

West Bath School Administrative Unit

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

April 10, 2024 at 6:00 PM

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

Members Absent: Casey Whorff

Others Present: Patrick Bowdish, Emily Thompson, and Bob Weir

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM by Mr. Hinds. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Comments from the Chair:

Mr. Hinds thanked the members of the board for the flexibility with scheduling due to recent weather challenges.

Approve/Amend Minutes of 3/20/24

Ms. Powers made a motion to approve the minutes of 3/20/24. Mrs. Werner seconded the motion. Vote (4-0).

Adjustments to Agenda:

None

Public Comments:

None

Executive Session

Mr. Hinds made a motion 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 matters at 6:05 PM. Mr. Briggs seconded the motion. Vote (4-0).

The board returned to regular session at 6:21 PM.

Committee Reports

1. Facilities Committee – Mrs. Thompson said that facilities committee had met that day for a public opening of the bids received from the RFP, and shared the bid rates with the

board. She said that the committee will schedule interviews for the week following break.

2. Finance Committee
 - a. Payroll Warrants – Mr. Hinds signed payroll warrants on 3/29
 - b. AP Warrants – The AP warrant was signed by Mr. Hinds, Ms. Powers, and Mrs. Werner on 4/10.

Superintendent's Report

1. Financial Report – Mrs. Thompson reported that with 25% of the year remaining, 28.97% of the budget remains, or 27.8% once the food service is transferred out. She commented that there were no changes to how the budget was tracking.
2. District Updates –
 - a. Bikes for Books - Mrs. Thompson stated that they were fortunate to have had the Bath Masons visit the school for their Bikes for Books program earlier that day. Students have been submitting tickets for every book they've read since February break. The Masons raffled off two bikes per classroom from submitted tickets! She thanked the Bath Masons for their generosity.
 - b. Credentialing – Mrs. Thompson said that Last Wednesday the school hosted 12 visitors from EL Education for their recredentialing presentation. They had 3 visitors on site, and 9 attending remotely. She explained that the credential "is considered to be a marker of excellence and equity in implementation of the EL Education Core Practices and in impact in the Three Dimensions of Student Achievement" - mastery of knowledge and skills, character, and high-quality work. She said there are currently fewer than 50 credentialed schools in the country - one of which is West Bath School.

She explained that this three-hour presentation was organized to highlight the ways in which students learn at the West Bath School every day and to show evidence of how we have attained, sustained, and grown in each of the three dimensions since our 1st credentialing presentation in 2018. She said that the student and staff presenters were outstanding spokespeople and that they look forward to hearing the results of the review in a few weeks so they can pause and reflect, celebrate successes, and ultimately use the data to help to inform the next set of goals as they strive to continuously improve.

- c. Power Outages – Mrs. Thompson let the board know that due to the power outages in the past two weeks, there was the loss of the milk in the milk cooler in the first outage, and some food loss and milk loss in the second outage. She explained that Mrs. Labbe was prepping the loss numbers and she did not have the exact amounts, but it was looking to be about \$500 worth of milk and food in total.
- d. Student-led conferences – Mrs. Thompson reminded the board that the school would host student-led conferences the following day.

Mr. Weir asked if there were fewer schools partnering with EL, since the credentialing number was so low. Mrs. Thompson explained that the opposite was true, there were more schools partnering than ever, but that earning the credential is extremely challenging and several schools struggled to meet the benchmarks of credentialing during the pandemic.

Old Business

1. Review of the 2024-2025 School Budget

Mr. Hinds let the board members know that he had received an email from David Hennessey that stated that the Budget Advisory Committee would be recommending the budget as proposed.

Mr. Briggs said that he had been thinking about whether or not it would be wise in future budgets to add a percentage of the budget to allow for there to be a cushion in case of emergency.

Mr. Hinds said that that is certainly a budgeting theory, and that West Bath is unique in that there is the investment fund as a safety net if needed. He said that there are some planned expenditures down the road, but if there was an emergency they could probably approach the town for funding. Mr. Briggs said that he thinks that the board should be thinking about adding a safety net of \$100,000 in the future.

Mrs. Werner commented that the school system does have insurance that also would help in an emergency.

Mr. Weir stated from the audience that he could comment on the capital fund, and let the board know that the capital fund came to the town from the lawsuit, with \$650,000 designated for long-term capital improvements. He said it was for things the town and school would plan on, like the school needing to replace the roof. It is not meant to supplement overruns of budgets in a given year. He said that it paid for the town reevaluation and the salt shed and there is a provision in the town budget that each year the town will designate \$50,000 on an annual basis to that fund with a cap of \$866,000.

Ms. Powers commented that there are so many facilities projects on the list for the future, and the board is just trying to cover salaries and benefits in the budget. She questioned how the board will get to those other items. She commented that the budget advisory committee had asked good questions about salaries and benefits, and the only way to reduce those is through cuts.

Mr. Hinds suggested the board not lose sight of all the improvements that have been done over the last decade, and how many capital projects were successful done with COVID funds. He mentioned his desire for the board to develop a long-term capital campaign.

Mr. Briggs said that even a quarter of a percentage of the budget, which is just a drop in the bucket, adds up and over a long period of time if you were to accrue these funds it

would help to take care of facility needs. Mr. Hinds said that for 3-5 years the board tried to put money in the budget towards the roof, and each year the budget advisory committee would remove it saying that investment fund would cover the roof when the time comes.

Mr. Hinds reminded the board that they are scheduled to meet next week for the second reading and adoption of the budget.

New Business

1. 2024-2025 School Calendar

Mrs. Thompson reviewed the proposed school calendar, highlighting any differences between the calendar and that of the neighboring district.

Mrs. Werner made a motion to approve the 24-25 school calendar. Mr. Briggs seconded the motion. Vote (4-0).

Public Comments

None

Set Next Meeting Dates and Locations

1. April 17 – Special Budget Meeting of the WBSAU School Board of Directors
2. April 24 – Special Budget Meeting of the WBSAU School Board of Directors
3. May 9 - Public Information Session @ 6 PM @ Fire Hall
4. May 15 – Regular Meeting of the WBSAU School Board of Directors
5. May 16 - Annual Budget Town Meeting @ 6 PM @ West Bath School

Adjourn

Mr. Briggs made a motion to adjourn at 6:50 PM. This was seconded Mrs. Werner. Vote (4-0).

Submitted by,



Emily Thompson