Glen moved the Board to have the bus stop at the Russell farm, seconded by John and passed 2 to 1.

Sue informed the Board that she has received the assessment results in Science. The test was given to grades 4 and 8 in the spring of 2008-09. This year's fifth graders did a superior job – 62 percent met the standard, 12 percent exceeded the standard, no students scored a one. The test was administered to all students in the class, including Title 1 and SPED students (with approved accommodations). For the current ninth graders, eighth graders last year, the results were very different with only 12

percent meeting the standard. Sue stated that she was not prepared to give the whys, saying that we really need to ask ourselves some questions on why we are getting that performance. As students get older, are they really committed to it.

Sue looked at how other schools performed in the District; 16 percent met the standard. She plans to look at every item and analyze it. Some kids' performance was really surprising, expected to be higher.

The District will put together a taskforce to look at the Science program. Sue plans to do a survey at the school, what are the questions we need to look into. She will come back to the Board with more detailed information. She plans on looking at schools that had a strong performance and making some visits.

Penny stated that when you have smaller numbers of students taking the tests you have to be careful. A group really needs to be larger than 40. There is a writing component, part of the issue is how they may feel about writing it down. Sue commented that we need to look at our part in this. She will be back to the Board with the item analysis done and a plan of action.

Sue informed the Board of a parent evening scheduled for November 17<sup>th</sup>. She talked to a student who is experiencing some potential cyber bullying. This presentation will be about internet safety and safety online. It is being held on a School Board night. In addition, Ron would like to have a budget meeting that night. Judy suggested holding the budget meeting at 6:00 p.m., holding off any decision until Glen is there. Glen moved the Board to reschedule the regular meeting at 8:00 p.m. on November 17<sup>th</sup>, preceded by a budget meeting to start at 6:00 p.m. to end by 8:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Judy and passed.

Sue went over the number of kids for basketball. There was some discussion of combining teams with Benson. There is a full size gym there. Judy suggested combining the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade teams to go to Benson. She would be willing to drive them to Benson.

Sue talked with John Rayhill. He will be in touch with us within the week to tell us when they are going to be here next week.

Rusty Young inquired about incorporating the plowing of the Congregational Church in the bid. Jim Booska will do it at no extra charge.

Sue informed the Board that Doran Roofing will dismantle the standing seam roof and find the leak in Doreen Sweeney-Dodge's room. This work is under warrantee.

Sue told the Board about Ashley Wolf, an author, who visited the school today. She started a story with the kids and created a storyboard with them. Sue will have the pictures framed.

Sue commented that there was good attendance at Open House.

Judy moved the Board to approve the following contracts:

- Christopher Mongeur, Boys Basketball Coach (grades 5-6) \$500
- Jill Thomas, Girls Basketball Coach (grades 6-8) \$500
- Ann Ellis, Lead Teacher \$1,000
- Laurel Cecil, Lead Teacher \$1,000
- Ann Larkin, Drama Advisor \$425 (each performance)
- Patricia Williams, Student Council \$500
- Patricia Dubois, Geo Bee \$425
- Barbara Young, Yearbook \$425

The motion was seconded by Glen and passed.

Information was mailed to the Board regarding the school bus bids. John stated that the Federal government offered a grant to pay up to \$40,000. There is a 1998 bus that was due to be replaced next year, so we will replace it this year. Glen would have liked to see a spec sheet before the bid went out, engine size, transmission, It should have been discussed at a Board meeting before it went out. John asked the Board if they wanted to table the bid until next meeting. Judy moved the Board to table the bus bids for further information, seconded by Glen and passed.

One person applied for the Board vacancy position. Judy moved the Board to appoint Peter W. Ochs to the vacant Board position until the next Town Meeting, seconded by Glen and passed. Glen stated that it needs to be notarized by the Town Clerk. She will have the paperwork for Peter to sign. He needs to bring a copy to the next meeting.

Under old business, Judy addressed the issue of drinking on the ball field. What are we going to do as a Board to address the excessive drinking at the softball tournament. What is her responsibility if she is there. As a School Board member and not addressing the issue, is there a liability for her. She doesn't want to wait until softball season, need to address it sooner. The big issue is liability for the school and herself. Discussion followed. Penny stated that it is a State regulation that there is no alcohol on school property. She will ask Ron to get a legal opinion. John will have this put on the next agenda under old business.

Glen asked about putting the School Board minutes in the Wildcat. Sue stated that she is supposed to be notified by a School Board member if it's okay. John will read them over and let her know.

Judy received an email from Kathy Tester regarding a sister-to-sister program for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> girls. Sue will send out the information to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls.

Glen questioned the bill for the port-a-potty for service through November 8<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully it has been picked up, would like the bill prorated. Sue will do that tomorrow.

Glen moved the Board to approve bills for October in the amount of \$236,836.19, seconded by Judy and passed.

John moved the Board into executive session for a student issue at 8:52 p.m., seconded by Glen and passed.

Out of executive session at 9:14 p.m., no action taken.

Judy moved the Board to adjourn at 9:14 p.m., seconded by Glen and passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Flood