

Blackstone-Millville Regional District School Committee

Minutes of Meeting October 24, 2013

The Blackstone Millville Regional District School Committee met in the library of the Frederick W. Hartnett Middle School at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present:

William F. Chaplin, Jr., Chairperson
Steven J. Tringali, Vice Chairperson
Wendy L. Greenstein, District Treasurer
Catherine A. Robinson, Assistant District Treasurer
Erin P. Vinacco, District Secretary
Michael J. Buckley, Member
Diane C. Robin, Member
Brian T. Faulkner, Member

Also in attendance was Perry P. Davis, Ed.D, Interim Superintendent of Schools.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States was recited.

A Public Forum was held between the School Committee members, the Boards of Selectman and Finance Committees of Blackstone and Millville.

Dr. Davis stated that there is a current deficit of \$394,597 in our budget. This figure takes into account the change in projected deficit from the Student Services Department which lowered the deficit from \$472,816 to \$394,597.

The fact that they did not hire an Assistant Superintendent yet this year is helping to reduce the deficit along with the per diem salary rate of Dr. Davis.

Another factor is that the current Medex insurance rate has decreased. We also have a lower number of staff using our insurance plan.

The Excess and Deficiency funds have been certified by the MA Dept. of Revenue at \$529,044. Under MA General Law the District can have up to 5% of the District's Operating and Capital Budget in the E&D Account. This amount could be \$1,043,800 based on the operating and capital budget of \$20,876,006.

The current E & D figure of \$529,044 is 50.6% of the maximum allowed under MA General Law. The School Committee needs to recognize the limitation of using E&D funds to support the FY 15 budget which will place the District in a limited fiscal position to respond to any unanticipated expenses during the school year.

The current school year budget has not been frozen yet. They will try to meet any emergency repairs and student needs.

The School Committee has adopted goals as it works with the District administration to develop the FY15 operating budget. These goals serve as the principles upon which the budget is built. The goals take into consideration the recent budget history of the District as well as current economic conditions of both the communities of Blackstone and Millville.

The Budget Development goals are to develop an operating budget that includes a process where the district reviews budget history to determine financial trends.

The operating budget will be prepared with input from the building depts. and district administration.

To prepare an operating budget that is focused on student needs and recognizes changes in student needs based on the student population profile.

To provide an opportunity for the member towns of Blackstone and Millville to provide feedback and ask questions about the BMRSD budget development process.

The FY14 Revenue for July-Sept. came from the following areas:

*Assessment of Blackstone – 71.14%

*Assessment of Millville – 28.86%

State Aid Chapter 70

State Aid Transportation

School Choice Reimbursement

Interest Unibank money market account

Program revenue misc.

Program revenue athletics

Program revenue student services Pre-School

Revenue Circuit Breaker

Program revenue Medicaid

Revenue Athletic user fees

Revenue music user fees

The Total of the above is \$20,709,557.

*It should be noted that due to changes in student enrollment which affects the percentages assessed to the two Towns the rates will be as follows in FY15:

Blackstone – 71.66%

Millville – 28.34%

In the Student Services area there were issues from the start. They were short staffed in the Teacher Aide area. The Student Services Supply and Materials account was greatly underfunded. Fluctuations in the Out of District tuition and transportation requires additional funding.

The BICO Collaborative rents classrooms in the District with revenues of approximately \$30,000.

The District will examine trends and how they affect the District. They will examine enrollment figures, students going to BVT, Norfolk Agricultural School and Mount St. Charles Academy.

School Choice is being monitored along with the before and after school day care program.

Dr. Davis wants to create policy that will increase student achievement. There is a strong base of stakeholders that need to come together.

They would like to invite the stockholders to visit the schools and make them more involved in the process, not just financially.

All budgetary items shared with the School Committee will be made public.

Planning ahead is so important. Planning for improvements to buildings, fields, etc. is of the utmost importance. How will they fund these items?

The roof replacement at the JFK/AFM complex should be finished in early December.

The High School roof should begin in the summer of 2014.

They are currently looking and assessing the conditions in Millville. This will be a less expensive roof to replace.

The MSBA tells you what can be done to your buildings and what they will fund. They control everything. They will qualify the District for what they assess your needs are.

Dr. Davis stated that we currently do not have a director of maintenance. We are relying on the head custodians to fill this job in their respective schools.

We do not have funds set aside for repairs. A director of maintenance could assess the needs of the buildings. We are terribly underfunded in our maintenance accounts. We are on the fix it as it needs it basis. There are no funds for a preventative maintenance plan. They cannot generate funds they do not have.

Dr. Davis applauds the custodians for all they are able to accomplish.

He is hoping that the budgets in the future will be on a needs basis.

Dr. Davis cannot forfeit the needs of the students for the sake of the maintenance of the buildings.

Pleas have been made in the past for a stabilization account but the Millville Finance Committee did not want to discuss it.

Dr. Davis is looking for more funds in the maintenance line. If you place \$50,000 on this line and you do not use it the funds can be put in stabilization in the future.

Part of the solution is to get a list of items that need attention and work together with the Towns to address the needs on the list.

All communication should go through the Central office and not through the principal of the school.

However, this is not going to happen under minimum contribution. With minimum contribution the funds are used for the teachers.

They are currently in reactive mode in the District due to only having a Superintendent for five years. They are in need of an Assistant Superintendent as well.

Mr. Faulkner recommends a facilities manager that would be for the town and the school.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Buckley, seconded by Mrs. Robin (7 in favor, 1 abstain from vote on Sept. 26th minutes – Mr. Chaplin) to approve Consent Agenda A which includes Warrants, Use of School Facilities, Field Trip Requests and Minutes of Meeting of Sept. 26th and October 10th.

Report of Superintendent

Dr. Davis stated we have a current balance in the video acct. of \$49,000.

The District had a recent visit from Dr. Mathew Malone, Secretary of Education and the former Brockton superintendent. Dr. Malone visited all schools in the Commonwealth. He was highly impressed with math instruction in 5th grade.

Dr. Davis requested the approval of budget transfers which were listed on a handout.

He is requesting moving the money to be more reflective of where we have spent it.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Robin, seconded by Mrs. Robinson and unanimously voted to approve the budget transfers as outlined by Superintendent Davis.

A request was sent from Mrs. Breault, Support Staff Union president to reopen bargaining with support staff.

Appointments

Superintendent Search – A meeting was held with NESDEC. A timeline was reviewed and questions asked of the School Committee. They would like to know how they want to structure this search. This will be worked on to review the major expectations of the candidates.

NESDEC will be in touch with the candidate and talk to them about the credentials needed.

NESDEC would also put a focus group together if the Committee approves. They would like to dedicate November 14th from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. so they can discuss what they are looking for in a Superintendent.

Sub Committee Reports

Facilities – they are putting together a document that gives an assessment of each of the buildings - have custodians do a quick assessment- assessment to the external building safety-

Potentially the Regional Agreement could be reviewed to see who would be responsible for the maintenance-

Committee Forum

Mr. Buckley said happy 10th birthday to the FWH Middle School.

Motion: It was moved by Mrs. Robin, seconded by Mrs. Greenstein and unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Monique F. Simard

Recording Secretary

ATTEST: _____

Erin P. Vinacco, District Secretary

