



**June 4, 2025, 4:30 pm
HDEC Conference Room and Via Zoom Meeting**

Board Minutes - Unapproved

Board Members:

Voting:

Jessica Burlew – Absent
Bob Flint – Present
Lyza Gardner – Present
Desiree Giroux - Present
Chris Hodsden – Present
Kate Lamphere – Present
Andrew Pennell – Absent
Kelly Tarbell – Present
Sarah Vogel – Present

Ex-Officio:

Scott Farr – Present
Layne Millington – Absent
Andrew Hass – Absent
Sherri Nichols – Absent
Kendra Rickerby – Absent
Deb Manseau – Absent
Jennifer Cummings – Absent
Kristen Wilson – Absent

Others: Derek Williams, Ashley Newton, Tina Bixby, Christine, Balch, Jen Fribush

Program Presentation: Advanced Mfg. & Engineering, Chris Gray

Bob Flint, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm and thanked Chris Gray for his presentation.

Board Re-Organization – Scott Farr

MOTION: (Chris/Kate) to open nominations for Springfield At-Large Board Member for the three-year term ending June 2028. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Chris Hodsden nominated Bob Flint

MOTION: (Chris/Kate) to close nominations and accept the nomination of Bob Flint as Bellows Falls At-Large Board Member for the three-year term ending June 2028 and have the Superintendent/Director cast one vote in favor of Bob Flint. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

MOTION: (Bob/Desiree) to open nominations for FY 26 for the following positions on the RVTCS Board of Directors, Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary/Clerk. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Chris Hodsden nominated Bob Flint as Chair, Jessica Burlew as Vice Chair and Andrew Pennell as Secretary/Clerk

MOTION: (Chris/Kate) to close nomination and elect Bob Flint as Chair, Jessica Burlew as Vice Chair and Andrew Pennell as Secretary/Clerk of the RVTC Board for FY 26 and have the Superintendent/Director cast one vote in favor of the slate of officers nominated. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item I. Agenda Changes or Additions

Scott Farr combined Item C & D under New Business.

Agenda Item II. Public Comments

None

Agenda Item III. Consent Agenda

Enrollment Update – Scott Farr reported we are currently 24 students below our enrollment at this time last year. The decline is primarily in the Pre-Tech program due to a smaller incoming freshman class at Bellows Falls. Additionally, we experienced a loss in the Digital Media Online Program as high schools finalized student schedules. All other programs remain approximately at last year's levels.

Financial Report – Scott Farr shared we are currently projecting an approximate \$968 surplus for the current year. This amount is impacted by reserve funds this year.

MOTION: (Chris/Kelly) to accept and approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item IV. Old Business

VTVLC Update – Ashley Newton, Interim VTVLC Director, presented on the following:

- VTVLC Financial Report – Anticipated deficit of \$297,329.08
- FY26 Proposed Budget – Pathways Grant went from \$2M to \$2.4M. The governor's budget has been signed. This is a draft budget. VTVLC will be looking for approval from the Board in August.
- Current Enrollment – Referred to the report included in the Board packet.
- Interim Director's Report – Referred to her Director's Report that was included in the Board packet.
- Upcoming Events –
 - a) June 4th - End of Spring Semester
 - b) June 11th - Lake Elmore end-of-year celebration

Statewide CTE Update – Scott Farr provided a quick overview. Governor Scott signed the FY26 budget in late May, which includes level funding of the Base Rate for Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Vermont. This results in approximately \$66,000 more than we had budgeted.

We did not take any formal action to reduce the Building Secretary position due to the timeline outlined in the union agreement. Additionally, we've discussed with candidates that the Assistant Director position may be either year-round or school year only, depending on legislative outcomes. This will enable RVTC to have its Assistant Director and Building Secretary positions be calendar year positions.

There is a late bill in legislation. It has (H480) passed out of committee with language residing in H454, the miscellaneous Education Bill. This would require centers to share directory information across regional lines for students who didn't get a spot for the programming they wanted in their service region technical center and allows for transportation with reimbursement

to centers / schools if they provide transportation. This bill is currently listed as unfinished business.

Technology/Equipment/Building Reserve Spenddown Update – Scott Farr reported based on Christine’s estimate, we will use approximately \$29,500 of our reserves during FY25; significantly less than anticipated—leaving a projected balance of about \$68,500. This amount includes Board-approved actions related to vacation day payouts for the RVTC Administrators and a tuition reimbursement request.

Teachers’ Union Negotiations – Discussed in Executive Session.

MOTION: (Desiree/Chris) to ratify the Agreement between the River Valley Technical Center School Board of Directors and the Springfield Teachers Association for September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2028. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

MOTION: (Chris/Kelly) to authorize the Board Chair to sign the Agreement between the River Valley Technical Center School Board of Directors and the Springfield Teachers Association for September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2028, upon completion and review of the ratified agreement. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Payment of 5 Unused Vacation Days (RVTC/VTVLC) – Scott Farr informed the Board he, Derek Williams and Melissa Sargent-Minor (of VTVLC) would like to request payment of unused vacation days. This is consistent with the provisions outlined for all RVTC/VTVLC administrators.

MOTION: (Chris/Desiree) to authorize, upon the employee’s request, payment for up to 5 unused vacation days to the following VTVLC administrators at their per diem rate, per their contracts:

- Melissa Sargent Minor
- Derek Williams
- Scott Farr

Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item V. New Business

Authorization for Retirement Stipend, John Harmer – Scott Farr reminded the Board this is language in the teachers’ union agreement. We have budgeted for this. Split payments span over the next three years.

MOTION: (Chris/Kelly) Pursuant to Article XIX, Section 19.1 of the Agreement between the RVTC Board of Directors and Springfield Teachers Association to authorize payment of a \$14,500 retirement stipend for John Harmer, Horticulture and Natural Resources Instructor, as described in the agreement. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

FY26 Perkins Grant – Scott Farr and Derek Williams reviewed the summary that was shared with Board earlier this week. WorkKeys, Outreach Coordinator, professional development, are included in the grant application. This is a multi-year grant. In the future we may have to shift some of these costs to the local budget since this grant potential will be reduced.

MOTION: (Chris/Lyza) to approve the submission of the Perkins Grant proposal for FY26 as presented. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

TIME Grant / AVP Online – Scott Farr shared with the Board that FY26 will be the second year of the grant trying to bring back online CTE; starting with AVP online. We will receive approximately \$80k in FY26 for the is (state) grant.

MOTION: (Kelly/Lyza) to approve the submission of the TIME Grant proposal for FY26 as presented. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Non-Union Support Staff FY26 Rate Increase/Handbook / Admin. Assist./HR Coordinator Position Change – Scott Farr shared we are requesting the annual approval of the Non-Union Support Staff Handbook, which includes salary adjustments aligned with the union staff agreement. For FY26, the proposed increase is 5.1% plus \$0.10/hour.

Additionally, I recommend reclassifying the Admin Assistant/HR Coordinator position from Column IV to Column V. We conducted a time study in the fall and found that the role now splits its time evenly (50/50) between administrative and HR duties. When the position was originally classified (as 67% admin / 33% HR), the staffing level was significantly smaller. With growth at RVTC and VTVLC and the increased adjunct hiring the HR workload now justifies reallocation to 50/50. This change increases compensation by reflecting the new HR time commitment.

MOTION: (Chris/Kate) to authorize a pay rate increase of 5.1% + \$.10 per hour to non-union support staff for FY26 and approve the non-union support staff handbook including the movement of the Administrative Assistant/HR Coordinator position from column IV to column V of the hourly wage schedule. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

VTVLC Administrator Contracts – Discussed in Executive Session.

MOTION: (Chris/Kate) to authorize the Superintendent, in consultation with the Board Chair, to negotiate VTVLC administrators contracts for FY26. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

VTVLC Teaching Positions – Discussed in Executive Session.

MOTION: (Desiree/Kelly) to authorize the recall of Jennifer Hardy to 1.0 FTE as the 5-6 grade VTVLC teacher. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

MOTION: (Chris/Kelly) to authorize the hiring of a 1.0 FTE Math/Science teacher and a 1.0 FTE English/Social Studies teacher for grades 7-12 for VTVLC. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Information Technology Instructor – Discussed in Executive Session.

MOTION: (Lyza/Kelly) to authorize the adjustment of the Information Technology teacher contract from .5 FTE to .55 FTE. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Tuition Reimbursement (RVTC) – Scott Farr reported we are seeking tuition reimbursement for Courtney Lihatsch, who completed an accelerated Master’s Degree program. Although the tuition exceeded the contract cap, Courtney pursued this degree to meet state and federal Perkins requirements to be able to offer dual enrollment credit through VTSU and CCV.

MOTION: (Kelly/Lyza) to reimburse Courtney Lihatsch \$1,982 for additional professional development expenses incurred in FY25 per Section 18.3 of the Springfield Teachers Association agreement. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Assistant Director Position – Discussed in Executive Session.

MOTION: (Kelly/Kate) to authorize the Superintendent/Director to negotiate a contract for the RVTC Assistant Director of Adult and Technical Education position for FY26. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Mentor Contract – Discussed in Executive Session.

MOTION: (Desiree/Kelly) to approve the mentor contract between RVTC/VTVLC and Scott Farr as presented. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

Summer Meeting Schedule – Per Bob Flint, we usually skip having a meeting in July. We will plan to reconvene in August unless something comes up before then.

Superintendent’s Report – Scott Farr reviewed his Superintendent's report that was included in the Board packet.

Other – Bob Flint recognized Scott Farr and his great serve to RVTC for many years. Scott Farr thanked the Board

Agenda Item VI. Next Meeting

Next regular Board meeting – August 6, 2025

Agenda Item VII. Executive Session

MOTION: (Chris/Kate) pursuant to Title 1 VSA, Section 313, the Board enters Executive Session to discuss the teachers’ agreement negotiations, VTVLC administrator contracts, RVTC/VTVLC Teacher positions, Assistant Director position, mentor contract because premature general public knowledge would clearly place a person(s) at a substantial disadvantage, inviting Scott, Derek and Ashley. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

MOTION: (Kate/Lyza) to exit Executive Session at 6:05 pm. Motion voted and passed unanimously.

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Bixby, Recording Secretary