

## **West Bath School Administrative Unit**

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

May 27, 2020 Following the Budget Workshop (Remote Meeting)

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**Members Present:** Keith Hinds, Robert McDaniel, Joanne Powers, Ashleigh Randall, and Mary Wallace

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Patrick Bowdish, Emily Thompson

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:14 PM by Keith Hinds. A roll call attendance was taken.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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

None

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

None

#### **Public Comments:**

None

#### **Old Business**

##### **1. Discussion of Proposed School Budget**

Mr. Hinds said the board had just completed a workshop with the budget advisory committee. He asked the board if they had any initial comments after that workshop.

Ms. Powers asked if Mrs. Thompson had an estimate regarding the cuts that were discussed in the workshop. Mrs. Thompson said that flooring and shelving reductions would be \$18,281.55. She said she felt they could handle a \$5,000 cut to professional development and travel lines. Additionally, Mrs. Thompson said that if transportation was reduced by the \$40,000 that had been put aside, assuming the reserve account can be reallocated, then that reduction could be considered as well. She also said that Mr. Hennessey had asked about carry forward, and the board could apply another \$70,000 of

carry forward from this budget to add in as revenue as well.

Mrs. Randall said that she is willing to forgo the board stipend as a cost savings measure and a show of solidarity. Other board members expressed that willingness as well.

Mr. Hinds made a motion to eliminate board stipends from next year's budget. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Roll call vote (5-0).

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to eliminate \$18,281.55 from the maintenance line for flooring and shelving. Mr. Hinds seconded the motion. Mrs. Randall said she was in support of that, but wondered about the rest of the capital project summary sheet. She asked if there are anything else in the proposed projects that can come out? Mrs. Thompson said that other than the unit ventilator which enhances building ventilation, only the flooring and shelving remained. Roll call vote (5-0).

Mrs. Wallace asked if the board needed to vote to approve the reserve account in a different manner? Mr. Hinds said that it is a multi-faceted approach. There would need to be a separate warrant article to reclassify that account, and decide if the board wanted anything from the current budget to be moved to that account. He said that the only wrinkle would be that if the funds are removed from the budget, and the town does not approve the change at town meeting, the board would need to request a special town meeting. Mrs. Thompson said that she hoped that the board can work with the budget advisory committee and the board of selectmen to be able to make this happen. Mrs. Wallace said that she would like to make this happen and take the transportation costs out of the budget. She said that she had a hard time believing that if the school is going to be busing children 4 times per day, it would be unlikely that children are at school every day. Mrs. Thompson said that she had targeted that also thinking about \$40,000 as a round number. Mr. McDaniel said he would like to recommend taking \$25,150, which is the increase, which still gives the difference to work with as a failsafe. Mr. Hinds asked for two separate motions, one to redesignate the reserve account, and one to make the budget adjustment.

Mrs. Wallace made a motion to redesignate the account to an unanticipated expenditures reserve account. Mrs. Wallace asked if it should be due to COVID? Mrs. Thompson said she would like to not have that in the motion, in the event the board cuts from other areas such as tuition. Mr. McDaniel seconded the motion. Roll call vote (5-0).

Mrs. Wallace made a motion to remove \$40,000 from the transportation budget. Ms. Powers seconded the motion. Mr. McDaniel said that he would like to just remove the \$25,150. Mrs. Randall said that she agreed. She said she was hesitant to remove \$40,000 from a line that is only increasing by \$25,150.

Roll call vote (2-3). Mrs. Wallace and Ms. Powers voted for the motion. Mr. Hinds, Mrs. Randall, and Mr. McDaniel voted against the motion. The motion is defeated.

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to remove \$25,150 from the transportation line. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. She stated that this still gives some funds just in case. Mr. Hinds reminded the board that they are not adopting a final budget tonight. The board might get to the point where they take it all out, but there is justification for just doing a piece tonight. Roll call vote (5-0).

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to remove an accumulated amount of \$5,000 from travel or professional development at the superintendent's discretion. Mrs. Randall seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).

The board discussed the reduction of legal fees. Mrs. Randall said that she was not comfortable with decreasing the line with the changes in labor laws, with so many changes with COVID, and in the midst of a contract year. Ms. Powers said that she agreed with her.

Mrs. Randall asked about carryover funds, and whether they should move an additional \$70,000 from carryover to the revenue of the budget. Mrs. Wallace made a motion to apply an additional \$70,000 in anticipated carry forward. There was no second. Mr. McDaniel made a motion to move \$50,000 from carryover funds into the budget. Mr. Hinds seconded that motion. Joanne said that next year is going to be tough, but it's not going to be over in one year, and she is concerned about the log term. Mrs. Thompson said she agreed, and that is why she wants to keep the stability of having carry forward funds. It is also not best practice to use unaudited funds for carry forward. In this extreme situation, there's a balance we have to figure out. Roll call vote (5-0).

Mrs. Randall said she had been thinking about tuition savings. If there are fewer students enrolling next year possibly, is this another area to think about? Mrs. Thompson said that if the unanticipated expenditures reserve account could be used to access tuition then she would be comfortable pulling that back. She said that if she had to guess, she would anticipate that there would be fewer students enrolling next year than are currently enrolled. She said if that there was a 3% increase of just the currently enrolled students and no additional students, that would be a savings of \$43,796.60.

Mrs. Powers said that she had read about the Portland Schools opening up the teachers' contract. She asked about teacher negotiations if negotiations refers to next year, or the following year? Mrs. Thompson said that they have one year left of their contracts, so to discuss this further we'd have to request they open up their contracts.

### **Executive Session**

Mr. Hinds made a motion to to enter into an executive session pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405,6,A. of the M.R.S.A. for the purpose of discussing personnel issues at 5:52 PM. This motion was seconded by Mrs. Randall. Roll call vote (5-0).

### **Return to Regular Session**

The board returned to regular session at 6:10 PM.

**Public Comments**

None

**Set Next Meeting Dates and Locations**

1. June 3rd - Remote Meeting - School Board of Directors Meeting @ 4:30 PM

**Adjourn**

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to adjourn at 6:13 PM. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion.  
Roll Call Vote (5-0).

Submitted by,

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

Emily Thompson