Approved

Stamford School Board

Meeting Minutes

October 28, 2025

986 Main Rd.

Stamford, VT

Present at Meeting

Administration:

Bill Bazyk and Julie Swanson

School Board:

Danielle Smith, Beth Thomas, Phyllis Desautels, Brian Rower, and Cindy Lamore

Visitors:

Caroline Burch, Tyna Senecal, Kelly Holland, and Jane Sullivan

I. **Call to Order**

Board Chair**,** Cindy Lamore, called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm

II. **Agenda Additions or Deletions**

Cindy Lamore motioned to add a recognition of the first and second grade teacher, Kristi Sherman's, Outstanding Educator Award, a discussion about Para/Teacher contract negotiations, and an update on food service repayment from Readsboro Elementary. Danielle Smith seconded the motion, and it was carried by the board.

III. **Approval of Minutes**

Cindy Lamore motioned to approve the minutes of the September 23rd School Board meeting. Phyllis Desautels seconded the motion, and it was carried by the board.

Cindy Lamore motioned to approve the minutes of the October 9th Special School Board meeting. Brian Rower seconded the motion, and it was carried by the board.

IV. Fiscal Matters

Signing of Warrants

Cindy Lamore reported that she signed warrants for September for the amount of $69,776.42

Phyllis Desautels asked about the timing of high school tuition bills and how our school was billed for those tuitions. Bill Bazyk replied that the new system is working well, and he received most of the

resident verification forms that were sent out to parents. The bills for Drury High School were received, and he does not think we will have any issues with the other schools.

Financial Audits

Nothing different than what's in the draft, the final audit has been released, and they have already begun the FY25 audit. Moved from one data collection system to another, which helped the process, and they were able to reconcile discrepancies from years back.

Bill Bazyk reported that Stamford School would begin the year with a roughly $86,000 surplus, and the school is in fairly good shape financially. The surplus comes mostly from tuition. He also reported that the Supervisory Union is coming into the year with a roughly $500,000 deficit.

V. Reports and Updates

Principal Report

Julie Swanson reports that she and her team finished benchmarks at the end of September, and they analyzed the data and were able to drop in support for our students.

She devised an incentive program, "Principal for the Day", to increase participation and encourage students to complete Math and ELA homework. They will hold a drawing on Thursdays for those students who have completed homework and assignments. The winner will get to act like a principal all day and make decisions regarding the student schedule.

The school held a Literacy Night and a pasta dinner. They celebrated state test scores and had family/teacher time in the classroom. Families received state test scores and benchmarking data for their children. Families received data by mail if they were unable to attend. Julie wants to have parents fully aware of how their children are performing, so there are no surprises.

Julie Swanson reported that each student in the school will receive at least 8 brand new books due to the large participation in the "Book Blast Event". The school partnered with a for-profit company named Books Are Fun. This company specializes in raising funds through a student-driven fundraiser. There was 75 percent participation in this program, which is significantly higher than the program typically receives in other schools.

The PTG has organized a Family Halloween Dance and Trunk-or-Treat event for Halloween evening.

Act 73 Update

There are three recommended redistricting maps; none of these maps seems to take Stamford's special situations into account. Recommendations to the legislature are due by December 1st. There is not a lot of political will to do anything because redistricting is hugely unpopular. Bill Bazyk believes that the biggest issue and the most detrimental item for Stamford residents is that there are legislators who do not want to tuition Vermont students to other states. Cindy Lamore would like to write letters to the AOE and the school board association about the hardships that may come with changes.

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Beth Thomas brought up a lawsuit around the issue of barring Vermont students from being tuitioned at independent and religious schools. Her concern was mainly for siblings of students who were already enrolled in these schools not being able to attend the same school. She wanted to know if Stamford had any families affected by this law. Bill Bazyk advised that there were none in Stamford.

Kelly Holland, resident and visitor, brought up that there is a law on the books that allows for our students to be tuitioned out to Massachusetts schools. She was wondering if that law would be superseded by the Act 73. Bill Bazyk acknowledged this law and said the new redistricting could negate old laws. However, there would be a grandfather clause allowing all students who were currently tuitioned out to remain in the school of attendance. This conversation was rolled into the Hearing of Visitors section of the meeting because Kelly Holland had more items to discuss.

VI. Hearing of Visitors

Kelly Holland stated that the school board is out of compliance with the open meeting law. Minutes are not being posted on time. Unapproved minutes must be posted within 5 calendar days. This is an item on the agenda tonight.

Each school board's Chairperson filled out a survey regarding Act 73 that was made public. Kelly Holland agreed with the way in which our Chair, Cindy Lamore, filled out the survey. However, she was concerned with the way Twin Valley filled out theirs. She noted that their surveys seemed to call out schools that tuition their students to Massachusetts and wondered if it was their prerogative to have Vermont students stay in state to have Stamford stay within their district. Cindy Lamore said that she would look into that and was concerned about this.

> Tyna Senecal, library trustee, began to discuss the new lock and access to the bathroom in the school. Apparently, the new lock does not allow patrons of the library to access a bathroom in the school. She is concerned about this because, when the school is closed, there are no convenient options. Superintendent Bazyk was not aware of the issue and said he would research it and was happy to discuss it privately. Tyna Senecal believed that the matter should be discussed in this public forum and wanted the issue to be addressed immediately. Bazyk mentioned a concern about public safety when discussing locks and school access in a recorded public forum. This issue was tabled until Bill Bazyk could gather more information &and bring recommendations to the board.

Jane Sullivan, a resident of Stamford and also an owner-operator of the bus company Stamford contracts for student transportation, wanted to make a public statement about busing costs if Stamford was not allowed to tuition its students to nearby Massachusetts. As a taxpayer, she is very concerned about those costs.

Kelly Holland asked, “How will you keep the public apprised of Act 73 issues?”

Cindy Lamore responded, town email, school email, public meetings, Billmont’s corkboard. Bill Bazyk added that we would not hear much any time soon. He also added that July 1, 2028, would be the earliest any new laws would be enacted.

Approved

VII. Discussion

Recommended Policies

Bill Bazyk asked the Stamford Board to review a list of recommended policies he provided to determine if any would be pulled out at the SU level. The Board has until December to do this, as the SU Board will meet then to decide and possibly enact.

C3- Transportation Policy

Stamford's transportation policy was completed and approved in 2022; it falls in line with SU policies and doesn't need to be changed.

C9 - Local Wellness Policy

Bill Bazyk advised that the Stamford Board review and choose either to choose between 2 written policies, or write our own. These policies are guidelines for food choices and preparation for our students. He wants us to review these choices by the November meeting and adopt the policy by December.

Old and Possibly Outdated Policy Review

Bill Bazyk advised the Stamford Board that it might be a good idea to designate someone to meet with him to review out-of-date local policies. Beth Thomas volunteered to review these policies with Bill. There are roughly 17 or 18 policies to be reviewed.

Meeting Minutes Discussion

Board Secretary, Brian Rower, has 5 calendar days to post the unapproved draft of meeting minutes after a meeting, by law. It was brought up to the Stamford School Board by Kelly Holland that Brian Rower has not been complying with this law. This was discussed, and he and the board agreed to adhere to the law in the future.

There was a discussion about paying someone to take minutes. This was tabled for a future meeting.

1st and 2nd Grade Teacher Kristy Sherman

Kristy Sherman was the winner of the Outstanding Educator Award. Every year, the College of Education and Social Services (CESS) at the University of Vermont, together with Vermont supervisory unions and school districts, the Vermont Agency of Education, and the Vermont NEA, joins to honor the accomplishments of our state's outstanding educators. This year, Stamford School's Kristy Sherman was awarded this honor. The Stamford School Board officially acknowledged her efforts and amazing teaching abilities and efforts.

Teacher/Para Contract Negotiations

Cindy Lamore was tasked with being on the committee for these upcoming negotiations.

Approved

Food Service Update

The board was apprised of food service financials by Bill Bazyk. Bill Bazyk mentioned that it would behoove individual schools to use a single cook to provide breakfast and lunch to Readsboro, Halifax, and Stamford. The food is easily transported and has been proven to be very good when this occurs due to absence.

VIII. Items for Discussion with Possible Action

Nothing for this meeting.

IX. Executive Session

The board may withdraw from public session to meet in executive session to discuss school personnel, consistent with 1 V.S.A. § 313. Cindy Lamore made a motion to enter executive session because premature general public knowledge of contracts will place the board at a substantial disadvantage. Beth Thomas seconded the motion, and the board approved unanimously. The board went into executive session at 7:11 pm.

X. Return to Regular Session

After an executive session, the board will return to the main meeting or invite visitors to re-enter the meeting space for continuation of the public session. There was no further discussion.

XI. Next Scheduled Meetings

The board will review future meeting dates and other important dates.

- November 5, 2025-Super Board Meeting 6:30 Halifax
- November 25, 2025-Stamford School Board 6:00

XII. Adjourn

Cindy Lamore made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 pm. Beth Thomas seconded the motion, and the board was unanimous in adjourning.