

1 **Southwest Vermont Regional Technical School District (SVRTSD)**  
2 **Regional Governing Board Meeting Minutes: Monday, April 19, 2021, Zoom Online Meeting**  
3

4 **RGB members present:** Michael Cutler, Asher Edelson, Art Haytko, Leon Johnson, Jackie Kelly, Francis  
5 Kinney, John MacDonald, Kenneth Sweirad and Anthony (TJ) Williams  
6

7 **CDC represented** by: Michael Lawler, Superintendent/Director; Meg Honsinger, Assistant Director;  
8 Rebecca Tattersall, Business Manager  
9

10 Audience: CAT-TV  
11

12 **Recorder:** Sandra Redding, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent  
13

14 Meeting was called to order by Board Chair, John MacDonald at 10:02AM. He welcomed the public and  
15 asked for comments. There were none.  
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17 The consent agenda was presented for consideration:

- 18 • Minutes from Full Board meeting, March 8, 2021, were approved by unanimous decision after  
19 motions by L. Johnson and F. Kinney
- 20 • Payroll Warrants were approved unanimously after motions by F. Kinney and L. Johnson
- 21 • Vendor Warrants were approved unanimously after motions by F. Kinney and M. Cutler.  
22 Question was asked by K. Swierad re: Zoom expense. R. Tattersall shared that there is a yearly  
23 subscription cost as well as a monthly fee to use the Zoom format. Fortunately, this expense falls  
24 under criteria to be covered by state funds due to Covid. We will be reimbursed from the state.  
25 Also, question concerning HOSA jacket purchases was discussed. Again, due to Covid  
26 guidelines, it was suggested to have sufficient jackets for all participating students to wear for  
27 HOSA competitions, (which is one of our CTSOs-Career Technical Student Organizations) The  
28 GEER grant funds were available for this purchase as well as covering other Covid related  
29 expenses. Supt Lawler shared that the state received 4.7 million from the Feds for use in Tech  
30 Education. The amount we received, (approx. \$245,000.) was determined by percentage of free  
31 and reduced student lunch needs and we did fairly well in that area. Other areas where these  
32 funds will be used is in Broadband connectivity which does include Zoom activity.  
33

34 There were no questions or concerns on cash flow, revenue and expenses as presented by the  
35 Business Office.  
36

37 L. Johnson stated that committees should get started as soon as possible. Discussion later in this  
38 meeting resulted in:

- 39 • Board members have been assigned to committees; see list in your packet, also in Dropbox
- 40 • After some discussion, it was decided that committees should try to meet before end of May to  
41 organize; tentative schedule is:
  - 42 ○ Monday, April 26, 2021 10AM-Education/Facilities online
  - 43 ○ Monday, May 3, 2021 10AM-Policy online
  - 44 ○ Monday, May 10, 2021 is reserved for RGB Full Board, 10AM online
  - 45 ○ Monday, May 17, 2021 10AM-Bylaw Review online
  - 46 ○ Monday, May 24, 2021 10AM-Finance online
  - 47 ○ Superintendent Evaluation Committee will meet in June, tbd
- 48 • Draft agendas will be created for election of chair and organizational discussion
- 49 • New Zoom link will be provided on draft agenda  
50

51 Supt. Lawler noted that this year and its related difficulties due to Covid may well have a major impact on  
52 education in regard to special education, tech programs and adult learning. School will return with more  
53 opportunities and the value of tech education has been recognized as a strong need in our communities.  
54 The need for adult tech programs, both day and night is especially noticeable. Funding for adults might  
55 be available thru VSAC and the VT. Dept. of Labor. Finding a path forward to train plumbers, electricians,

1 welders, etc. should be investigated and interacting with local contractors might be helpful in determining  
2 this communities' needs. AJ Williams shared that the VT. Dept. of Labor has a list of apprenticeship  
3 needs that could possibly be linked with our school to help access these opportunities for our students.  
4 Our Work Based Learning Coordinator, Wendy Klein and our Adult Workforce Education and Training  
5 Coordinator, Rob Bahny specialize in placing students with local companies for onsite, hands-on  
6 experiences. Unfortunately, this year due to Covid restrictions, not many employers were willing and/or  
7 able to assist us in this area. This situation should improve as we return to more normal circumstances in  
8 the future.

9  
10 Supt Lawler also shared with the board the progress of hiring an instructor for the Manufacturing  
11 Program. At this time, our Para-educator, Tim Mullen, has been leading the program with great success.  
12 He is doing a phenomenal job with the students and has been very motivated and innovative running the  
13 program in this very difficult year. Lawler noted the difficulties in hiring instructors for tech education  
14 programs as anyone interested usually has an operating business in his/her field, must attend VTC to  
15 obtain CTE certification, learn to manage students and a classroom and continue to carry on with  
16 everyday life. Not an easy thing to accomplish, also considering education is not a high paying career.

17  
18 At this time, the nomination for the Culinary Instructor was presented for discussion. Lawler provided an  
19 account of Chef Mark Anthony Conway's 26 years of experience and education. There were 12  
20 applicants, 4 were interviewed and 2 invited for a second interview and presentation. Chef Mark Anthony  
21 was the choice of the committee and recommended by Asst. Director, Meg Honsinger. The nominee will  
22 begin an apprenticeship program at VTC soon and have 3 years to complete. Course program will consist  
23 of online, in-person and 2 week boot-camp type activities Criminal background checks are in progress  
24 with the initial computer check thru VCIC completed successfully. Supt. Lawler explained the criminal  
25 background check procedures and the time involved. It was noted that this applicant also has military  
26 experience. After discussion, motions were made by F. Kinney and L. Johnson to accept nomination of  
27 Mark Anthony Conway as Culinary Instructor. This was unanimously approved by the board. Lawler  
28 teased the gathering with the fact that the new chef planned on creating barbecue next week as his first  
29 culinary feat with his students! We all look forward to that and also to the in-house coffee roasting that is  
30 happening.

31  
32 The Chair, John MacDonald, invited comments during his report time:  
33 Asher Edelson had a few concerns:

- 34 • Why no July board meeting? During July, faculty/admins/staff/students are away from the  
35 building as this is the time for building repairs and maintenance. Kelly, Kinney and Johnson  
36 noted that it's foolish just to "meet to meet" and that just wait, there will be plenty more meetings  
37 than you expect due to committee meetings. Also, the admin staff is responsible for much of the  
38 behind the scenes work when it comes to board meetings and may not be available in the  
39 summer except for emergencies.
- 40 • Are teachers/instructors aware of IEP/504 information and meetings concerning the students?  
41 Sending schools are responsible for setting up meetings. Sometimes, parents sign off on  
42 attending and/or who can attend. Teacher doesn't necessarily need to be present for meetings  
43 as we have a Special Needs Coordinator, Robbe Marra, who is the on-point person. As long as  
44 everyone is on the same page, we can help the student be successful. Also, this may be a topic  
45 more suited for committee discussion as we can invite Ms. Marra, any teacher or other informed  
46 person to share information with the committee members for consideration. Also noted, is that all  
47 board members can attend committee meetings, they just do not vote in that committee unless  
48 an assigned committee member. Input is always welcome. All committee agendas are sent to  
49 the full board membership.
- 50 • VCIL Virtual Workshop Information: Edelson shared with the board a letter from VCIL concerning  
51 a virtual workshop and the opportunities offered with assistance in transition for students. Also,  
52 there is a link to Vermont Rehab with information. MacDonald shared that as sending schools  
53 are responsible for transition plans for students, we must be careful in our involvement.  
54 Johnson noted that any information such as this should be presented in committee for  
55 discussion, then if approved, brought to the full board for their approval. Individual board

1 members cannot act on their own when representing the group. Thank you to Edelson for the  
2 information as this is an important area for consideration.

- 3 • Teachers' Pension Situation: Edelson inquired if we should be responding to the state  
4 concerning the teacher's pension issue. MacDonald stated you may respond as a private  
5 citizen, but not as a representative of the full board. This is another topic that should be  
6 discussed in committee.

7  
8 Supt. Lawler at this time, welcomed the three new board members, Asher Edelson, Michael Cutler and AJ  
9 Williams. He shared the link to the VSBA which has a great deal of valuable information for new and  
10 continuing school board members. Many opportunities for training can be found on this site. We pay to  
11 belong to this organization, so be sure and use it!

12  
13 He then elaborated on our school's CTSOs, which are similar to sports team activities in traditional high  
14 schools. Even in this unusual year due to Covid, we had decent participation by our students.  
15 Many students work extremely hard to compete via Zoom in several competitions and we are proud to  
16 say we had many students place well in their respective competitions. We thank them for their efforts and  
17 congratulate the winners! Lawler also thanked Nicole Sauer for her continued efforts to keep our school  
18 and students in the limelight in social media.

19  
20 Lawler expressed his thanks to all faculty and staff for functioning so well under all the Covid restrictions.  
21 He indicated that many of the processes may be changing in the near future. Vermont state did a very  
22 good job with testing and distribution of the vaccine. Vaccine is available to all 16 years old and above.  
23 He did not have any guidance on graduation activities at this time.

24  
25 Lastly, Johnson stated that we should try to keep all committee meetings scheduled for no more than an  
26 hour. We will certainly try to make this happen!

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28 With motions from L. Johnson and J. Kelly, meeting adjourned at 11:20AM.  
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