

## **West Bath School Administrative Unit**

### **Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

March 1, 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, Aggie Demers, and Emily Thompson

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM by Keith Hinds.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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

Mr. Hinds welcomed the board back, and also welcomed students and staff back from February break. He said that he hoped everyone had a restful time.

#### **Approve/Amend Minutes of 2/1/17**

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to accept the minutes of 2/1/17 as presented. Mr. Hinds seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).

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

None

#### **Public Comments:**

None

#### **Committee Reports**

1. Policy Committee - No Report
2. Technology Committee – Mrs. Thompson asked that Mr. Bowdish update the board on a recent challenge that the school had experienced with the server. Mr. Bowdish said that the school has been operating with older infrastructure that was set up when the school was part of a prior district. The server the school is built with 4 components, and can lose 1 and can still run with 3. In what he called a million to one scenario, with one component down, another went. Mr. Bowdish spent the prior weekend rebuilding the server and ensuring that school could resume this week without any hiccups. While there are further tweaks and adjustments to be made, Mr. Bowdish said things are up and running. Mrs. Thompson thanked Mr. Bowdish for the time he put in to make sure that that the internet and printing would be working once school resumed.
3. Facilities Committee
  - a. Mrs. Thompson let the board know that the Facilities Committee had met and identified priority projects for building maintenance and upgrades. A meeting was

- scheduled for the following day to prioritize the projects for the budget. She said that she would say more about those projects during the first reading of the budget.
- b. Mrs. Thompson reminded the board that in the month prior she had let them know that she had been working with the Bath Water District Lead testing to sample the building's water for lead. All drinking water and kitchen faucets were tested. Mrs. Thompson said that the EPA recommends that all water outlets in schools that are used for drinking or cooking meet a standard of 20 parts per billion lead or less. She stated that they had one utility faucet in the kitchen that tested just above that. The use of the faucet was immediately discontinued and the faucet and piping to the faucet were replaced to ensure that were below the recommended level. While the level in that faucet was not considered dangerous, just cosmetic as it may affect odor or taste, Mrs. Thompson said the school is committed to ensuring that our students have clean drinking water and took measures to rectify the situation.
4. Finance Committee
    - a. Mr. Hinds said that payroll warrants were reviewed and signed on February 7th and February 17th.
    - b. Mr. Hinds said that AP Warrants were reviewed and signed on February 8th and February 17<sup>th</sup> by Mr. Crews, and February 10th and February 19<sup>th</sup> by Mr. Hinds.

## **Superintendent's Report**

1. Financial Report
  - a. School Department Budget – Mrs. Thompson said that with 33% of year remaining, 48.61% of budget remains. She stated that the budget document does not include the amount raised at the special town meeting.
  - b. Referendum Results – On February 7<sup>th</sup> the referendum for the double validation of the funds appropriated at special town meeting was held. The result of the referendum vote was 25 yes votes, 7 no votes.
  - c. Preliminary 279s – Mrs. Thompson said that the school district received the preliminary 279s, and West Bath's subsidy has increased slightly to \$125,114.72. She said that the state budget is about a month behind due to snow storms. She said that the public hearing for the Governor's budget takes place on Friday. There are 48 changes to the funding formula. Some of these changes will be reflected in the proposed budget later in the agenda. Mrs. Thompson said that there are statewide increases of 17 million in special education, and 7 million in teacher retirement. These two areas are increased in the proposed West Bath budget as well.
  - d. Educational Efficiencies and Opportunities Grant
    - i. Mrs. Thompson said that last month she discussed with the board the Educational Efficiencies and Opportunities Grant and want to report out that West Bath did submit a collaborative grant with Brunswick, Topsham, Bath, and Wiscasset to look at regional transportation for special education and homeless.
2. District Updates
  - a. Mid-Year Review/Mission & Vision Process – Mrs. Thompson said that on February 5<sup>th</sup> the mid-year review for Expeditionary learning was held, and that she had utilized the process to begin to collect information for beginning to

develop a new mission and vision for the school. The day started with a stakeholders group. Mrs. Thompson said that she wished to thank Deb Snell, David Strelneck, Aggie Demers, Steven Hinds, Keith Hinds, Camille Kauffunger, Hannah Whitney, Emily Booth, Joy Frohmiller, Jennifer Bowdish, and Lou Ensel for taking the time out of their busy days to take part in this meeting. She said that this was the first time she had had a stakeholders group like this to hear parent input and the process was extremely valuable.

Mrs. Thompson shared the questions that were asked, and some sample responses. When asked, How do you feel about the quality of instruction at the West Bath School? parents spoke about the high quality instruction, feeling pride for their school, appreciating the feeling that they know their child is known and cared about, and recognized the investment of the staff in the children, commenting that teachers show up at weekend games and events. When asked about where they have seen growth in their child as a result of their West Bath education, parents said that they saw their children taking risks, see confidence growing, and appreciate how teachers scaffold growth. When asked what parents' hopes were for West Bath students, the responses included having an education that is well rounded, with community involvement, including a variety of exposure to everything, intellectual and hands on, opportunities for confidence building and ensuring that children are not just prepared to move on to middle school, but carry that confidence with them that allows them to make those around them stronger. A parent also commented on how the boat building program has led to instrumental change for her child, allowing him to find a way to be engaged in school. When asked what their dreams are for the West Bath School in the future, parents stated that they wanted their children to be armed for a radically changing world, and develop a strong sense of core values. They wanted their children to be global citizens on a local level, and for us to ensure that expectations are high for all students. Responding to the question about how West Bath can better support the students to be a strong global citizen, parents stated that they need access to foreign language, which opens up the mind to diversity and helps the brain develop. When asked if parents had any final hopes for their children, the school, or the community, parents mentioned that there is a need for improving the physical space, and providing more room for art and music. The final word was one that stated that the integration of school and community are "profoundly important" and we need to put attention towards making sure this is woven together.

Mrs. Thompson said that the day also had a student focus group, a teacher focus group, and then a full faculty meeting to continue to collect data on the year's goals and to thoughts for developing a new mission and vision. The work is still in the draft phase and the board will again have the opportunity to give feedback later in the process.

- b. Maine Maritime Museum – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Open House – Mrs. Thompson said that the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students held an open house at the Maine Maritime Museum on February 17<sup>th</sup>. She said it was extremely well attended and that she had included

- an article about the event in the board packet. Mr. McDaniel said he was impressed with the article. Students, parents, and staff were universally positive, if not glowing about their feedback of the program. He said that it seems that it has impacted everyone right away, and that it looks like an effective program. Mr. Hinds said that he was floored with the craftsmanship and the ambassadorship, and how well students represented the school. Mrs. Randall said that the moment she walked through the door she was greeted by a student, and all children were at work. Mr. Hinds responded that there was no fooling around. Students entered, put down their bags, picked up their nametags, and got to work. Mrs. Randall said that the students are not just building boats, they are building life skills, work ethic, and aspirations. Mr. St. John said that Maine Maritime sets a high standard, and students have stepped up. Mr. McDaniel commented that the outcomes of the open house were much like a those of a regional science fair, where students explain their work and talk to adults. He said there is real value in this process. Mrs. Thompson added that Mrs. Franklin, one of the school's special education teachers, had attended the open house and commented on how impressed she was by the amount of information her students could tell her about each and every tool in the boat shop and the process of building the boats. Mrs. Thompson thanked the board for supporting this first year program.
- c. Community Read – Mrs. Thompson said that the next day the school will be celebrating Reading Across America by participating in the Community Read organized by United Way. She wished to thank the volunteer readers: Sally Hagget, Courtney Clifford, Jenny Tisdale, Emeilia Marsh, Bill Browning, Jennifer DeChant, Amy Carmichael, and Joel Merry
  - d. 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Swimming Program – Mrs. Thompson announced that the PTO funded 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Learning to Swim program begins on Friday at the Bath Area Family YMCA. Each 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class will once again have the opportunity to have 6 weeks of swim lessons.
  - e. PSO Kinderkonzert – Mrs. Thompson said that the K-2 students attended the Portland Symphony Orchestra's Brass Quartet Presentation of Burt Dow at the Crooker Theater. She thanked the PTO for sponsoring this trip as well.
  - f. YMCA Care – Mrs. Thompson said that she had communicated with Sabrina Murphy, the director of the Bath Area Family YMCA about before and after-care for next year. Ms. Murphy had said that she is committed to running a program next year at West Bath school and will start the outreach and enrollment process as soon as it is reasonably possible to do so.

### **Old Business:**

- a. Recording WBSAU School Board of Directors Meetings – Action
  - 1. Mr. Hinds stated that the board had consensus last month that they would beginning recording the WBSAU School Board of Directors Meetings. He asked if the logistics of doing so had been worked out. Mrs. Thompson asked for Mr. Bowdish to respond to the board. Mr. Bowdish said that it is possible to archive a live feed, but he would like to do a trial run of just recording the meeting and then posting it directly afterwards to get things started. The suggested that the board can then move to live streaming a few months down the road if they wish to. Mr.

St. John asked if it would be posted on YouTube. Mr. Bowdish responded affirmatively. He said that to get started he would use his own camera. If the board wants it streamed, there may be some costs. He also stated that one of the problems the board may experience is with sound, and that will need to be figured out. Mr. St. John said that if the meeting is posted on YouTube the board can track and see the number of views the meeting has. Mr. Hinds asked if there were any other board questions. Mr. McDaniel asked if there would be a trial run the next month, to which Mr. Hinds responded there could be if there was a motion and a vote. Mr. St. John asked whether there have been requests for having meetings recorded, or if the board is just trying to be proactive? Mr. Hinds replied that the request came at a Board of Selectmen meeting, asking the Board of Selectmen to call together the Administrative Review Committee to revisit recording meetings. Mrs. Randall said that the question was addressed to the Board of Selectmen, but that the person speaking was really asking universally for all meetings to be recorded.

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to have a trial recording done at the April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. St. John seconded the motion. Mr. Hinds asked if there was any further discussion. Mr. Crews commented that if the board wants to make recording meetings permanent, this would be a good time to discuss a budget for equipment. Mrs. Thompson also suggested that the board consider a stipend for the person who records and posts the videos each meeting. Vote (5-0).

- b. Second Reading of Board Policies – The board conducted second readings of the following policies:
  1. DFF – Student Activities Funds  
The policy is unchanged since the last meeting, with the exception of cross references. Mr. St. John made a motion to approve the policy. Mr. Crews seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).
  2. DI – Fiscal Accounting and Reporting  
Mr. St. John made a motion to approve the policy. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).
  3. JJE – Student Fund-Raising Activities
  4. Point 10 was added to the policy after the first reading. Mr. St. John asked for a period to be added after the word policy.
  5. Mr. St. John made a motion to accept the policy with revisions. Mr. McDaniel seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

#### **New Business:**

- a. First Reading of the 2017-2018 School Budget

Mr. Hinds said that he wanted to remind the public that this is the first time the board has seen the budget. He said the superintendent will present the budget, the board will give feedback, and will give the public opportunity to comment as well.

Mrs. Thompson said there are challenges with preparing a budget at this time of year, particularly when the budget information from the state is about a month behind

schedule. She said that at this time, there are no Title I fund amounts available and Local Entitlement amounts have not been shared, which means that locally we need to budget increases to cover these areas. Mrs. Thompson said that there is also a universal increase in retirement, as the auditors had suggested increasing by 18%. She stated that the goal for the budget presentation is to share a draft goal that will promote conversation and the setting of priorities. She said that she would go through each line item of the budget and discuss what the line means. Mrs. Thompson stated that the proposed budget has an increase to local contribution that she would not dare to say is reasonable. However, the board will need to think about district priorities and also understand what pieces are completely out of our control.

Mrs. Thompson walked through the line items of the budget pointing out areas that had increased or decreased.

- Page 1
  - Salaries/Professional – increased by 6.41% due to entering the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a contract for professional staff. There is no increase in number of staff from the prior year.
  - Health Insurance Professional – increased by 4.18% due to contractual obligations.
  - Retirement – increased by 18% based on auditor’s recommendation.
  - Repairs/Maintenance – Removed from the budget as repairs and maintenance are funded in the building maintenance line.
  - Tuition Elementary – Increased by 14.4%, as it is budgeted for the number of students currently in the district, +2 and allows for a 4% increase.
  - Tuition Elementary – Private – This is increased based upon the school choice applications that have been approved.
  - Pre-K – Retirement - increased by 18% based on auditor’s recommendation.
  - Tuition Secondary – increased by 2.27%, as it is budgeted for the number of students currently in the district, +2 and allows for a 4% increase.
  - Tuition Secondary – Private – Decreased by \$22,000 based upon school choice applications.
- Page 2
  - Salaries/Professional – increased by 12.66% due to entering 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a contract for professional staff, and needing to plan for possibly decreased Title IA funding.
  - Salaries Ed Techs – Increase is due to a staff position change from library ed tech to special education ed tech to cover academic needs. The reduction is reflected in the library budget.
  - Health Insurance Professional – increased due to contractual obligations.
  - Retirement – increased based on auditor’s recommendation.
  - Tuition Public – increased for tuition fees for life skills programming in RSU1
  - Tuition Private – increased for out of district placements outside of RSU1 as determined by student IEPs.
- Page 3
  - Salaries-Professional-Social Work - increased due to entering 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a contract for professional staff
  - Salaries-Professional-Health – decreased based upon new hire
- Page 4

- Tuition – Increased based upon number of teachers enrolled in course work, which is a contractual obligation
- Library increases and decreases are based upon moving from a 5 day per week ed tech III to a 3 day per week librarian, resulting in a net decrease of 44.64%.
- Page 5
  - Technology overhead - Overall decrease of 11.40%. This is due to completing a 4 year lease of the student Macbook cart and teacher Macbooks. We will reenter a new 4 year lease for teacher machines, but will purchase the current teacher machines at \$50 a seat and add those to the student cart, and not re-enter a Macbook cart lease for students. As the Macbooks age out, they will be replaced with Chromebooks.
  - Board of Education Contracted Legal Fees – increased to allow for negotiating 3 contracts in the next fiscal year.
  - Auditors – increased due to actual expense of audit for the school department.
- Page 6
  - Special Education Salaries-Administration – increased to allow for a 2-3 day per week special education director to allow for K-5 support in RTI, social skills instruction, positive behavior supports, executive skills, mindfulness, and to provide feedback and supervision on special education service delivery, implementation, and pre-referral procedures. The position would supervise special education staff, review IEPs, help to develop 504 plans, and would provide workshops for all staff. At the 6-12 level, the director would attend all IEP meetings, ensure that IEPs are current and appropriate for student needs, and ensure that services are being effectively delivered. The person in the position would work to develop positive working relationships with neighboring districts for the benefit of our students.
  - Contracted Services – This is decreased as the special education director would no longer be a contracted service. However, the position is not entirely off-set as the new position increases the time available for support and with the special education agreement between RSU1 and West Bath, all 6-12 special education evaluations of West Bath students will be paid for by West Bath.
  - Other expenses – This is increased to allow for summer school and Maine Care Seed money.
- Page 7
  - Other expenses – Increased to add an additional day per week in the summer, and two additional weeks per year of the office manager position, to ensure work completion and quality and to support the audit process.
  - Cleaning Services – The proposed budget move from a contracted cleaning service to a day employee and an evening employee. The increase includes proposed salary and benefits and associated costs. Additionally, supplies are increased to ensure the district would have the capacity to purchase equipment that would no longer be available to us through the current contract.
  - Repairs/Maintenance – held flat at 128,000, but it includes 60,000 of necessary annual costs and a portion of \$112,414 worth of maintenance and repair costs that will need to be prioritized by the facilities committee.
  - Heating Oil – Increased, as the bid has not yet been received by the town.

- Student transportation – The increase is based upon the new contract, which removes gas and diesel from the expense line and moves that into the purchased price.
- Page 8
  - Student Transportation – Out of District – This increase cost reflects the cost of transporting students who are programmed out of district and require transportation services per their IEP.
  - Food Service – Increased by 10,000, which means the town is funding approximately 50% of the food service program. The rest is subsidized by parents and the state.

The end result of the budget showed a total proposed budget that had a 9.25% increase over the prior year. With an 11.15% increase in state subsidy, a 39.74% decrease in tuition reimbursement, and a 66.28% increase in carryover, the local contribution would increase by \$474,303.45 or 16.58% from the prior year. Mrs. Thompson made some suggestions to the board regarding where they could look to cut back. She asked the board to look at areas that are not contractual, perhaps consider going back to outsourced custodial services, being less precise about tuition costs and budget less than 4% for the possible increase, and to think about the funds for maintenance and prioritize the projects over time. Mrs. Thompson also asked the board to consider the \$69,000 of non-designated funds from the prior fiscal year and perhaps add that to reduce the local contribution, or to set it aside in a capital account. Mrs. Thompson said, for the audience 16.58% is \$474,303.45.

Mr. McDaniel said that this was the same issue that the board faced last year. He asked if there are funds that could be used to prepay certain programs, stating that if the board can prepay certain commitments and decrease the amount of additional funds that are being asked for, we are better off doing that.

Mr. Hinds asked, what is the board's thought about nearly a \$500,000 increase to the local contribution?

Mr. McDaniel said that he would be happier if the board could trim some portion of the budget and feel confident that when the board goes to the town for money they can justify exactly what is there and how we have come up with the figures after giving it the best effort to reduce it. Mr. Hinds asked if other board members were in agreement. Mrs. Randall and Mr. Crews answered affirmatively. Mr. Crews said that he thought it would be helpful to separate what is in the budget because of special education funding, as we can't really effect those areas, but it is a big part of the narrative about why the budget is going up so significantly. Mr. Crews said that if he read the numbers correctly half of the increase is due to special education increases and tuition credit decreases.

Mr. Hinds said that there's not a lot that the board has control over, as the board inherited the contracts with the increases, and inherited how the tuition credit calculation works. Mr. McDaniel said that the board has no control over special education costs. Mr. St. John said that in the past the board has talked about adding additional programs, and that conversation can't even take place.

Mr. Hinds stated that he didn't want to take away from the Facilities Committee work that is scheduled for the following day, but wondered if it was reasonable to even



consider going to employee positions instead of a service? Mr. Crews said that the committee is not looking at biting off the entire facilities list this year, and next year there will be new needs. Mr. Hinds said that the board does not want to get in the business of deferring maintenance. Mr. Crews said that he does not want to defer roof drainage, but that he was hesitant to make the case to add maintenance staff if the net cost is increasing. Mr. St. John asked what the maintenance costs were. Mr. McDaniel said that he would like to see the Facilities Committee look at the needs and make a 1, 2, and 3 year plan. Mr. Hinds asked if any floors had asbestos? Mrs. Thompson said no, and explained that the final asbestos flooring was removed this past summer. Mr. Hinds asked if the tile and lighting projects for the hallway included material and labor, which was answered affirmatively. Mr. Hinds said that there is still some money in the Board of Selectmen's capital account for the school as well.

Mrs. Randall said that she had spoken to a contact at BIW about the boat building program, and it perked their interest.

Mr. Hinds invited the audience to join the conversation and commented that if special education increases were removed, that's approximately 20% of the increase, and it can't not be paid for. The total proposed budget is really not that bad. Mr. Crews commented that if you look at the budget in three separate chunks as contractual obligations including salary and retirement, special education, and discretion, the discretionary amounts are quite small. Mr. Bowdish spoke from the audience that the discretionary amounts are what the children most benefit from. Mr. Crews said he would like to take a closer look at the proposed increases for facilities and maintenance. Mrs. Demers said that the board needs to also consider that there are costs the district is currently paying for for services that the current vendor is not doing, such as plumbing.

Mr. Hinds asked the board to spend some time reviewing the budget before the next meeting.

### **Public Comments**

None

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

1. March 8, 2017 – School Board Meeting - Budget Workshop @ 6:30 PM at WBS
2. March 13, 2017 – Board of Selectmen's Meeting @ 5:30 PM with School Board & Budget Advisory Committee to review draft budget at the Town Office (could just be the finance committee)
3. March 15, 2017 – School Board Meeting – Budget Workshop @ 6:30 PM at WBS
4. April 5, 2017 – Regular School Board Meeting @ 6:30 PM – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of the Budget and Board Vote at WBS

### **Adjourn**

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to adjourn at 8:28. Mr. Crews 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