

Tinmouth School Board  
Official Minutes  
December 08, 2008

Present were Helen Mango, Chair; Board Members Anne Robbins and Lisa Patry. Also present were Susan McKelvie, Principal; Gail Fallar, Town Treasurer; Tom Gallagher, Interim Superintendent; Louis Milazzo, Business Manager; Jonathan Czar, Secretary.

Helen called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**MINUTES**

Helen moved to approve the minutes for November 10th, 2008 as amended. Anne seconded, all approved. Motion carried.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

***Business Manager's Report:***

Louis provided a written report (attached page 3). Regarding the Betcha transportation contract, Louis needed approval from the board to move forward with either extending the contract or putting it out to bid. The board felt it was important to make sure there would be no penalties if the contract was broken due to budget cuts. After a brief discussion, Helen moved to extend the contract for Betcha for 3 years contingent on the penalty free issue. The contract would be based on the CPI increase annually. Lisa seconded, all approved. Motion carried.

***Superintendent's Report:***

Tom provided a written report (attached page 4). As relates to Gail's question from the previous meeting, the SU is currently drafting a policy regarding the attendance of children based on anticipated residency in the town. Tom also addressed the bill-back problem from Mill River Union as being due to the increased needs of special education as students get older.

***Principal's Report:***

Susan provided a written report (attached page 5).

**BILLS AND ORDERS**

Gail presented the following warrants for the board to sign.

<b><i>AP Warrants</i></b>		
<b>Warrant #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>8</b>	11/24/08	\$29,286.67
<b>9</b>	12/08/08	\$11,885.83
<b><i>Payroll Warrants</i></b>		
<b>Warrant #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>9</b>	11/17/08	\$10,803.21
<b>10</b>	12/01/08	\$10,567.46

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **FY10 Budget Development**

Louis presented the board with the third draft of the FY10 school budget. The board asked for clarification regarding various line items. The board discussed possible tuition rates for TES and asked Louis to provide some comparative data.

## **NEXT MEETING**

Both Helen and Louis could not make the next regularly scheduled meeting. Alternate dates will be sent out via email by Helen later in the week.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Helen moved to go into executive session at 8:35 p.m. for purposes of personnel contract discussion. Anne seconded, all approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jonathan Czar

## **CONTINUATION MINUTES**

Motion to come out of executive session at 9:20 p.m. made by Helen, seconded by Lisa. Motion carried.

No action taken.

Motion to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. made by Helen, seconded by Anne. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Mango

**December 8, 2008**

**To: Tinmouth Board**  
**From: Louis Milazzo, Business Manager**  
**Re: Business Manager Report**

**1. FY08 PE Assessment Adjustment**

I have completed my research on the FY08 PE Assessment and put together a reconciliation of the time and expense for each district. This reconciliation has been shown to the administrators at each of the districts and they all have approved it. The net effect is an overcharge to Tinmouth in the amount of \$7654.52. The Assessments for FY09 will be adjusted to reflect this correction.

**2. Betcha Transportation**

Tom and I had a brief conversation with Don Kirby from Betcha Transit a couple weeks ago. Rather than going out to bid for a new contract we discussed extending the Betcha contract for another 3 years. The contract would increase each year based on the CPI index. If we put our contract out to bid it is unknown as to what new bids will come in at, and we run the risk of increasing our rates and adjusting the wording for a fuel surcharge which our contracts do not currently have. I will need board approval to move forward with either extending the contract or putting it out to bid.

**3. Ira student Transportation**

Tom and I had a conversation with Don Kirby from Betcha Transit, during which we discussed the 2 Ira students who are riding the bus to Mill River. He doesn't believe that these students are riding on a Tinmouth bus. I believe we need to get more clarification before any charges are incurred.

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**Finance**

Budget preparation has consumed most of CO time this past month. There were several questions regarding the budget last time.

Special Education VABIR (Vermont Association of Business and Rehabilitation) This new category is for vocational rehabilitation services for special needs students. Mill Rive HS provided this last year and the cost was included in excess costs. They no longer provide the service so it has been contracted out and separated as a line item. The excess cost had been adjusted accordingly.

100-200-10-62000 support staff has been removed (\$2,000)

The IDEA funds are being used to pay an instructional aide, Jen Calvey. It is broken down as follows:

Salary	7,239
Health insurance	2,970
Social security	449
Medicare	105
Municipal retirement	290
Worker's comp.	64
Unemployment	94

We have two contributing factors creating the increase in Speech and Language Services. Three autistic children in the EEE require more intense speech and language services.

A second factor may be in the method we use to identify students who need language services.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to plan with the number of "late" bills and bill backs we have been receiving. I do not have an immediate solution, but I do know that Middletown Springs and Ira have the same concerns. Perhaps this can be an item for discussion.

**Policy**

A number of policies need discussion and or revision. These include:

- Driver Education Policy
- Residency Policy
- Public Participation at Board Meetings
- Substitute Teachers
- Curriculum Coordinating Council

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

Because the Tinmouth Board members have already seen the scope of the curriculum audit, I think it wise not to repeat it here. Please refer to the SU update.

### Principal's Report/Tinmouth Town Report

According to historical records, the Tinmouth School District conducted its 215<sup>th</sup> year (approximately) of educating local students in 2007-2008. While much has changed since the late 1700s, our mission remains the same: to provide the children of our rural community with the finest education possible to prepare them for successful lives.

Unlike those early days when local folks decided everything from who taught to what was taught, today most of those decisions are controlled by the state and federal government through regulations, state standards, and "Grade Expectations." And, unlike the "good old days" when the three "Rs" were paramount, today teachers are accountable for teaching high quality content in reading, writing, arithmetic, AND science, social studies/geography, health/nutrition, social skills, technology, art, music, physical education, etc. Here at Tinmouth Elementary School, our teachers are constantly participating in professional training to improve their teaching skills and content knowledge to best support our students in a rapidly changing and complicated world with high expectations for every child.

While our school may be small, even by Vermont standards, the education our students receive is outstanding. As a testament to our superb teaching staff, standardized test scores in 2007-2008, used by the state and federal government to determine the quality of a school, are above both the state and district averages in reading, writing, and math. Additionally, through the generosity of Tinmouth community members, our children also benefit from a broad range of extra-curricular experiences, from Spanish language instruction to cross-country skiing at no cost to taxpayers. Further, the hard work of our Parents' Club and a volunteer grant writer provide enrichment opportunities from artists-in-residence to field trips. And finally, federal grants support instrumental music instruction for a growing number of talented students and a thriving Homework Club/After-School Program, which supports parents who need child care after school hours. Despite our small size, our students are immersed daily in rich and diverse learning experiences to rival any school of any size.

An excellent example of such a learning experience is our annual Living History project, which brings together school and community members to recreate an historical era for in-depth study across all grade levels, from preK through 6. This past year, while studying the time of the French and Indian War, students researched life during this era from many points of view over many weeks. Finally, taking on the identities (and clothing!) of actual people from the time, the entire school and many community members traveled to Fort #4 in Charleston, New Hampshire to "live history" for two days. Book learning alone could not possibly replicate the depth and breadth of understanding gained during this experience, which is largely grant-funded.

Today's world requires us to prepare our children for careers that we can't even imagine. In addition, research shows that today's student will change jobs 5 to 8 times during his or her lifetime. Gone are the days when an employee would stay with the

same company for 30 years and retire with a nice benefit package. Our challenge as educators is to prepare students to learn how to learn; to learn how to adapt and acquire new skills independently. Academic instruction goes beyond memorizing dates, names, and facts. Rather, elementary-age students are now taught how to think, solve complex problems, apply strategies in new situations, and to propose alternate solutions. Students are taught how to reflect on their own thinking processes and to express their thinking clearly in writing. They are taught to use technology tools for learning and expressing their learning that we couldn't have imagined when we were children. They learn to work both independently and in teams with other learners: real life skills that are necessary for success in the working world. In short, our expertly trained and passionate staff is aware of the seriousness of our mission as educators. Although the world is a different place than it was 215 years ago, our purpose remains the same. Every child must be prepared to take his or her place as an educated, productive citizen. We believe that here at our small school, with the support of a caring community, we are fulfilling that mission on a daily basis.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McKelvie, Principal