

**Slate Valley Unified Union School District  
Regular Meeting  
August 24, 2020  
Fair Haven Union High School  
6:30 p.m.**

**Participation will be in Person or Virtually connect by going to: [meet.google.com/ktx-zmmr-ett](https://meet.google.com/ktx-zmmr-ett)  
Or by calling (US) + 1 72-500-2592 PIN: 800 583 317#**

**Approved Minutes:**

| Name                 | Role/Term                     | Town Representing | In Attendance |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Pati Beaumont        | Board Member                  | Benson            | X Virtual     |
| Rebeckah St. Peter   | Board Member                  | Benson            | X-Virtual     |
| Becky Spears         | Board Member                  | Benson            | X-Virtual     |
| Toni Lobdell         | Board Member                  | Castleton         | X- Virtual    |
| Tim Smith            | Board Chair                   | Castleton         | X             |
| Julie Finnegan       | Board Member                  | Castleton         | X             |
| Christin Pouliot     | Board Member                  | Hubbardton        | X             |
| Joshua Hardt         | Board Member                  | Hubbardton        | X             |
| Vacant               | Board Member                  | Hubbardton        | -             |
| Tanya Tolchin        | Board Member                  | West Haven        | X- Virtual    |
| Angela Charron       | Board Member                  | West Haven        | -             |
| Vacant               | Board Member                  | West Haven        | -             |
| Tara Buxton          | Board Member - Clerk of Board | Fair Haven        | X             |
| Mike Bache           | Board Member                  | Fair Haven        | -             |
| Rick Wilson          | Board Member                  | Fair Haven        | X             |
| Peter Stone          | Board Vice Chair              | Orwell            | X             |
| Glen Cousineau       | Board Member                  | Orwell            | X             |
| John Wurzbacher      | Board Member                  | Orwell            | X             |
| Brooke Olsen Farrell | Superintendent                | Slate Valley UUSD | X             |
| Cheryl Scarzello     | Director of Finance           | Slate Valley UUSD | X             |
| Chris Cole           | Director of Operations        | Slate Valley UUSD | X             |
| Casey O'Meara        | Director of Curriculum I&A    | Slate Valley UUSD | X             |
| Kris Benway          | Director of Special Services  | Slate Valley UUSD | X             |

**Audience Attending:** Kim Prehoda, Phil Hall, Patrick Walters, Kate Leathe, Amy Roy, Jen Paquette, \*64,

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Tim Smith led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Call to Order - 6:30 p.m.:** Tim Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda:** Peter Stone made a motion to approve the agenda with no changes; this was seconded by Julie Finnegan; Motion carried by the full Board.

**Approval of SVUUSD Minutes - August 10, 2020:** Peter Stone made a motion to approve the minutes of 8/10/20 with no changes or corrections; this was seconded by Julie Finnegan; Motion carried by the full Board.

**Public Comments:** None

**Correspondence:** None

**Committee Reports:**

- **Building and Grounds:** Peter Stone gave an update from the Building and Grounds Committee. He noted that the Ventilation Systems in all buildings had been reviewed and were in good working order. The report done by engineers said there was plenty of air circulating. The air handlers will need to be adjusted in the winter with the cold weather so they are not drawing as much outside air due to potential freeze ups. At all schools they have replaced filters, belts and a few motors. All schools within the SD have built isolation rooms within the nurses offices and these are nearing completion and will be ready to go by September 8 and the opening of schools. Oil tank replacement at CES and FHGS was completed. Two new electrical panels were installed in Orwell Town Hall along with two new doors. The steam line at FHUHS in the cafeteria was fixed. Other electrical work was completed at FHUHS to re-route the electrical system that was in the tunnel under the steamline.
- **Policy Committee:** Policy A25 - Delegation of Authority During State of Emergency due to COVID 19 Pandemic- Adopt. Toni Lobdell made a motion to change the current policy B8 to B10, renumbering the policy, this was seconded by Peter Stone. Toni Lobdell made a motion to warn the new B8, this was seconded by Pati Beaumont. Toni Lobdell made a motion to adopt A25, this was seconded by Julie Finnegan. Julie explained A25 to all and that Brooke would still be bound to inform the board of these emergent situations. All motions carried by the full Board with regard to policies discussed tonight.

**School Reopening Updates:** Brooke Olsen Farrell, Superintendent gave updates on the reopening plans. She started by indicating that we were continuing to move forward with the reopening plans. She noted that we had been working on the athletic plan based on and following the guidance for Fall Sports put out by the Agency of Education. She noted that it was a bit trickier for Middle School and that we are not quite finished with this plan. In phase 2 we shouldn't mix students from multiple schools and there are not potentially enough students to field their own M.S. teams so for right now they will just practice at their individual schools. Many of the 5th and 6th grade teams regionally are not operating, so we may be looking to do something different with 5th and 6th graders. While we are in Stage II we will not be offering football for Middle School. Brooke mentioned that Cross Country can be done together as there is little to no contact.

We will be receiving another distribution of PPE from the State of VT on September 1st, 2020. Brooke noted that we are in relatively good shape with regard to PPE. Brooke noted that the lack of substitutes was starting to be a concern. Many of our subs have been retired teachers in the past and they are concerned about their own health. Brooke included a memo in the Board packets with regard to increasing the pay for Nurse Substitutes, as no one is willing to sub because they earn more at the hospital. Brooke recommended that we increase this to \$30 per hour, with a minimum of 3 hours per day. This is a critical need for us given the Covid-19 Pandemic. We can not be without nurses.

Some students have applied for a medical exemption for remote learning. Brooke indicated the deadline for this is Friday, August 28, 2020. With regards to opening of schools we are in good shape with our staffing. We currently have one Science opening at FHUHS that we have been unable to fill despite our best efforts.

Peter Stone asked if there are certain criteria upon which we would send someone to the nurse isolation room. Brooke assured him there was and that we are waiting for updated guidance from the Department of Health. They have come up with a new algorithm, where multiple scenarios will be listed.

Julie Finnegan asked if we were considering teaming up with VTLC for other course options for the H.S.? Casey spoke about dual option enrollment as a more cost effective measure with the local colleges. He has had and will continue to explore conversations with VTLC, however it is a costly option. More recently they have looked at a program called Gear Up with VTLC

**New Hires:** Peter Stone made a motion to approve the Letter of Intent for Thomas Peppard as the FHUHS Band Director at a salary of \$48,076.00. This was seconded by Julie Finnegan. Motion carried by the full Board.

**Teacher Contracts:** Julie Finnegan made a motion to allow Tim Smith, Board Chair to sign all Teacher Contracts, this was seconded by Glen Cousineau and Pati Beaumont. Motion was carried by the full Board.

**Substitute Nurse Pay:** Tim Smith summarized that we were looking to increase the substitute nurses pay to \$30.00 per hour with a minimum of 3 hours. Peter Stone made a motion to improve the increase, this was seconded by Julie Finnegan. Motion carried by the full Board.

**Other Business:**

1. Brooke mentioned that the newest Board Member, Christine Pouilot is interested in joining the Finance Committee and the Teacher Negotiations Committee. Since she was newly appointed she needs to be recommended by existing Board members. Peter Stone made a motion to add Christine to these two Board Committees, this was seconded by Julie Finnegan. Motion carried by the full Board.
2. Rebeckah S. Peter asks the Board to re-think in-person Board meetings. She said this goes against the Governor's orders. Peter Stone disagreed, and says he feels it is important to show the community that not only do we feel it is safe to bring our kids back to school, but that the Board is willing to meet in person. Josh, Tara, Julie, and Glen also agree with continuing with in person meetings. Christine Pouilot asks why we can't continue to have in person and virtual for those members who do not want to come in person. Rebecca Spears suggests we notify the community how we plan to clean after an in person Board meeting. Board meetings are only held in one school at this time 2 X's per month and staff would have time to clean before kids return to the school the next day.

**Executive Session - If Needed:** None

**Agenda Building:**

1. Update Board on the opening of schools.
2. Athletic update from Ali and Kim
3. Discuss how we are communicating what we are doing to the community other than through Board Minutes
4. Discuss the Board's Vision for the future.
5. Discuss rescheduling the Board Retreat; identifying roles and responsibilities; determining budget priorities.
6. Discuss if we are planning to reorganize schools; the potential for changing the language in the articles of agreement to be placed on the November ballot.

**Adjournment:** Peter Stone made a motion to adjourn at 7:40 p.m., this was seconded by Glen Cousineau and Pati Beaumont.