

West Bath School Administrative Unit

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Members Present: Nathan Briggs, Keith Hinds, Joanne Powers, Izabela Werner, and Casey Whorff

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Patrick Bowdish and Emily Thompson

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM by Mr. Hinds. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Comments from the Chair:

Mr. Hinds welcomed the participants to the meeting.

Approve/Amend Minutes of 3/6/24

Mrs. Whorff made a motion to approve the minutes of 3/6/24. Ms. Powers seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

Adjustments to Agenda:

None

Public Comments:

None

Committee Reports

1. Facilities Committee – Mrs. Thompson stated that the facilities committee had met on March 11th and March 18th. On the 11th, they talked through the facilities budget, and the cleaning contract in particular. Last year there was a significant increase in contract cost, and she said they are constantly weighing when the right time is to hire our school staff versus having a cleaning contract. After discussing, the committee decided to not extend the current contract, and instead to go out to bid for services, to see what the updated market looks like.

She reported that they had reviewed the overall facility needs, and discussed the need to be thinking about a long-term financial plan. The group knows that the roof repair next

summer will be funded through the withdrawal funds, but the group is able to identify other expenses on the horizon that they wish to have a timeline for, and a funding plan in place. Mrs. Thompson said she would reach out to Mr. Hennessey to ask his guidance.

The committee discussed projects for the upcoming year, and the overall budget. They are recommending adding two shelving projects to the list of building improvements for next year. They also noted the need to fill potholes in the parking lot, and to raise the funding for general building maintenance, as costs of everything have increased.

Mrs. Thompson said that on March 18th, they reviewed the progress of going out to bid with the committee members who were present. On the 12th she had created the new RFP and it was sent out to potential bidders. She set up advertising for the next three weeks in the times record. She sent the 90 day contract notification to our current contractor. The bids are due by noon on April 10th, and packets will be opened at 3. That then leaves a couple of weeks for interviews and allows for time for a contract to be awarded by May 1st.

Mrs. Thompson also updated the group on the response from Mr. Hennessey, who said he'd be happy to meet with the committee at a later date. We also did a final review of the budget proposal for this budget.

2. Finance Committee
 - a. Payroll Warrants – Mr. Hinds signed payroll warrants on 3/14
 - b. AP Warrants – The AP warrants were signed by Mr. Hinds and Mrs. Whorff on 3/20.

Superintendent's Report

1. Financial Report – Mrs. Thompson reported that with 29% of the year remaining, 31.22% of the budget remains (on paper), while 30% remains once the food service transfer is transferred out. She said the budget is tracking as it was when the board met two weeks ago.
2. District Updates – Mrs. Thompson said that given that the board had just met, she wanted to share some upcoming dates to make the board aware:
 - Battle of the Books - coached by Mrs. Fuller – is March 28th at 6 PM at Woolwich Central School
 - April 3rd is the school's recredentialing presentation with EL Education. This is a 3 hour presentation showing the school's progress over the last 5 years (since last credentialing) in the 3 dimensions of achievement.
 - Student-led conferences are on April 11th.
 - Mrs. Jarvis, Mrs. Newton, and the school garden committee are organizing a spring community garden event on May 4th. At this event they are envisioning has a seedling swap, water barrel/irrigation info, native plants and pollinators information, information about composting, and food demos. They are also hoping to have a story walk, student led garden tours, and hands on kids activities. They are anticipating guests such ReTree Us, KELT, Maine Cooperative

Extension, Wildseed project, Garbage to Garden, West Bath
Recycling/Composting Committee, SNAP-Ed, Let's go, and Bath Garden Club
and West Bath Historical Society

New Business

1. First Reading of the School 2024-2025 School Budget

Mrs. Thompson stated that she was presenting a zero-based budget, as she believes in only asking for what is needed based on the current reality, not on hypothetical situations. She expressed that there was some challenges with this budget, including it being a negotiation year, impending legislation, and the ending of COVID funds. She also expressed that this current year is a tight budget year as a kindergarten class needed to be added after the budget had been approved, enrollment had increased at the 6-12 level, and tuition had increased to 8-10% rather than 3% the board had budgeted for. She said that she felt positive about the starting point for this budget proposals, but there's work to do to make sure it meets both the needs of the school and of the community.

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 - \$1,025,173.65/increase of \$49,249.00 or 5.05%
- 02 - Regular Instruction Tuition - \$1,698,141.31/increase of \$47,507.18 or 2.88%
- 03 - Special Education Instruction - \$791,892.49/increase of \$124,294.16 or 18.62%
- 04 - Special Education Tuition - \$28,000/no change
- 05 - Other Instruction - \$4,500/no change
- 07 - Student & Staff Support - \$328,953.77/increase of \$37,971.03/ or 13.05%
- 08 - System Administration - \$109,106.51/increase of \$8,304.09 or 8.24%
- 09 - School Administration - \$212,961.05/increase of \$3,708.28 or 1.81%
- 10 - Transportation - \$180,625.00/decrease of \$7,456.38 or -3.96%
- 11 - Operation/Maintenance - \$232,840.00/decrease of \$4,398.00 or -1.85%
- 13 - Food Service - \$50,000/no change

This creates a total proposed budget of \$4,662,193.73/increase of \$259,251.36 or 5.89%

The proposed revenue includes:

- State Subsidy - \$298,342.59
- Carry forward - \$0
- Carry forward from the undesignated fund balance - \$0

The local contribution is \$4,363,851.14/increase of \$506,737.28 or 13.14%

The board discussed concerns around the increase to local contribution given the board's due diligence to keep the budget low in past years. Mr. Hinds encouraged board members

to reflect upon what they have heard and to reach out to the superintendent with questions before the next meeting.

Old Business

1. Calendar Waiver Consideration from the Department of Education

Mr. Hinds made a motion to waive the two days waived for students by the DOE, for staff as well, provided it is not precedent setting. Mrs. Whorff seconded the motion.

Vote (5-0).

Public Comments

None

Set Next Meeting Dates and Locations

- A. March 27, 2024 at 6 PM - School Board of Directors Workshop/Special Meeting
- B. April 1, 2024 at 6 PM - School Board Budget Meeting/Special Meeting (tentative)
- C. April 3, 2024 at 6 PM - Second Reading of the School Budget & Vote
- D. April 10, 2024 at 6 PM - Regular Meeting of the School Board of Directors –Approve Warrants

Adjourn

Mr. Briggs made a motion to adjourn at 7:11 PM. This was seconded Ms. Powers. Vote (5-0).

Submitted by,



Emily Thompson