

## **West Bath School Administrative Unit**

### Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

January 4, 2017 at 6:30 PM at the West Bath School

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**Members Present:** Dennis Crews, Keith Hinds, Robert McDaniel, Ashleigh Randall, and Jordi St. John

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Patrick Bowdish, Bobbie Brewer, William Brewer, Adam Garland, Peter Oceretko, and Emily Thompson

#### **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Keith Hinds.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

#### **Comments from the Chair:**

Mr. Hinds wished all who were in attendance a happy new year, and extended those well wishes to staff.

#### **Approve/Amend Minutes of 12/7/16**

Mr. McDaniel commented that the minutes should be amended to include a dollar sign in front of the number 500 in section C, part i.

Mr. Crews made a motion to accept the minutes of 12/7/16 as amended. Mr. McDaniel seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).

#### **Adjustments to Agenda:**

None

#### **Public Comments:**

None

#### **Auditor's Report: William Brewer, CPA**

Mr. Hinds welcomed William and Bobbie Brewer, the Town's auditors, to the meeting. He let the members of the public know that this was the first time the board has seen this document, and wanted to provide them first with the opportunity to ask questions, but that he would open up the floor for questions later in the presentation.

Mr. Brewer said that the auditors are required to give a letter at the end of the audit process to report out the results and the working partnership. He stated that he had no difficulties working with the Superintendent and Mrs. Donovan and that there were no disagreements with the audit report and the school department. The Brewers provided the board with a list of the requirements of the annual audit by state statute, and pointed out that the 3<sup>rd</sup> requirement on the list was a meeting with the school board.

Ms. Brewer asked the board to turn to the financial statements on page 5, and noted that the fund balance was \$431,535.47 with \$261,817.71 in the unanticipated fund balance. She said that it is a benefit to have such a fund balance, particularly where the cost of special education can services can change everything instantly for a district.

Ms. Brewer said that the district did a good job of controlling expenses and picking up potential liabilities throughout the year. In terms of wages, the summer accrued salaries were picked up, which is a good position to be able to pick those up immediately.

She said that \$123,518.04 had been overpaid to the school from the town, and these funds need to go back to the town. This is likely due to a misinterpretation of the warrant, or voided checks being provided funding for twice. She stated that communication between the town and the school needs to be strong, and West Bath seems to have had pretty good communication from the get go.

Mr. Brewer asked the board to turn to page 8 to review the lunch program. He noted the fund transfer from the general fund, and said that most school lunch programs do not make enough money to cover the expenses, especially in a small school. He said that food expenses should be 50% of the revenue, which it is, so that was considered to be on track.

Mr. Brewer said that the state does not allow for school departments to have an excess fund balance of more than 3% of the budget, which would be approximately \$167,142 for West Bath. He recommends that the WBSAU put an article in the school warrant creating a reserve account for special education or maintenance. He suggested that the school department would need a good line of communication with the Board of Selectmen to ensure that they understand why the money should be set aside.

Mr. Hinds asked if this reserve fund should be for the school, separate from the town? Mr. Brewer responded affirmatively. From the audience, Adam Garland, the Town Administrator asked if there are any limits to the wording of the titles for these funds? Mr. Brewer suggested that the wording be as simple as possible, such as major repair or purchase, so there are not too many restrictions on the funds.

Mr. Brewer told the board that they should periodically review the Principal's account, and that account needs to be broken out so the money in and money out is clear. Ms. Brewer passed out information to the board about student activity funds and the board's obligations of oversight.

Mr. Brewer provided the board with a copy of the management letter that had been sent to the Superintendent previously, and to which she had responded. He said that he felt that Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Donovan had done a really good job, as a lot of school departments do not have a handle on what they have been doing, and they've been doing it for a long time. He suggested that the board listen carefully to Mrs. Thompson if she asks for help in the office, because she will mean it, and that if Mrs. Donovan retires, be prepared to replace that position with two people. He ran through the items in the management letter which contained: 1) reconciliation of bank accounts; 2) Federal Grant Funds Reimbursement Requests; 3) Verification of Federally Funded Employment; and 4) Posting Errors.

Mr. Hinds said that when the auditors met with the finance committee prior to the board meeting, they had mentioned school lunch and developing some policies around lunch. Ms. Brewer said that the board should create a write-off policy, and also a policy that states how high of a tab a student can run.

Mr. Hinds said that the main takeaways from the audit are the four items that are in the letter, one of those items all schools received, and the other three have been addressed, two food service policies, and that the board should be reviewing the Principal's Account and the federal funds.

He stated that for a new school district, a new school board, superintendent, principal, finance director, food service director, facilities director, and transportation director, things have gone well.

Mr. Brewer said that he would have expected that the budget would have been wrong, and that expenditures would have exceeded the budget. This is not what happened. He said that the reality is that the the district did a good job. Ms. Brewer said, that it was an amazing job.

Mr. Hinds asked the members of the public if they had any questions. Mr. Oceretko commented that the school department had done a nice job.

## **Committee Reports**

1. Finance Committee:
  - a. Mr. Hinds commented that through the auditing process, it was suggested that the finance committee report out to the board when the warrants were reviewed for payroll and accounts payable, to ensure that the board is aware of the oversight.
    - i. Payroll Warrants reviewed by Board Chair: 12/13 and 12/21. A second payroll warrant was reviewed by the Vice Chair on 12/21, as it contained a stipend for the chair.
    - ii. AP Warrants were reviewed the Finance Committee: 12/7 and 12/21.
  - b. The finance committee met on 12/22 with the auditors and and conduct a pre-screen of the audit report.

## **Superintendent's Report**

1. Financial Report
  - a. Mrs. Thompson stated that with 50% of the year remaining, there is 64.03% of the budget remaining. Other than the areas of special education that have been discussed, all budget areas are right on track.
2. District Updates
  - a. Celebration of Learning - Mrs. Thompson noted that the school held its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual winter Celebration of Learning on 12/21. This celebration focuses on process and reflection within the learning process. She said that she had the opportunity to visit each grade level during the rehearsal, and hear each student's presentation. She noted the following new academic trends that she witnessed during her visits to each grade level's presentation:
    - i. concrete evidence of analysis of texts

- ii. students referred to close reading of challenging text and text-dependent questions, and shared examples of their work.
- iii. variety of complex student writing
- iv. all classrooms had students referencing their learning targets, and their progress towards targets
- v. students referred to their rubrics and criteria lists, and showed multiple drafts of their work towards something they felt was high-quality
- vi. children referred to the critique protocol that was used with their drafts
- vii. 100% of the children were able to stand tall, look the audience in the eyes, and discuss their learning
- viii. In all grade levels, students were able to use content specific vocabulary appropriately, and answer every question sent their way.

Mrs. Thompson noted that the school has come a long way in a short amount of time. She wished to take the opportunity to both thank and congratulate the WBS staff and students who go above and beyond in all aspects of teaching and learning. She said she would also like to thank our school board of directors and the West Bath community for continued support.

- b. January 3<sup>rd</sup> Professional Development Day - Mrs. Thompson said that the prior day had been the first professional day the staff has had since October, and was spent focusing on the next aspect of the school's work plan, which incorporates student engagement. The faculty spent the morning looking at and re-acclimating themselves with a variety of lesson designs – workshop, use of protocols, and Discovery Based lessons. Teachers then had the opportunity for guided planning, and participation in a peer critique process. Following the implementation of the lessons within the next few weeks, they'll debrief student outcomes and engagement.
- c. School Choice for 2017-2018 – Mrs. Thompson said that the school choice window for the next school year is open, and will remain open through February 14<sup>th</sup>. Letters have gone home to current 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, and information will be sent to the current school choice families on 1/5. The information is posted on the school's website and Facebook, and will be distributed through the town email list. Applications for school choice will be accepted through February 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Old Business:**

#### 1. Approve Warrant for Special Town Meeting

Mrs. Thompson provided the board with an updated handout of the estimated funds needed for special education. The estimated total of funds was \$164,823.60. She stated the the auditors and town administrator had encouraged her to add a buffer. With that in mind, a 20% buffer would bring the suggested amount for appropriation to \$197,788.32. Mrs. Thompson said that at this point the board needed to discuss the estimates, the buffer, and how to proceed. Mr. Hinds opened the conversation to the board. Mr. Crews said that he was comfortable with what was presented. Mr. McDaniel asked what would happen if not all that is appropriated was spent? Mr. Hinds said that the amount would become excess funds, as was just seen in the audit. Mr. St. John asked whether the board would be able to set up an account for special education like the auditors had discussed? Mr. Hinds reminded the board that the board had made that request for this fiscal year. Mr. Crews said that now there is the benefit of having the auditors say it, and we also

have been hit with the special education situation that the auditors had described. Mr. Hinds reminded the board that any carryover that could potentially have subsidy in it must be used for education.

Mr. Hinds made a motion to approve the article as presented with the amount for appropriation being \$197,788.32. This was seconded by Mr. Crews. Vote (5-0).

At 8:05, Mr. Hinds made a motion to continue with the meeting, although it was passed 8 PM. Mr. McDaniel seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).

2. Second Reading of Board Policies - The board conducted second readings of the following policies:
  - a. Second Reading of JKD – Suspension of Students
  - b. Mr. St. John made a motion to accept the policy as written. Mr. McDaniel seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).
  - c. Second Reading of JKD-R – Suspension of Students-Procedures
  - d. Mr. St. John made a motion to accept the policy as written. Mr. McDaniel seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).
  - e. Second Reading of JKE – Expulsion of Students
  - f. Mr. McDaniel made a motion to accept the policy as written. Mr. St. John seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).
  - g. Second Reading of JKE-R – Expulsion of Students-Procedures
  - h. Mrs. Randall asked if the WBSAU board would have a role in an expulsion hearing for a high school student. Mrs. Thompson said that it was unlikely that they would have a role at the high school, but there could be a situation where a student may need to be expelled from the WBSAU. She asked the board if she should seek feedback from the attorney, to which the board chair responded affirmatively.
  - i. Mr. McDaniel made a motion to accept the policy as written. Mr. St. John seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

#### **New Business:**

None

#### **Public Comments**

None

#### **Next Meeting Dates and Locations**

1. Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 PM – West Bath School Administrative Unit Board of Directors Meeting
2. Mr. Hinds stated that all board members are encouraged to attend the special town meeting at 5:30 PM on January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **Adjourn**

Mr. Crews made a motion to adjourn at 8:11 PM. Mr. McDaniel seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Thompson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Emily Thompson