

West Bath School Administrative Unit

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2022 at 6:00 PM

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

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Patrick Bowdish, Emily Thompson

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mrs. Randall. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Comments from the Chair:

Mrs. Randall stated that there was a lot to discuss that evening and that they would move right to the agenda.

Approve/Amend Minutes of 2/16/22

Mr. Hinds made a motion to approve the minutes of 2/16/22 as presented. Mrs. Whorff seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

Adjustments to Agenda:

None

Public Comments:

None

Committee Reports

1. Policy Committee - Mr. Hinds reported that the committee had met the week prior, reviewed several of the policies that Mr. Bailey had recommended, and they were prepared for first reading. He said they were held off the agenda until the next meeting due to the length of agenda this month.
2. Facilities Committee - Mrs. Thompson reported that the facilities committee had met on 2/28 for the primary purpose of prioritizing budget items. They met again on 3/2 to finalize the budget priorities for the first reading. Mrs. Thompson shared the committee's document showing their maintenance plan and priorities.

She also communicated the committee's conversation about a potential solar project with Revision Energy. She explained that given the cost of electricity, and knowing there's a roof project in the near future, the committee would like to look into determining whether or not it would be possible to add solar panels to the roof in conjunction with that project. She had learned about two options from Revision. Option 1 is power purchase agreement, meaning that Revision creates a plan for the building, and finds an investor. The investor purchases all of the equipment and gets the 26% tax credit, the school puts no money down. In exchange the school purchases electricity back from the investor at a reduced rate. She said that currently electricity is 19.6 cents a KW/hour, and it could be purchased it back at 14 cents. It is a 35-year contract w/ 2% escalation figured in for increases in electrical costs. After 5 years the school would have the option to buy the cost of the array back at 55% of the initial cost. Option 2 is to purchase the array outright. Revision would create the plan, insure electrical panels are up to date and ready to communicate with CMP, and would study the building infrastructure to make sure that the roof could take the load. She explained that there would be no roof penetrations, but they would use racking and concrete ballasts. The goal would be to generate and store enough electricity for all municipal buildings.

Mrs. Thompson said there's no costs for the school to investigate this and work with Revision to develop a plan. The next step would be to have their rep meet with the facilities committee and discuss if and how we want to move forward, and then once it is determined to be something that would be viable pull the town committees and BOS into the conversation see if they want to be a part of it. She said she was excited about the prospect and how even the planning of the project itself could be a learning experience for students.

Mrs. Randall and Mrs. Jungbluth both expressed support for the concept of the project. The board discussed the need to balance the initial phases with the bid requirements.

3. Finance Committee
 - a. Payroll Warrants - Mrs. Randall said that she had signed payroll warrants on 2/278 & 3/11.
 - b. AP Warrants - Mrs. Randall said that she signed AP warrants on 3/2 and 3/16 and Mr. Hinds had signed AP warrants on 3/2 and 3/15.
4. Comprehensive Planning Committee (Ad-hoc) - Mrs. Randall reported that the adhoc committee had met with the town's committee on Monday evening. She said they had a great conversation about further developing West Bath School as a community center. She stated that the committee had brought up ideas about how to support students in grades 6-12 that the board had not discussed before and they had a lot of conversations about mentoring programs. She said that now the next step is for the consultant the town hired to draft up a new plan.

Superintendent's Report

1. Financial Report -
 - a. Mrs. Thompson reported that with 25% of the fiscal year remaining, 40% of the budget remains. She said that lines are tracking appropriately, with the exception of areas they have discussed before, such as electricity and oil.

2. District Updates -

- a. WinterKids Winter Games - Mrs. Thompson said that coming back from vacation the school had their Winter Games award ceremony outside with WinterKids. WinterKids brought drummer and motivational speaker Elec Simon, who performed for the school and energized the crowd. WBS was notified that they were the silver medalist was awarded us \$7,500! Now the exciting task of beginning to plan for ways to turn that back into more opportunities for outdoor learning, adventure, and wellness begins.
- b. Read Across America - Mrs. Thompsons said that Read Across America was on March 2nd, and typically that event is organized by United Way, but they were not able to do so this year. However, Mrs. Thompson said that she had reached out to families for volunteer readers, and the community once again stepped forward. She thanked Abel Wright, Emily Anderson, Grace Cooney, Jane Sainsburg, Kasi McGraw, Herve Garant, Lisa Atkins, Officer Brett McIntire from the Bath Police Department, and Deputies Chad Carleton and Brittany Buzzel from the Sagadahoc County Sheriff's Office for coming to read to classes.
- c. Current Events - Mrs. Thompson said the school was holding a March themed spirit week that week. The second trimester had ended and report cards were going home the following day. She also said that on Friday the staff would have a professional development day to work on teaching the next new trait of the updated code of character, to develop spring modules and expeditions and plan for a spring Celebration of Learning. She said she was excited for all that is to come this spring as the practices begin to move back towards pre-pandemic practices.
- d. Substitutes - Mrs. Thompson shared that since the last board meeting, she had been able to grow the substitute pool and she feels better about her ability to properly staff the building when staff need to be absent. She thanked the board for making the changes to compensation to help to support this change.
- e. Top 10 - Mrs. Thompson said that the week prior Morse High School had officially announced their top 10 students. She was excited to be able to announced that 6 of the 10 top 10 students were former West Bath School students.

Old Business

1. In-Person Instruction Updates

Mrs. Thompson reported that the school has had 6 cases associated with it since the last meeting. She said that there currently were no active cases, and pools were all negative again this week.

She explained that the Friday of February vacation, the federal CDC changed their guidance to say that there was no longer going to be school specific guidance, rather schools should follow the guidelines for the community they are in. Universal masking would be recommended in schools and on buses where the community rates are high. On March 2nd, Maine aligned their guidance with the federal CDC, and announced that masking could be optional in schools effective March 9th provided community transmission is in the low to medium range. She said she had talked with Dr. Hanna who supported the announcement, and recommended that the school continue to follow the guidance from the Maine CDC. She highlighted that rates and hospitalizations have

reduced significantly, and that the health field is ready to respond to a mask optional environment.

Mrs. Thompson said the school moved to mask optional on March 9th. Staff and students who are returning to school from having tested positive for COVID, need to mask from days 6-10, otherwise, masking is optional. She explained that other protocols have remained in place, but the CPT has reviewed each one to begin to identify where and when further procedures can be pulled back. She said that provided there is no sudden increases in cases, she expects that things will mostly be back to pre-pandemic practices by April vacation.

She stated that another SOP was released on March 9th. The SOP allows for schools to now accept home COVID test results - both positive and negative results. Results do not need to be confirmed by a school test. She also said that now that the universal masking requirement at school has been removed, staff and students who are either not enrolled in pool testing or are not vaccinated (boosted if eligible) and are exposed to a positive COVID case within their household, will need to follow the quarantine guidance from the Maine CDC.

New Business

1. First Reading of the School Budget

Mrs. Thompson provided the board with a coversheet and proposed budget, and walked them through the line items of the first reading. The budget included the following:

- 01 - Regular Instruction - \$922,070.51/decrease of \$41,344.74 or 4.29%
- 02 - Regular Instruction Tuition - \$1,448,568.14/increase of \$71,597.44 or 5.2%
- 03 - Special Education Instruction - \$615,296.68/decrease of \$1,035.73 or .17%
- 04 - Special Education Tuition - \$51,000/decrease of \$21,000 or 29.17%
- 05 - Other Instruction - \$4,500/no change
- 07 - Student & Staff Support - \$281,076.74/increase of \$15,647.47/ or 5.9%
- 08 - System Administration - \$99,454.96/increase of \$1,500.01 or 1.53%
- 09 - School Administration - \$198,289.54/decrease of \$14,035.01 or 6.61%
- 10 - Transportation - \$165,132.40/increase of \$9,109 or 5.84%
- 11 - Operation/Maintenance - \$220,151.00/increase of \$57,516.60 or 35.37%
- 13 - Food Service - \$45,000/increase of \$10,000 or 28.57%

This creates a total proposed budget of \$4,050,539.97/increase of \$87,955.64 or 2.22%

The proposed revenue includes:

- State Subsidy - \$242,688.79
- Carry forward - \$125,000
- Carry forward from the undesignated fund balance - \$150,000.

The local contribution is \$3,532,851.18/increase of \$98,102.73 or 2.86%

Public Comments

None

Executive Session

Mrs. Randall made a motion to enter 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 8:04 PM. Mr. Hinds seconded that motion. Vote (5-0).

Return to Regular Session

The board returned to regular session at 9:07 PM.

Set Next Meeting Dates and Locations

1. March 21 - School Board Budget Workshop/Special Meeting @ 6 PM
2. March 24th via zoom - Roberts Rules of Order
3. March 30 - School Board Budget Workshop/Special Meeting @ 6 PM (budget advisory committee)
4. April 6 - School Board Budget Meeting - Second Reading of the School Budget and Vote @ 6 PM
5. April 13 - Regular Meeting of the School Board of Directors @ 6 PM

Adjourn

Mr. Hinds made a motion to adjourn at 9:09 PM. Mrs. Randall seconded the 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