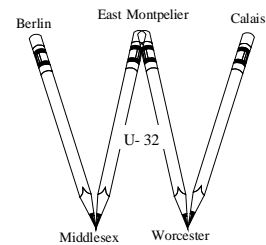


Washington Central Supervisory Union

1130 Gallison Hill Road
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone (802) 229-0553
Fax (802) 229-2761

William Kimball
Superintendent



WCSU exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.

Washington Central Unified Union School District Board

Meeting Agenda
6.5.19 at 6:30 PM

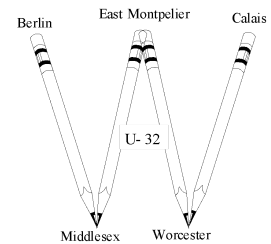
Berlin Elementary School Learning Center, 372 Paine Turnpike North, Berlin

- 1.0 Call to Order
 - 1.1 Reception of Guests
 - 1.2 Agenda Revisions & Board Comments
 - 1.3 Public Comments & Correspondence
- 2.0 Consent Agenda
 - 2.1 Approve Minutes of 5.22.19 and 5.31.19 – pg.
 - 2.2 Approve Minutes of 2.19.19 & 4.8.19 District Organizational Meetings – pg.
 - 2.3 Approve Board Orders
- 3.0 Discussion Agenda
 - 3.1 WCUUSD Board Retreat
 - 3.1.1 Goals
 - 3.1.2 Who Should Attend
 - 3.1.3 Establish Planning Group
 - 3.2 Required Policies – pg.
 - 3.3 Meeting Protocols
 - 3.3.1 Committee Makeup
 - 3.4 General Fund & Capital Fund
 - 3.5 Budget & Election Communication Plan
 - 3.6 Amendments to Articles Communication Plan
 - 3.7 Personal, Property & Employee Insurance
 - 3.8 VSBA Dues
 - 3.9 Litigation Update
- 4.0 Action Agenda
 - 4.1 Approve First Reading of Required Policies
 - 4.2 Authorize the Superintendent to Accept All State & Federal Grants
 - 4.3 Accept Insurance Bid – pg.
 - 4.4 Adopt Meal Prices for 2019-2020 School Year – pg.
 - 4.5 Approve Adding Student Representative(s) to WCUUSD Board
 - 4.6 Approve Telephone Systems Bid – pg.
- 5.0 Future Agenda Items
- 6.0 Summary of Meeting – Next Steps for Board Members
- 7.0 Adjournment

Washington Central Supervisory Union

1130 Gallison Hill Road
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone (802) 229-0553
Fax (802) 229-2761

William Kimball
Superintendent



WCSU exists to nurture and inspire in all students the passion, creativity and power to contribute to their local and global communities.

Washington Central Unified Union School District Board **Unapproved Meeting Minutes**

5.22.19
6 PM – 8:30 PM

U-32 Room 128/131, 930 Gallison Hill Rd, Montpelier

unapproved

Board Members Present: George Gross, Chris McVeigh, Lindy Johnson, Flor Diaz Smith, Scott Thompson, Dorothy Naylor, Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, Marylynne Strachan, Jaiel Pulskamp

Administrators Present: Bill Kimball, Superintendent; Jen Miller-Arsenault, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; Kelly Bushey, Director of Special Services; Lori Bibeau, Business Administrator; Aaron Boynton, Berlin Principal; Cat Fair, Calais Principal; Matt Young, Doty Principal; Alicia Lyford, East Montpelier Principal; Aimee Toth, Rumney Principal; Steven Dellinger-Pate, U-32 Principal; Jody Emerson, U-32 Assistant Principal

Others Present: Matthew DeGroot (Worcester), Kyle Landis-Marinello (Middlesex), Rick Kehne (Calais), Michael Duane (East Montpelier), Jerome Lipani (ORCA), David Delcore (Times Argus), Ellen Knoedler (East Montpelier)

1.0 Call to Order: Superintendent Kimball called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Board members and community members introduced themselves.

1.1 Reception of Guests: Superintendent Kimball thanked everyone for coming together on the board.

1.2 Agenda Revisions & Board Comments: Flor Diaz Smith shared that the East Montpelier School Board had met, and had prepared a statement of thanks to WCUUSD board members.

Scott Thompson stated that he intends to make a suggestion to the board at this meeting, to defer the action agenda.

1.3 Public Comments & Correspondence

2.0 Board Organization

2.1 Elect a Chairperson: **Dorothy Naylor nominated Scott Thompson. Seconded by Marylynne Strachan. Lindy Johnson nominated Jonas Eno-Van Fleet.** He asked what that entails;

Superintendent Kimball described the role of the chairperson, typically. **Jaiel Pulskamp seconded. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet nominated Flor Diaz Smith. Seconded by Lindy Johnson.** No more nominations were heard.

Scott Thompson shared his perspective that we are in this as equal partners. Chris McVeigh stated that he encourages a free flow of information between the chair and the other board members.

Flor Diaz Smith shared that she feels the boards have worked so hard together, she has been dreaming of this moment when the board comes together. She feels that the board is a learning community. She spoke about the need for collaborative leadership and engaging the community.

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet stated that if the board is interested in a board chair that is a “blank slate,” then he is; however, it may be that this board needs a chair who has experience in this first year. Chris McVeigh suggested that, if a vote results in a tie of two candidates then the bottom candidate(s) would not be included in a second vote. It was agreed by board members. A vote was called:

Votes: Jonas: 2

Scott: 5

Flor: 2

Scott Thompson was elected chair.

Scott Thompson asked whether any of the guests at the meeting had anything that they would like to contribute. Rick Kehne stated that he would like to participate but he wanted to ask whether the board will allow discussion throughout. Scott Thompson stated that it will.

Matthew DeGroot offered an update on the superintendent search. He explained the process to date which has resulted in two finalists. The Executive Committee will interview the two finalists tomorrow and bring one forward to the WCSU Supervisory Union Board next week. He noted that the Secretary of Education has signed off on both candidates. He invited board members to attend the meeting next week.

2.2 Elect a Vice-Chair: **Chris McVeigh nominated Flor Diaz Smith. Seconded by Lindy Johnson.** No more nominations were heard. This motion carried unanimously.

2.3 Elect a Clerk: Chris McVeigh nominated Jonas Eno-Van Fleet. Seconded by Flor Diaz Smith. No other nominations were heard. **This motion carried unanimously.**

2.4 Establish the Time and Day of Regular Monthly Meetings: Superintendent Kimball suggested that it helps to meet on the first and third week of the month. He suggests Wednesday or Tuesday - not Monday, since vacations and holidays often interfere with Monday.

Jaiel Pulskamp and Marylynne Strachan indicated that 6:30 start time would work. Flor Diaz Smith noted that a later start makes for a longer day for administrators.

Chris McVeigh moved to establish time and day of regular meetings: first and third Wednesday at 6:30. Seconded by Jonas Eno-Van Fleet, this motion carried unanimously.

2.5 Establish the Newspaper of Record and Locations for Official Posting: Superintendent Kimball suggested Times Argus. He suggested that two locations are named, but that others are included less formally (for example, schools.) **Flor Diaz Smith moved to establish newspaper of record, Times Argus, and two locations for official posting: U-32 and WCUUSD central office. Seconded by Lindy Johnson.** Discussion: Lindy Johnson suggested including all of the schools and

the town offices, as well as the website; however not included as official posting places. **This motion carried unanimously.**

3.0 Discussion Agenda

3.1 WCUUSD Budget

3.1.1 Overall Budget

3.1.2 WCUUSD Capital Fund

3.1.3 Warning: The board discussed and took action below.

3.1.4 Communication Plan & Annual Report

Scott Thompson explained why he had suggested deferring action. He indicated that as a brand new board, we are presented with a budget. He noted that even though he has been part of creating this budget, this new board needs to know it thoroughly and “own it,” and he feels that it is unfair to new members to ask them to make a decision that they are not prepared for.

Flor Diaz Smith indicated that she is surprised at this suggestion, after all of the work that has been done together; every board supports its piece of this budget. She feels that it is up to us as board members to study this, and later, when we have established the culture to work together, to discuss and develop a budget for the coming year. It is important to support our administrators.

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked what would be the result if we do not approve this budget today. Superintendent Kimball explained that we need to post a warning for a vote on the budget, at least 30 days in advance. Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked, how would Scott Thompson recommend we proceed if the action is deferred and a budget is not passed before July 1st. Scott Thompson explained his understanding that the board would be able to borrow funds under the statutory authorization, up to 87% of the current year budget. He stated his preference that the new board have the time to carefully consider this budget. Chris McVeigh expressed his concern around the timeline between now and the end of the school year, to allow for time to carefully consider a budget together, with need for input from administrators. He does not feel that funding, or having money to operate, is an obstacle to not voting a budget today; what he feels is the obstacle is having the time with administrative support to consider the budget.

Superintendent Kimball stated that in August the Executive Committee had discussed and made the recommendation that the budget be developed as it has, by each individual town and then combined together. That is the proposed action tonight.

Rick Kehne stated that, as a community member, and as a board member, he believes it is a mistake for this board as a new entity to “rubber stamp” a budget and to not do its due diligence and carefully consider the budget. Rick Kehne indicated that there is a court case around the issue that, for example, he as a Calais tax payer, is forced to take on the debt of other towns, for example, East Montpelier. He noted that we are in a tough place, and our students are in a tough place, but it is by the doing of the legislation.

Kyle Landis-Marinello stated that each local budget has been passed. The court case will have two more decisions before July 1st, one being about the “forced debt” issue, and secondly, whether everything should be on hold until the Vermont Supreme Court makes a decision. He noted that the budget has two components: the amount we are agreeing to spend, and how you collect the money. That is also being voted with this budget. He noted that according to the documents provided tonight, Calais and Worcester’s taxes will

increase significantly and East Montpelier's will decrease significantly. He suggested that the board wait until August to have a vote.

Chris McVeigh asked for clarification from Lori Bibeau, specifically around bidding to borrow money to start the school year. She noted that a bank takes at least two weeks to respond to a bid, and then the bank's board needs to approve.

Flor Diaz Smith stated that the process of creating a budget together collaboratively will take time. This is a unique circumstance and we are needing to take a leap of faith. She indicated that she is concerned with the morale of our administrators.

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet asked - if the process of meshing the seven budgets together was not sufficient, then why are we addressing this now? Some discussion followed around some of the ongoing issues around the Act 46 process.

Dorothy Naylor indicated that she has been very concerned about the debt issue. She feels that by voting on this budget, it feels that we are accepting of the debt issue. She can't vote for the budget for this reason, and she can't ask her community members to vote for it. Matthew DeGroot stated that the conversation has trended away from being fiscally responsible to opposition to the merge, which he believes is more the "sticking point." He asked to hear from administrators, about the impact of not approving this budget tonight.

Rick Kehne stated that at this point, there is great debate on this issue in court. He stated that Calais is very much against it; this will create a rift between towns. If we waited until we had some clarity from the courts, then we are in a position to move forward. He stated that we are in an uncomfortable situation but it is the responsibility of the legislators. He feels that if the board approves this budget and backs us into a corner, then it is the responsibility of this board and it will create some problems between towns that are working hard to come together.

Superintendent Kimball shared that he has never seen the administrators so unraveled, over the prospect of having no funding mechanism in place on July first.

Chris McVeigh asked some logistical questions about the bidding process for accessing loans, considering, for instance, if a budget is not approved by voters. He asked about the idea of having a "proposed budget." Some discussion followed around the understanding of the 87% of current budget provision, if a budget is not approved by July 1st.

Matt Young (Doty Principal) stated that 87% of the current budget would cripple Doty School and feels the decision to defer approving a budget is risky for the kids.

Kelly Bushey (Director of Student Services) expressed concerns about the summer program which begins on July 9th. She indicated that not passing a budget is short sighted, as the summer program is required, and she believes if the program is not up and running as planned then the supervisory union will be faced with litigation around providing FAPE. As a Berlin resident, she is ok with her taxes going up as it is for the kids.

Kyle Landis-Marinello reiterated that the courts will be making a decision within the next month and he believes that will have an impact on the long haul.

Jaiel Pulskamp stated that she would appreciate time to look through the budget document carefully as she believes it is a matter of financial inequity. Jonas Enos-Van Fleet asked Dorothy Naylor and Jaiel Pulskamp whether they require closure on the tax issue before they are willing to vote to approve this budget.

Steven Dellinger-Pate (Principal, U-32) stated that in his experience, this is the least understood budget he has ever been asked to develop. He needs to know what funding is going to be available; the more uncertainty that exists in the system, the harder it is to plan forward. He stated that if the board does not come to consensus then it ties the hands of the administrators.

Scott Thompson moved to defer the vote on the budget and the warning. Seconded by Dorothy Naylor. Three in favor. This vote failed.

George Gross asked, would it make sense to reaffirm what was stated at the organizational meeting, that no decisions tonight shall be interpreted as consenting in any way to a forced merger.

Dorothy Naylor moved to approve the WCUUSD budget in the amount of \$33,854,769, and that this shall not be interpreted as consenting in any way to a forced merger. Seconded by Chris McVeigh. Discussion: Scott Thompson reviewed this budget, which, as he explained, is a “mash up” of the seven budgets from each of the schools and the central office.

Jonas Enos-Van Fleet indicated that he would like to spend some time tonight talking through this budget before taking action. Some board members indicated that staying late tonight is not tenable.

Michael Duane asked to remove funding from this budget for the Vermont School Board Association. Scott Thompson indicated that he would like to have this discussion item on a future agenda.

Kyle Landis-Marinello asked for clarification around tax rates. Lori Bibeau explained. Marylyne Strachan asked for clarification about the required timeline.

Jonas Enos-Van Fleet asked members of the Transition Board - was this budget approved for this board's consideration? Board members indicated that it had been, by unanimous vote. Lindy Johnson stated that her vote implied that she as a Transition Board member had considered this budget and was approving it. Other board members did not agree that this had been implied in their action on local boards. Jonas Enos-Van Fleet indicated that it seems this board is in a bind, because the board itself is here against the will of a great number of people. He asked what mitigation of the tax issue would be necessary to support this action. Scott Thompson stated that this has been discussed to a great degree and has not been mitigated. Bill Kimball stated that he believes the state board of education is the only institute that can levy tax rates.

Jonas Enos-Van Fleet stated that this issue of debt seems to be the sticking point and yet it does not seem like an issue that will be resolved in the near future.

A vote was called. This motion carried unanimously. Dorothy Naylor stated that she believes some people believe that her opposition to the budget has been around a merger. Her problem is not about merging school districts; it is about debt.

Rick Kehne stated that, as a resident of Calais, that it is more than simply debt; it is not a “one issue” debate.

3.2 Amendments to the Articles of Agreement

3.2.1 Review Amendments

3.2.2 Warning

3.2.3 Communication Plan

3.3 Meeting Protocols: Superintendent Kimball suggested some meeting protocols. He suggested that board meetings rotate to the school buildings in the unified district, and that the school be responsible to have student and staff presentation. He suggested that the board enact policies about how they will operate - for example, what are the public participation practices going to be? How to get an item on the agenda? Superintendent Kimball and Scott Thompson will work on a list for the board to consider at future meetings. Chris McVeigh asked about student representation: how will this be determined? Steven Dellinger-Pate explained how student representation is determined at U-32. He recommends that this board take part in determining student representation.

3.4 Governance Processes & Committees: Superintendent Kimball suggests that the board wait to determine committees and committee membership until they have gotten their work as a whole board underway.

3.5 Plan for Policy Review & Adoption: Superintendent Kimball stated that this board will need to approve certain policies before July 1st; this will be on a future agenda.

4.0 Action Agenda

4.1 Approve the WCUUSD Budget: (please see action taken in 3.1)

4.2 Recommend Articles of Agreement: **Chris McVeigh moved to warn the amendments to the Articles of Agreement, so that voters have a chance to weigh in on them, whether to approve or not. Seconded by Marylynn Strachan.** Discussion: Chris McVeigh explained that the Amendments Committee had worked on these amendments to articles that voters are allowed to vote to amend. Discussion continued and action was taken below in 4.3 *

4.3 Approve Warning for Budget & Articles of Agreement: **Chris McVeigh moved to approve the warning and article as presented. Seconded by Lindy Johnson.** Discussion: Dorothy Naylor pointed out a typo in the warning - that it indicates Articles 1 through 5, but there is only 1 article.

Kyle Landis-Marinello stated that he believes there should be verbiage in the warning that indicates the sentiment that a vote in favor of this budget does not indicate consent in any way to a forced merger. He also stated that if the board is seeking transparency then it should share information about tax impact to the towns. Some discussion followed around

adding language to the warning. Superintendent Kimball stated that the language in the article is not allowed to change. Some discussion followed around adding language to other parts in the warning.

Superintendent Kimball reminded the board of the timeline and indicated that changing the language in the warning will push back the timeline.

Chris McVeigh suggested that the verbiage around “not indicating consent” be added in a paragraph immediately following the article. He suggested including tax impact information as well.

The warning is published but on the voting ballot, only the article is stated.

Flor Diaz Smith suggested that the board will discuss at a later date, how to roll out information to the public.

Rick Kehne suggested that the information around tax impact should be very clearly explained.

Chris McVeigh moved to amend the motion to include the language, after the article, on the warning: voting for this budget shall not be interpreted as consenting in any way to a forced merger. Seconded by Jonas Eno-Van Fleet. This amendment carried unanimously.

A vote was called on the motion. This motion carried unanimously. Chris McVeigh explained that he feels it is important to provide an opportunity for the voters to weigh in on these amendments.

Flor Diaz Smith stated that, after listening to discussion tonight, she thinks it might be wise to not act quickly on amendments, to let the default articles come into play and to address these amendments at a later time, to allow for thorough discussion.

Rick Kehne indicated that the original article and the amendment should be shared with the community.

Ellen Leonard stated that she feels these amendments need thoughtful explanation.

Chris McVeigh moved to amend the motion to remove Articles 16 (4) and 17 (5). Seconded by Dorothy Naylor. A vote was called on the amendment. This motion carried.

Jaeil Pulskamp stated that she has not had time to review these amendments, and that she is not comfortable taking action tonight.

Discussion followed around a timeline to work on amendments to articles.

***A vote was called on the amended warning. In favor: 5; Opposed: 4. This motion carried.**

4.4 Approve WCUUSD Annual Report:

Flor Diaz Smith moved to approve the WCUUSD Annual Report as presented.

Seconded by Lindy Johnson. Discussion: Jonas Eno-Ven Fleet stated that he would like the board to resolve that we are going to do everything possible to mitigate the debt issue. He indicated that he feels it is important to communicate this to the communities very clearly so that the voters of towns that are facing a tax increase know that the board is

aware and intends to do what is possible to mitigate this. **This motion carried unanimously.**

Jonas Eno-Van Fleet pointed out that the annual report lists Rumney and Doty as towns; this will be corrected.

4.5 Approve Minutes of District Organizational Meetings (will do this at next meeting).

5.0 Future Agenda Items

- capital fund
- VSBA
- retreat
- discussion of internal organization
- policy
- how to run meetings
- committee discussion
- update on litigation

June 5, June 12, then discuss June 19 (which has some conflicts/ graduations), June 26

Kyle Landis-Marinello indicated that the feeling of this meeting is much different from the local school meetings, where communication is more open and reciprocal, and that he will likely not attend future meetings. He stated that voters are being asked to come together to vote on the exact same budgets they have already voted on, except that the tax impact will be different for each town.

Rick Kehne indicated that he believes when people from the community come to meetings they should be provided time to engage in discussion with the board. He believes that this board will need to engage in very careful outreach to the communities.

6.0 Adjournment: **Dorothy Naylor moved to adjourn at 9:06 p.m. Seconded by Jaeil Pulskamp, this motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary

UNAPPROVED MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
WASHINGTON CENTRAL UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
February 19, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Stephen Looke, East Montpelier, opened the meeting at **6:04 p.m.**

He explained that he will facilitate the meeting until a moderator is elected.

He read the following:

The legal voters of the Washington Central Unified Union School District (the “District”), comprising the voters of the Towns of Berlin, Calais, East Montpelier, Middlesex and Worcester, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Union 32 High School in East Montpelier, VT on Tuesday, February 19th, 2019, in the Auditorium at 6:00 p.m. to conduct the following business:

He explained the voting procedures.

- i. To elect a temporary presiding officer and clerk of the District from among the qualified voters of the district.*

Allen Gilbert, Worcester, asked how many people we will be electing, and how long will they serve?

He asked for clarification about the clerk and “temporary presiding officer” in item “i” and the moderator and clerk in item “iii.”

Stephen Looke explained that Article i is to elect a temporary presiding officer, who will take the meeting through Article iii.

Kyle Landis Marinello, Middlesex, nominated Susan Clark of Middlesex to be temporary presiding officer and clerk for the meeting.

John Brabant, Calais, seconded the nomination.

Matthew DeGroot, Worcester, nominated Paul Hanlon, Worcester, to be temporary presiding officer. Seconded by Flor Diaz Smith, East Montpelier.

No other nominations were heard. Stephen Looke noted that the nominations are closed.

Michael Duane, East Montpelier, asked what Superintendent Kimball and Paul Hanlon were talking about before the meeting. He would like this information to be made public before a vote is taken.

Stephen Looke suggested that the two nominees make a brief statement.

Susan Clark stated that she would be happy to take the role if that is the will of the group.

Mr. Hanlon stated that he had been asked if he were willing and able to moderate the meeting, and that before the meeting he, Superintendent Kimball, and legal counsel had met to discuss Roberts Rules.

Matthew DeGroot called for a division of vote.

Stephen Looke asked for voters to stand to designate their votes for either Susan Clark or Paul Hanlon.

Susan Clark was voted to serve as moderator for the meeting.

Allen Gilbert stated, as point of order, that officers are required to take an oath.

Susan Clark swore aloud and signed an oath.

She reviewed some points of order for the meeting.

Susan Clark asked Lisa Stoudt to take the notes for the meeting, to act as clerk.

- ii. *To adopt Robert's or other rules of order, which shall govern the parliamentary procedures of the organizational meeting and all subsequent annual and special meetings of the District.*

Barbara McAndrew, Calais, moved to adopt Robert's Rules of Order, as stated in Article ii. Seconded by John Brabant. This motion carried.

- iii. *To elect the following officers of the District from among the qualified voters of the district, which officers shall assume office upon election and serve for a term of one year or until their successors are elected and qualified:*

- *Moderator*
- *Clerk*
- *Treasurer*

Michael Duane moved to table and to adjourn the meeting to event certain, until such time as the judicial process (which could include any appeals) is resolved.

Craig Line of Calais seconded this motion.

Discussion: Some discussion followed about whether a motion to adjourn is debatable. Matthew DeGroot noted that a motion to adjourn to a time certain is, in fact, debatable.

Flor Diaz Smith asked for clarification: what would be the consequence of tabling the meeting?

Some in the room looked to legal counsel to answer this question. It was pointed out that, this being a meeting of the voters, only members of the towns are permitted to address the body.

Susan Clark asked whether there is objection to a statement by the attorney representing the school.

John Brabant asked: who asked the attorney to attend/ speak, and what is his role?

Carl Etnier, East Montpelier, moved to allow the attorney for the schools to speak.

Seconded by Allison Mindel, Worcester. A vote was taken. It was unclear whether two thirds voted in favor.

Discussion followed. John Brabant stated his concern that, procedurally, we are not aware of why the attorney is present tonight, and what he perceives his role to be.

Charles Merriman, Middlesex resident, stated that he would like to have the attorney's input.

Flor Diaz Smith and Carl Etnier stated that they believe having more information, e.g., having the input of legal counsel, will be helpful in making a decision.

A vote was called, and Justices of Peace counted the votes. **The vote was 178 to 50 in favor of allowing the lawyer to speak.** Colin McNeil of McNeil, Leddy & Sheahan introduced himself and explained that he had spoken with Superintendent Kimball and he was attending the meeting to help facilitate parliamentary rules and to provide clarification, if sought, about some of the legal aspects.

He spoke to the question of what the consequences might be, regarding the lawsuit that is pending, and whether this meeting tonight continues or is adjourned. He explained that as it stands, the statute provided direction and until the court has ruled otherwise, he believes that the direction to the boards is to continue to follow Act 46 as statute.

Charles Merriman stated regarding the pending legal action re: Act 46, that he expects a decision very soon. The pending case is a very important one, seems to be taken seriously and given priority, and he believes that within three weeks, a decision will be made. If we wait until final adjudication, it may take us until after the July 1 deadline. He suggested that the motion to adjourn be upheld until the date that the decision is handed down regarding the preliminary injunction.

Motion was made to amend the motion *to adjourn until the Act 46 judicial process reaches a decision on the preliminary injunction or stay* by Charles Merriman.

Marylynn Strachan, Middlesex resident, seconded this motion.

Discussion:

Alice Agney, East Montpelier resident, asked, what is the law now?

Julio Thompson, East Montpelier resident asked, does the Supreme Court have the authority to issue a stay of the injunction?

Michael Duane stated: if the schools get a preliminary injunction, the state can appeal this to the Vermont Supreme Court. He stated that the law now is very unclear. He stated that last night,

Orleans Central Supervisory Union, in a similar situation, held a meeting and voted to adjourn the agenda until March 15th.

Rubin Bennett, East Montpelier, stated that asking the citizens of five towns to come out and have a meeting to do nothing and then to do that again in the future, is not “no harm, no foul.” He stated that the law is Act 46; that is the law of the land right now. We, as elected bodies, are compelled to uphold the law. Right now, unless and until something changes, the law is Act 46.

Kyle Landis Marinello stated that the list that we’re supposed to vote on that was created for tonight was not created by the people in the five towns. He stated that representation on the transitional board does not allow for “one person, one vote;” that is not a lawful representation. He believes it is important for the courts to settle this issue, before we move forward. He stated that Rumney School will be hiring a new principal for the fall. He would like to see his local school board take part in the hiring of a new principal; he spoke about the value of local control through the lens of Act 46.

Richard Kehne, Calais, stated that he will continue to come back for meeting after meeting if needed; it is his obligation as a citizen. He stated that this process is splitting our communities, because we are losing the piece of democracy that we have trusted. If it means standing up to the legislature, then we need to do this. Our voice has been loud and has been falling on deaf ears for four years.

Matthew DeGroot stated that, at this moment, Act 46 is the law of the land. The judge has an opportunity to vote and has not yet. He noted that, given the timeline that is laid out before us, if we delay even for a month, we are running the risk of not having a budget in place by July 1st. He stated that this is a very real consequence. He noted that there is a very good chance of the law going forward as stated.

John Brabant moved to call the question on the amendment.

This motion was seconded. A vote was called. The motion carried by voice vote; the debate closed.

A vote was called on the amendment. A voice vote was unclear, so a standing vote was called.

Motion carried in favor of amending the motion by a vote of 171-50.

Matthew DeGroot moved to amend the motion to state: *date certain being four business days following the decision on the preliminary injunction, or stay.*

This motion for an amendment was seconded by Chris McVeigh of Middlesex.

Craig Line asked about the thirty day requirement to warn a meeting.

Kyle Landis Marinello stated it might be cleaner to wait to see what the court order is.

Carl Witke, Worcester, asked what is the cost to hold a meeting such as this, and what budget is used to cover the cost?

Calais resident Barry Bernstein: four days is not enough time. He stated that he had taken an evening out of his busy schedule to come here and support not moving forward.

Julio Thompson: having the four day window does not allow for open meeting law rules.

Berlin resident Pat McDonald: Right now Act 46 is the law. We need to plan for enough time to do this right.

Allen Gilbert stated that if a meeting is adjourned until a date certain then the 30 day warning does not apply.

Calais resident Teegan Dykeman-Brown - can we state an “either/ or” in the amendment? for example:

“Amend the original motion until either... or March 12th, whichever comes first.”

Vote was called on the amendment of the main motion (“adjourn until the Act 46 judicial process reaches a decision on the PI or stay”) to indicate: “adjourn until 4 business days following, when the Act 46 judicial process reaches a decision on the PI or stay” - **the vote on this amended motion failed, by voice vote.**

The question was called on the main motion by Barry Bernstein: “*to adjourn until the Act 46 judicial process reaches a decision on the PI or stay.*” Seconded.

The outcome of the voice vote on calling the question was unclear, so the moderator called for a division. **The vote to call the question on the main motion carried, 154 to 60.**

Upon return to discussion of the main motion, Allan Ferver, Berlin, asked for a paper ballot. Seven people concurred, as required.

A vote by paper ballot was held on the motion “*to adjourn until the Act 46 judicial process reaches a decision on the preliminary injunction or stay.*”

8:29 p.m.: Susan Clark declared that **the motion carried, 168 to 81.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

The following items were not addressed:

- iv. *To determine a date and location for the first annual meeting of the District and all subsequent annual meetings, which shall be not earlier than February 1 and not later than June 1 in each year.*
- v. *To determine whether to vote on the District’s budget and all other public questions by Australian ballot.*
- vi. *To determine whether to elect members of the District Board by Australian ballot.*
- vii. *To determine and approve compensation, if any, to be paid to officers of the District.*

- viii. *To determine and approve compensation, if any, to be paid to members of the District Board.*
- ix. *To establish provisions for the payment of any expense incurred by the District before it becomes fully operational on July 1, 2019 under a voter-approved budget for the fiscal year beginning on that date.*
- x. *To authorize the District to borrow money pending receipt of payments from the State Education Fund by the issuance of its notes or orders payable not later than one year from date: provided, however, that the District is authorized by Vermont Statutes to borrow sufficient funds to meet pending obligations.*
- xi. *To determine whether to authorize the Board of School Directors, pursuant to the provisions of 16 V.S.A. § 563(10) & (11)(C), to provide mailed notice to residents of the availability of the Annual Report and proposed school budget in lieu of distributing the Annual Report and proposed budget.*

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary

**SPECIAL MEETING
WASHINGTON CENTRAL UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
UNAPPROVED MINUTES**

April 8th, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Temporary Moderator Susan Clark (Middlesex) opened the meeting at 6:06 p.m. She reviewed Robert's Rules of Order and other norms for the meeting.

She invited student Ginger Knight to read a civil invocation as a welcome message.

1. To elect the following officers of the District from among the qualified voters of the district, which officers shall assume office upon election and serve for a term of one year or until their successors are elected and qualified:

Moderator
Clerk
Treasurer

Vera Frazier (Berlin) nominated Gus Seelig (Calais) for the position of Moderator. This motion was seconded.

Buzz Ferver (Berlin) nominated Paul Hanlon for the position of Moderator. Mr. Hanlon declined.

Barry Bernstein (Calais) moved to cast one ballot for Gus Seelig.

A vote was called; Gus Seelig was elected moderator. He presided over the meeting.

Richard Kehne (Calais) nominated Mary Ormsby for Clerk and Treasurer. This motion was seconded.

Robert (Berlin) nominated Rosemary Morse (Berlin) for Clerk. This motion was seconded

A vote was called for the Office of Clerk. A voice vote indicated that Mary Ormsby was elected.

A request was made to vote using cards: **Mary Ormsby was elected clerk.**

Mr. Seelig invited other nominations for treasurer. None were heard. **Mary Ormsby was elected treasurer.**

Kyle Landis-Marinello (Middlesex) asked whether he could add a non-binding resolution to the meeting agenda tonight.

He stated that he believes it is important to state on record that nothing that happens tonight is consent to the "forced merger." He noted that the state board order includes "any other

business” in its warning. Moderator Gus Seelig stated that he would like to take care of the business on the agenda and then address this issue, if time permits, at the end.

Chris McVeigh (Middlesex) reiterated Mr. Landis-Marinello’s sentiment and urged the meeting as a whole to take up this resolution now, before any votes occur, to be clear that the business that takes place does not constitute a voluntary merge on behalf of everyone in attendance.

An objection was heard, as the article is out of order.

Barry Bernstein indicated that the body can ask to have it heard, and if the majority of the body wishes to vote on it, then that is allowed.

Discussion: Kyle Landis-Marinello indicated that if we are able to get this out of the way now, the rest of the meeting might go more smoothly. He indicated that there are many people present who are not in favor of a forced merger, but do want to work together.

A vote was called to sustain the ruling of the moderator, to take this up at the end of the meeting, time permitting. This was voted down.

Kyle Landis Marinello moved: nothing that happens tonight shall be interpreted as consenting in any way to a forced merger. Seconded by John Brabant (Calais).

Discussion: Flor Diaz Smith (East Montpelier) asked, would this in any way make any decisions that we make tonight unofficial? Chris McVeigh indicated that, it being a non-binding resolution, it has no impact on any decisions that are made. Flor Diaz Smith indicated that the main priority is teachers, (teachers contracts) and students; she wants to be sure we are not jeopardizing moving forward.

Mark Chaplin (Middlesex) asked what are the hopes of the group (with the lawsuit)? Where are we hoping this will go?

Kyle Landis-Marinello stated that four of the five towns are currently legally challenging the forced merger.

Diane Nichols-Fleming (Berlin) indicated that this nonbinding resolution helps us to feel that our voices are heard.

Rick Thibodeau (Worcester) indicated that the resolution is worded in such a way that it seems everyone present is against a merged district, and that is not the case.

The question was called; $\frac{2}{3}$ voted in favor of calling the question.

A vote was called. This motion carried; the nonbinding resolution was adopted.

Flor Diaz Smith moved to have agenda item #3 (re: Australian Ballot) move to #2 on the agenda. Seconded. Discussion: Barry Bernstein asked for clarification - does this refer to voting by Australian ballot, going forward, at tonight’s meeting?

Dorothy Naylor (Calais) explained that the reason for deciding on Australian ballot first is that it will help to make decisions about meeting dates going forward.

Stewart Clark (Worcester) asked for clarification - is it Article 3 or Article 4?

Dorothy Naylor indicated that it would be best to vote on Article 3 and Article 4, before 2.

Gus Seelig asked Flor Diaz Smith and the person who seconded the motion, if they are ok with this friendly amendment. They are. **A vote was called; the vote carried.**

2. To determine a date and location for the first annual meeting of the District and all subsequent annual meetings, which shall be not earlier than February 1 and not later than June 1 in each year.

Dorothy Naylor moved the first annual meeting Tuesday May 21, 2019, U-32 High School at 6:00, and all subsequent annual meetings be held on Town Meeting Day. Seconded.

Discussion: What will be the purpose of the annual district meeting to be held in May? Dorothy Naylor stated that it will coincide with electing a board of directors. If a person wishes to run for one of the board seats, the person has enough time to collect signatures and have the petition to the Town Clerk in time for the May 21st meeting.

Kyle Landis-Marinello asked, on May 21, could the timing begin at the usual time (in the morning), and have the Australian ballot votes available at each town's school or polling place? Flor Diaz Smith stated that the May 21 date also allows for possibly voting on articles of agreement.

Shawna (Middlesex) - asked the logistics of having this annual meeting on Town Meeting Day, when townspeople will be at their own town meetings? Dorothy Naylor stated that she assumes voters will be able to vote at their own towns. Shawna stated that she would like an opportunity to meet the candidates. Some discussion followed about opportunities for forums.

Sarah Merriman (Middlesex) clarified that a vote on May 21st would be by Australian ballot, since town clerks can't be in two places at one time.

Stewart Clark: Are articles of agreement a topic for the May 21st meeting? Dorothy Naylor indicated that the articles of agreement will not be ready for the May 21st meeting; however, we will be having open meetings to discuss the articles of agreement as the work continues.

Lesley Fitch (Calais) reminded the group that we are required to hold public meetings to allow for discussion on any items that will be voted by Australian ballot.

Chani Waterhouse (Worcester): Explained that there were default articles of agreement from the Agency of Education, and a group has been meeting in open meetings to discuss and work from this default draft. Richard Kehne stated that there is a difference between attending an open meeting when discussions take place, and voting on items.

The motion carried.

3. To determine whether to vote on the District's budget and all other public questions by Australian ballot.

Flor Diaz Smith moved to vote on the District's budget and all other public questions by Australian ballot. Seconded. Discussion: Richard Kehne expressed concern around Australian ballot - as inconvenient as floor votes might be, Australian ballot distances people from decision making. Stewart Clark indicated that he is opposed to voting on budget and public questions by Australian ballot. He stated that it is important to get together and discuss what we are voting on; Australian ballot removes us from the process. A floor vote allows for the process of discussing the budget and amending the budget.

Lesley Fitch stated that there is nowhere in our district that can hold all of the registered voters in our five towns. There are a great deal who would not be able to participate. She indicated that Australian ballots provide an equal opportunity for everyone to vote.

Rubin Bennett (East Montpelier) reiterated that it is not feasible to have all of the voters in our five towns be able to come together and take care of business.

Janice Aldrich (East Montpelier) indicated that she is in favor of Australian ballot; absentee ballot is allowed in Australian ballot.

A member of the audience indicated that "all other public questions," as this article is worded, is too broad.

Gus Seelig suggested that the motion be divided into two: voting on budget versus voting on "all other public questions."

Ellen Knoedler (East Montpelier) clarified - if we decide to not take up the budget by Australian ballot, will it default to floor vote or is there a possibility that some other mechanism would come into play for voting on the budget?

A member asked how the five towns currently vote on their school district budgets. Chani Waterhouse indicated that all of the towns use Australian ballot to vote the elementary school budget, except Worcester.

Chris McVeigh urged those present to consider a floor vote for the budget. It allows for discussion. To say "we can't do it because it is too hard" is not acceptable.

Richard Kehne stated that it is a weak argument to say we don't have a big enough space; we were forced into this merger to begin with. He indicated that we learn and discuss when we have a floor vote.

Brian Tagliaferro (Middlesex) indicated that accessibility and opportunity to vote is paramount, and floor vote limits ability to participate.

Richard Raubertas (East Montpelier) indicated that insisting on a floor vote results in disenfranchising a large number of people and it is very telling that four out of five of our towns have already made the choice to move to Australian ballot.

Joanna Vonculin (Middlesex) stated that this is a false dichotomy - to say it's either discussion *or* Australian ballot; it can be both and she is for whatever gets the most people involved as possible.

Josh Fitzhugh (Berlin) indicated that this budget will be one of the largest in Washington County; having Australian ballot is needed to ensure the greatest participation.

Patrick Wood (Middlesex) asked whether there is a way to have a large, productive discussion about the school budget, and allow the town or the group as a whole indicate that the budget should move forward (ultimately to Australian ballot).

Chris Cadorette (Calais) moved to call the question. A $\frac{2}{3}$ vote was in favor of ending debate on the first part of the motion.

Motion was revisited: to vote on the district's budget by Australian ballot. This motion carried.

Second part of the motion: to vote on all other public questions by Australian ballot.

Motion was made and seconded. Discussion: Chani Waterhouse stated that all of the arguments that were made for voting on the budget could be made in favor of the second part of the motion. She favors Australian ballot for this as well.

A community member indicated that "all other public questions" is too ambiguous, and he would like to ensure a discussion and floor vote.

Michael Duane (East Montpelier) stated that this is so broad, is it possible to pass on this, or table it, and get more specific information, going forward.

Michael Duane moved to table the second part of Article 3: "and all other public questions" for one year. This motion was seconded. Discussion: Alice Agney (East Montpelier) indicated that we might be able to answer what "other public questions" means. They are often simply housekeeping motions that allow business to occur. It's not nefarious.

Josh Fitzhugh - it is very broad - at the very least, the school board directors should decide on a case by case basis whether items should be voted on the floor or by Australian ballot.

Rose (East Montpelier) asked, will we still have informational meetings? e.g., if we move to Australian ballot?

Rubin Bennet encouraged the group to not table this item, and to vote in favor of Australian ballot. The mechanisms are in place for public discourse. Tabling this item would "hobble" a new board.

Patrick Wood suggested a friendly amendment - use "basic housekeeping items" instead of "all other public questions."

Suggestion was made for a friendly amendment, rather than one year, at the discretion of the board, to bring back a definition/ list of items that is more narrow and specific than “all other public questions.”

Scott Tassej (East Montpelier) stated that anything to be voted on should be Australian ballot.

A vote was called on the motion to table this item. This motion was defeated.

The original motion regarding Australian ballot regarding “all other public questions” was voted on. This motion carried.

4. To determine whether to elect members of the District Board by Australian ballot.

Rebecca Reed (East Montpelier) moved to elect members of the District Board by Australian ballot. This motion was seconded. Discussion: Stewart Clark indicated that we don’t know how many members will be elected. He believes it is important that we have an opportunity in an open meeting, to hear from them, to get together and have an opportunity to discuss.

Discussion: Robert (Berlin) moved to amend the article: each town voting for only its own members. This amendment was seconded. Discussion: Dorothy Naylor indicated that, to have a set number of members from each town (e.g. two from each town), then we have to vote as a whole, and not by each town. Flor Diaz Smith stated that we are not allowed to amend this article, as it has been provided by the AOE and State Board of Education. To amend the article would not be following the rule of law. Chris McVeigh explained - with proportional representation: one person, one vote - this is included in the articles that will be addressed for July 1, 2020. However, the set, even, number of members from each town needs to be voted on by all of the towns.

Robert (Berlin) explained his intention (regarding the amendment.) Susan Clark clarified the idea of “one person, one vote.” Kari Bradley (East Montpelier) stated that the amendment would put us in contradiction with our default articles of agreement; it might be a topic for another day, but not for tonight.

Gus Seelig agreed and ruled that this amendment is out of order.

Question was called. Two-thirds voted in favor of ending debate.

Vote was held on whether to elect board members of the district board by Australian ballot: This motion carried.

5. To determine and approve compensation, if any, to be paid to officers of the District.

Stephen Looke (East Montpelier) moved to approve compensation to be paid to officers

**moderator \$250
clerk \$500
treasurer \$6600**

This motion was seconded. Division was called for. **This motion carried.**

6. To determine and approve compensation, if any, to be paid to members of the District Board.

Linda Urban (East Montpelier) moved to approve \$1000 each, to be paid to members of the District Board. This motion was seconded. Discussion: Vera Frazier stated that Berlin school board members do not receive compensation for their time; she amended the motion that there is no compensation. This amendment was seconded. Discussion: Carl Witke (Worcester) stated that there are costs incurred, and not everyone is in a position to serve (fiscally), offering this compensation provides a more equal opportunity to serve on a board.

Rose (East Montpelier) asked whether this compensation is already in the budget?

Chris Cadorette - there is no budget yet for the unified district.

Barry Bernstein - stated that it is asking a lot to expect board members to do what they do without compensation.

A vote on the amendment (to provide no compensation) was held - this motion failed.

A motion was made to amend the motion to prorate the payment. This motion was withdrawn.

Vote on the original motion (for \$1000 compensation) - this motion carried.

7. To establish provisions for the payment of any expense incurred by the District before it becomes fully operational on July 1, 2019 under a voter-approved budget for the fiscal year beginning on that date.

Rubin Bennett moved this motion. Seconded. Discussion: Carl Eitner (East Montpelier) asked for clarification.

Matthew DeGroot (Worcester) amended the motion: to authorize the payment of any expense incurred. Seconded.

Discussion: Diane Nichols-Fleming asked, where is the provision coming from? Is it from money that we are borrowing before the board is in place? Rubin Bennett explained that the new district will incur expenses before it is fully operational.

Paul Hannon (Calais) stated that the board authorizes payment. We don't necessarily want to authorize any payment that is put before the board. Do we want to amend: to authorize the board of WCUUSD to authorize the payment of any expense incurred.

Matthew DeGroot accepted this amendment (to his amendment).

Discussion: Robert Porter (East Montpelier) stated that this seems like an unlimited amount of money that we are authorizing. Carl Eitner asked for clarification - can the district incur expenses that will be paid by this provision, before May 21st? Dorothy Naylor stated that the May 21st meeting will be to elect a board of directors.

Matthew DeGroot indicated that this provision is required by statute, any time a new municipality is formed. He indicated his understanding that we will continue to use our current funds to cover expenses until the new board is operational.

Matthew DeGroot explained his understanding that the new district does not have funds until July 1, 2020. Stephen Looke indicated that as board members we are required to keep the schools operational. The board will be responsible for meeting the obligation.

Carl Eitner asked for clarification on the motion. Some discussion followed.

Lesley Fitch explained such expenses (of the district) that may be imminent: warning meetings, providing notices, printing, postage, ballots.

This motion, as amended, carried: To authorize the board of WCUUSD to authorize the payment of any expense incurred by the District before it becomes fully operational on July 1, 2019 under a voter-approved budget for the fiscal year beginning on that date.

8. To authorize the District to borrow money pending receipt of payments from the State Education Fund by the issuance of its notes or orders payable not later than one year from date: provided, however, that the District is authorized by Vermont Statutes to borrow sufficient funds to meet pending obligations.

Allison Gilman (East Montpelier) moved to authorize the District to borrow money pending receipt of payments from the State Education Fund by the issuance of its notes or orders payable not later than one year from date: provided, however, that the District is authorized by Vermont Statutes to borrow sufficient funds to meet pending obligations.

Seconded by Rebecca Reed (East Montpelier). This motion carried.

9. To determine whether to authorize the Board of School Directors, pursuant to the provisions of 16 V.S.A. § 563(10) & (11)(C), to provide mailed notice to residents of the availability of the Annual Report and proposed school budget in lieu of distributing the Annual Report and proposed budget.

Chris Cadorette moved to authorize the Board of School Directors, pursuant to the provisions of 16 V.S.A. § 563(10) & (11)(C), to provide mailed notice to residents of the availability of the Annual Report and proposed school budget in lieu of distributing the Annual Report and proposed budget.

Seconded by Chris McVeigh. Discussion: Cindy Gardner-Morse (Calais) explained that this means people will not receive an annual report, so will be asked to vote on a budget without information provided (at that time) about said budget.

This motion carried.

Motion to adjourn; was seconded and carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary