

West Bath School Administrative Unit

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

April 14, 2021 at 4:30 PM (Remote Meeting)

Members Present: Keith Hinds, Alexandra Jungbluth, Joanne Powers, Ashleigh Randall, and Casandra Whorff

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Patrick Bowdish, Bobbie Brewer, Emily Thompson

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by Keith Hinds. Roll call attendance was taken. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Comments from the Chair:

Mr. Hinds welcomed people to the meeting and wished them a happy spring. He said he wanted to point out that cases in the community are steadily rising. He said, that as the school enters the final push for the school year, he thanked the community for making good healthy decisions and asked for people to continue to do so.

Approve/Amend Minutes of 3/17/21, 3/24/21, and 3/29/21

Mrs. Randall made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mrs. Whorff seconded the motion. Roll call vote (5-0).

Auditor's Report

Mr. Hinds said that the board is required to have an annual report of its finances from its auditor. He introduced Bobbie Brewer, and turned the meeting over to her.

Ms. Brewer said that there were no findings, which is good. She began with schedule B 5, comparing meals served from 2020 to 2019. She said that there was a significant drop, which was due to COVID, which has happened everywhere.

On page 25, she referred to the student activity fund. She said that there wasn't enough time to use the student activity fund as there was in prior years, but hopefully 2021 will provide more opportunity for funds to be used.

On page 24, this is the schedule for federal awards. These flow through the Department of Education. The top fund is for the Department of Agriculture, and the amount of funds are

related to how many meals are served. The page also lists Title Funds and Local Entitlement. She said the balances that are listed were funds that were spent over the summer.

On page 18, schedule A1 has a line by line expense comparison to the budget amount. There were no budget transfers. No budget categories were overspent, and the total budgetary authority was under-expended by \$281,600.26.

On page 8, in looking at the school nutrition program, Ms. Brewer explained that a loss is typical for schools that she works in, and schools need to do a transfer in from the general fund. This year the board transferred in \$35,000, which was still a little short, so the change in net position was -4,000, which dropped the net position to 9,000. She explained that the board can not have the net position go below zero. If there is a year in which that happens, there will need to be another transfer in from the general fund. She asked the board to keep that in mind when budgeting for food service in the future. She said that in small towns, there's no way for a kitchen to bring in enough sales to cover the costs.

On page 7, this is exhibit C, which is a summary of schedule A1. This has the expenditures put into each budgetary category. No categories were over-expended. The only one that is a negative is the Maine State Retirement on behalf category, but the amount given by the state is listed above, and it nets out.

On page 6, exhibit B shows the funds and the activity in each fund. The transfer in is the PEPG and momentum grant funds. These were transferred into the general fund to close them out. The fund balance is at \$482,000. Capital projects and designated funds stay the same.

Page 5 is the balance sheet. The general fund column shows the fund balance is \$482,000, but the board has assigned \$366,000 to go to the budget to offset the cost. The unassigned amount is the \$116,000 to go towards the next budget. The board is doing a good job of applying the fund balance amounts to future budgets as they are known. However, the board could consider putting more into reserve.

Ms. Brewer said it was easy to do this audit. She said she had not gone out to clients with the exception of one other. She came to West Bath School for 2 mornings. She said she really appreciated all of the precautions that were taken in regards to COVID, and she felt safe the entire time. She felt the school is doing a really good job.

Ms. Powers asked for clarification around the amount that Ms. Brewer would suggest the board put into reserve. She said that whatever the board is comfortable with. She knows the board is already ahead another year for budgeting, but in the future to consider what may be coming with worse case scenarios.

Mr. Hinds asked Ms. Brewer if there were any concerns around fraud and and mismanagement, or anything the board should take action on. Ms. Brewer said no, and if there had been, there would be findings.

He thanked Ms. Brewer for her time and work on the audit.

Adjustments to Agenda:

None

Public Comments:

None

Mr. Hinds reminded the public how to submit public comment during remote meetings.

Executive Session:

Mr. Hinds made a motion at 4:47 PM to enter into an executive session pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405,6,D. of the M.R.S.A. for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations between the WBSAU and the WBEA. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Roll call vote (5-0).

Return to Regular Session:

The board returned to regular session at 5:07 PM.

Committee Reports

1. Policy Committee - Mr. Hinds reported the board met the prior Friday. They are working on ensuring that required policies and cross references to policies are in place.
2. Facilities Committee - Mrs. Thompson said that this committee has not met. They are waiting on allocations for the next round of CARES funding, so it is known how much there is to work with, and for a cost analysis from Siemens on proposed projects so the committee can make a solid plan.
3. Finance Committee
 - a. Payroll Warrants - Mr. Hinds reported that he signed the payroll warrant on 3/29 and 4/12.
 - b. AP Warrants - Mr. Hinds said that both he and Mrs. Randall signed the AP warrant on 3/31 and 4/13.

Superintendent's Report

1. Financial Report
 - a. Mrs. Thompson reported that with 25% of the year remaining, there is 30.53% of the budget remaining. She explained that when the set-aside for carryover is removed from the budget, there's 27% of the budget remaining, which is tighter than the board typically likes to be. She said that all line items are on track and that board will see no surprises when looking line by line, other than how closely its tracking. The one thing she wanted the board to be aware of is on page 14, under out of district transportation. The line says that there is 28.16% of the line remaining. She explained to the board that there has been a significant increase to the number of students the school department is transporting out of district, and the distance of that transportation, so that this may be a cost center that may need

to be supported by others by the end of the year.

Mrs. Jungbluth asked if there are multiple options in regards to transport in terms of suppliers. Mrs. Thompson said that Bath Bus is the district's best option, as they hold the contract and are incredibly supportive of the school system. When transporting students to other districts, if it is homeless transportation West Bath shares the cost with the other district. If there is a need for transportation to a special purpose private school if it is greater than 45 minutes away, there are limited options and we take what we can get. She said that right now all students' needs are being met, and that his her biggest priority.

2. District Updates

- a. Student-Led Conferences - Mrs. Thompson said that the second round of student-led conferences are being held the next day. She explained that conferences are being held remotely with students and families, to give students the chance to talk to their teachers and parents about their successes and challenges this year, along with their next set of goals. She said that while holding conferences remotely is not ideal, it does give some parents who live in other areas the opportunity to participate in ways they've not been able to in the past. She said that she appreciates this silver lining of remote meetings, and thanked families in advance for their participation.
- b. Middle School Math Meet - Mrs. Thompson congratulated 5th grader Anderson Brown for placing third place in the individual portion of the recent middle school math meet.
- c. Teacher of the Year Nomination - Mrs. Thompson congratulated 3rd grade teacher, Ida Beal, who has been nominated for Maine teacher of the year, and is currently a finalist for Sagadahoc County teacher of the year for the second year in a row.
- d. Attendance Report - Mrs. Thompson stated that by board policy she needs to report attendance results to the board each quarter. She expressed that this is a challenging year, as in the past when students would have cold symptoms they would come to school anyway, and now that is not possible. All in all, students are doing very well. There have been 125 school days through the end of March. Mrs. Thompson explained the rules for truancy and chronic absenteeism. Through the third quarter, anyone who has missed more than 12.5 school days are considered to be chronically absent. She provided the board with a report in the packet. She said that while she does not like to see the number of absences that are in the report, there were 3 other students on the prior report who no longer show up this quarter.

Old Business

1. In-Person Instruction Updates - Mrs. Thompson reminded the board that she has place this item on the agenda in order to give board members a chance to discuss in-person instruction, or ask questions. She said that while case numbers are rising in the community and around the state again, all continues to go really well at school. She expressed that when school resumes after break, the majority of staff will be more than 2 weeks past their completed vaccination cycle, which is exciting for us to begin to think about.

Mrs. Thompson said that families have continued to be great partners in the in-person instruction requirements, and the testing turn around has become much faster. All in all, things continue to go very well. She said that as community spread is happening, she's grateful for every day that they are able to be in person at school.

Mrs. Jungbluth said thank you. She said that the school is doing an amazing job and she has a lot of respect for Mrs. Thompson and the staff. Mr. Hinds seconded that. Mr. Hinds said that he assumes that boat building is progressing well. Mrs. Thompson answered affirmatively. She said that one challenge is that they are not able to use the community volunteers that the boat shop has depended on in the past, but having the students there and experiencing boat building far outweighs the challenges. She said that there was one day that boat building was paused because a person associated with the museum had symptoms. She said that regular protocols were followed. They paused, tested, and when there was a negative result, boat building resumed. She said that as long as they follow protocols, it allows the school to begin to think about other opportunities they've held back on as they've been learning about the science of how the virus spreads. Mr. Hinds said he is very thankful they've been able to continue to offer this opportunity.

2. 2020-2021 School Calendar - Mrs. Thompson asked the board to review the end of the year in regards to snow days. She explained that 2 snow days have been used this year. Because of the variety of the ways that schools are delivering instruction this year, there's been a waiver on the number of days that schools to have. Typically, there needs to be 175 student days. Mrs. Thompson proposed that the board waive the two snow days that were held, and set June 15th to be the last day of school for students.

Mrs. Randall said that West Bath kids are at an advantage as they have been full time in school since the beginning of the year. She is in favor of having the last day of school for students be on June 15th. Mrs. Whorff seconded the motion. Roll call vote (5-0).

New Business

1. Approve Labor Contracts
 - a. West Bath Education Association 2021-2024 - Mr. Hinds explained that the negotiations committee reached a tentative agreement with the association, and the association as voted and approved this agreement. he said that there are changes in the sick leave section of the contract. The current contract allows for 15 sick days. The new contract would allow for 13 days, and change personal days from 3 to 5 to comply with the change for EPL in Maine law. He said there is no net change with the number of leave days. He also explained that the section about teacher hours has been changed to express 10 minutes before and 10 minutes after the student day, rather than having set work day hours. There have also been changes to the reduction in force language, making seniority more clear and protecting the financial investment that the board makes in teachers. He said the compensation package would comply with the change in Maine law that requires a minimum salary of \$37,500 this year and \$40,000 next year. He expressed that this is another unfunded mandate. He explained that the salary package would have an increase of 2.25% this year, 2.5% in year 2, and 3% in year 3. Mr. Hinds also said that contract negotiations are a hard process, and does

not follow the #WeAreCrew mentality. He said that in wrapping up negotiations, there was a discussion about a more collaborative way of negotiating in the future. He said that he highly encourages the board to take a look at a different approach in 3 years.

Ms. Powers made a motion to approve the proposed contract. Mrs. Whorff seconded the motion. Roll call vote (5-0).

Public Comments

There were no public comments. Mr. Hinds reminded the public the procedures for making a public comment.

Set Next Meeting Dates and Locations

1. May 19 at 4:30 PM (held remotely) - Public Hearing on the School Budget
2. May 19 at 5:00 PM (held remotely) - Regular Meeting of the School Board of Directors

Adjourn

Mr. Hinds made a motion to adjourn at 5:31 PM. Mrs. Whorff 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