

**BLACKSTONE-MILLVILLE REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL  
COMMITTEE**

**Special Districtwide Town Meeting**

**BMR High School Auditorium**

**August 8, 2018**

**7:00 pm**

The Districtwide Town Meeting began at 7:00 p.m. in the BMR Auditorium with Dan Doyle as moderator.

Chairperson, Mrs. Reggio called the special town meeting to order.

The following School Committee members were present:

Jane C. Reggio, Chairperson  
Erin P. Vinacco, Vice Chairperson  
Caryn D. Vernon, District Treasurer  
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary  
Jack R. Keefe, Member  
Tammy Lemieux, Member  
Bethany B. Dunton, Member  
Sarah E. Williams, Member

Also in attendance was Jason DeFalco, EdD., Superintendent of Schools.

Mrs. Reggio suspended the school committee meeting to open the Districtwide Town Meeting.

Mr. Doyle stated that this is a very serious matter and we are making history tonight.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Reggio, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to waive the section for non residence attendees to participate in discussion matters only for Dr. Jason DeFalco, Town Accountants of both Blackstone and Millville and Millville Town Administrator, Jennifer Callahan.

The following warrant article was read by both Mr. Doyle and Mrs. Reggio:

**Article 1.** To see if voters present will vote to approve the re-certified school budget of \$22,623,707; to assess the amount of \$8,562,533 to the Town of Blackstone which includes \$6,317,741 for minimum contribution, \$ 1,347,481 in exclusionary costs, and \$897,311 in supplemental investments; and to assess the amount of \$2,919,338 to the Town of Millville which includes \$2,074,258 in minimum contribution, \$507,276 in exclusionary costs, and \$337,804 in supplemental investments.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Reggio, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to approve the recertification vote as presented.

Mrs. Reggio deferred to Dr. Defalco to speak about the reasons why the school committee is looking for this vote to pass.

Dr. Defalco stated that he takes his job very seriously and to heart as the chief child advocate. He wants to make sure we are advocating for the needs of our children. He understands budget restrictions across both communities. His priority as superintendent is to be sure they are giving their children the ability to be happy, healthy and proficient. He believes the most important parts are Community, Civility, Respect and Achievement.

Dr. Defalco wants to be clear where the number comes from that you are voting on tonight. 11.5 million comes from the State of Massachusetts which is just over 50%. 8.5 million comes from the Town of Blackstone and 2.9 million comes from the Town of Millville.

In the Spring the School Committee members and administration went through the budget cycle to reduce services and teachers by 1.5 million dollars. This is what they had to cut. That budget of 22.6 million includes the \$139,000 they are looking for this evening. 22.6 million is what lead to the cut of 1.5 million. There is no new or extra money. On August 16th they will let everyone know what will be put back into the budget if the Article passes this evening. We are now operating on a 1/12th budget of last years budget. There is urgency in getting this budget passed this evening.

## Discussion

Mr. Doyle opened the floor for discussion.

**Jim Benson - Millville** - He is in favor of the recommendation but he wants to know what he is getting for his money. He wants to be sure they are getting something of value here. What is our ranking right now? How do we rank against the rest of the state?

Mr. Doyle - This is not a question pertaining to the vote tonight. This question should be addressed at the school committee meetings. He will allow the chair to briefly elaborate on it.

Dr. Defalco spoke briefly on it. He stated that BMR ranks 115 out of 290 school districts. We are on a level 2 right now under the state accountability system.

**Mr. Watson - Blackstone - member of the Finance Committee** - he wants to simplify this for the people. He feels most people here do not understand. Blackstone has funded the entire amount. Millville has not funded \$39,000. What you are looking at is if you approve the School Committee's recommendation Millville will need to raise \$39,000 and send it to the school and Blackstone will not have to raise a single penny. The top number is fixed and not negotiable.

**Normand Gamache - Millville** - It may be a small amount to the town of Millville but it is also a small amount to the school district. Over the last several years the town of Millville has bankrupted their entire stabilization fund. It's a lot of money to the town of Millville.

**Erica P. - Blackstone** - look at 2016 data from the Dept. of Education. Blackstone spends such a small amount per year on their students. If we do not invest in our school district more students will leave and it will cost us more to send them to BVT, Norfolk Agricultural, etc. She does not want to see our property values decrease.

**Tammy Lemieux - Blackstone - member of the School Committee** - Addressed the \$139,000. It is a big deal to us. It could be two teachers. Please do not discount the fact that it is a small amount to the District.

**Debbie Swain - Blackstone** - built a home in Blackstone because of the school district. She is now a principal in Mendon-Upton. She is advocating for education. She feels we have to invest in our kids as they are our future.

**Amanda Guilmain - Millville** - wants to ask everyone to look around the room when you vote tonight as you are voting to advocate for their children. She wants to afford the same opportunity for her kids. We are all here for one reason. Our kids deserve an education.

**Armando P. - Blackstone** - does not want to put a damper on this but does not like coming back here because Millville did not do their share.

**Tom Houle -Millville - Board of Selectmen** - There are no more funds in Millville. This could mean the difference between one of our firefighters or our police officers. If they had it they would give it to them. It is the Town of Blackstone at a town meeting that put this into play. They decided to add an additional \$100,000 to their share of the budget at a town meeting.

**Jackie Lima - Millville** - this year Millville is facing a tight financial year. The senior center is closed. The library is running on donations. With the deficit they face there is no way to appropriate the \$39,000.

### **VOTING**

Mr. Doyle stated we have to vote by secret ballot and explained how to go about it.

A Yes vote - accept the warrant article as presented.

A No vote - if you do not agree with the article as presented.

There are 219 registered Millville voters

There are 369 registered Blackstone voters

Voting took place and the counters tallied the votes.

### **TALLY**

Mr. Doyle stated the tally has been made and 499 persons voted.

**Yes votes - 347**

**No votes - 152**

### **The Vote Passes**

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Reggio, seconded by Mrs. Vinacco and unanimously voted to dissolve the warrant and the Districtwide Town Meeting and continue with the school committee meeting at 8:20 p.m.

## Re-Certification of the FY 19 Budget

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco, seconded by Mrs. Dunton and unanimously voted to adopt a gross operating budget for the 2018-2019 school year in the amount of \$ 22,623,707.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Vinacco, seconded by Mrs. Larkin and unanimously voted to apply the following reimbursements to reduce said gross operating budget for the 2018-2019 year:

· Chapter 70	\$10,915,189
· Regional Transportation	\$ 472,648
· School Choice/Charter Offset	(\$ 305,000)
· Charter School Offset	(\$ 3,000)

Above reimbursements total \$11,079,837. The total net operating budget for 2018-2019 is \$11,543,871.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Vernon, seconded by Mrs. Dunton and unanimously voted to assess the amount of \$8,562,533 to the Town of Blackstone to be applied to the operating budget for the 2018-2019 year which includes \$6,317,741 for the minimum contribution, \$1,347,481 in exclusionary costs and \$897,311 in supplemental investments.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Lemieux, seconded by Mrs. Williams and unanimously voted to assess the amount of \$ 2,919,338 to the Town of Millville to be applied to the operating budget for the 2018-2019 year which includes \$2,074,258 for the minimum contribution, \$507,276 in exclusionary costs and \$337,804 in supplemental investments.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Williams, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to apply the following amounts to the gross operating budget for the year 2018-2019:

· Medicaid	\$ 60,000
· Interest	\$ <u>2,000</u>
	\$ 62,000



**Motion:** It was moved by Mr. Keefe, seconded by Mrs. Williams and unanimously voted to adopt a capital and interest budget in the amount of 426,379 to be assessed solely to the Town of Blackstone which includes \$152,388 for the FWH Middle School, \$98,047 for the BMR High School sewer connection and \$175,944 for the roof projects.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Dunton, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to adopt a capital and interest budget in the amount of \$179,135 to be assessed solely to the Town of Millville which includes \$57,368 for the FWH Middle School, \$36,911 for the High School sewer connection and \$84,856 for the roof projects.

Mr. Reggio stated that they now have a certified budget. Both towns will be notified and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as well.

Mrs. Reggio stated that they need to appointment a procurement officer to process the bid for the fire panel at the BMR High School. Dr. DeFalco will do it until there is a new Assistant Superintendent of Schools.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Reggio, seconded by Mrs. Vinacco and unanimously voted to appoint Dr. Jason DeFalco as the chief procurement officer for the fire panel bid process at the BMR High School.

**Motion:** It was moved by Mrs. Williams, seconded by Mrs. Lemieux and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Monique F. Simard  
Recording Secretary

ATTEST:   
Tara L. Larkin, District Secretary