

Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District

Budget Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2024

Members in Attendance:

Gerald Finn of Millville

Chester Hanratty of Millbury

Christopher Pilla, District Treasurer

Edward Cray of Mendon

Joseph Hall of Bellingham

Tyler Bartlett of Upton

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director

Anthony Steele, Asst. Superintendent-Principal

Nicole Ferguson, Business Manager

Jaime Patriarca, Assistant Business Manager

Jacqueline Raad, Assistant Business Manager

Member Absent:

None

Guests in Attendance:

Joseph Laydon, Town of Upton

Matthew Urquhart, Assistant Principal

Michele Denise, Vocational Coordinator

Mark Conley, Systems Support Technician

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m. by Mr. Finn in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

Approval of minutes from prior meeting

Mr. Finn asked members to review minutes from the January 4, 2024 Budget Subcommittee meeting.

In addition to reviewing the minutes, Mr. Finn acknowledged the work that Mr. Dolegiewicz put towards reducing electricity costs and noted the rapid turnaround in completing these projects to ensure the facility is operating in a cost effective manner.

Motion: On a motion moved by Mr. Hanratty to approve the Budget Subcommittee meeting minutes of January 4, 2024 as written, seconded by Mrs. Ferguson; the motion was voted and approved with one abstention from Mr. Pilla, as he was not in attendance at said meeting.

Agenda items

Ms. Ferguson and Ms. Denise opened the meeting with a review of the District-Wide Technology budgets which showed a total increase of \$48,283 or 23.45% from the prior year budget. The main drivers of the increase related to the following items:

Technology Hardware [\$31.3K increase]

- \$25.8K *Humanities*: Set of 20 iPads with pens, offset by removal of printer purchased in prior year
- \$ 3.5K *Painting & Design*: Set of 50 USB-C chargers for student laptops
- \$ 2.0K *Engineering*: Class set of Ethernet adapters, offset by removal of items purchased in prior year

Technology Software [\$17.0K increase]

- \$8.0K *Math*: Statistics online access offset by reduction in 3 year Kuta subscription purchased in prior year
- \$4.0K *Voc Assessments*: BioTech, Engineering and Electronics certifications (enrollment driven)
- \$4.0K *Academic (Tech-Software)*: Annual renewal and increased enrollment for various software
- \$1.0K *Academic Assessment*: AP English mock exams and AAPPL exam for Spanish (enrollment driven)

Next, Mr. Conley presented the Technology Department budget which had an overall increase of \$24,654 or 3.62% from the prior year budget. Mr. Conley explained the major components of the budget change as follows:

- \$21.5K *Tech Dept (Tech-Hardware)*: Driven by the 5 year replacement plan for obsolete computers, with additional increase as eRate funding is not available for hardware devices in FY25
- \$ 4.2K *Bldg Security (Tech-Software)*: Security camera software, an unbudgeted item in FY24
- \$ 2.9K *Bldg Network/Maint (Tech-C/S)*: Mainly network security training and remote support
- \$ (0.8K) *Library Periodicals*: Reduced periodical subscription, based on trend
- \$ (3.2K) *Classroom Instruct (Tech-Software)*: Reduced licenses for software no longer being used

Mrs. Ferguson directed attention to the next budget area for review which was Fixed Assets (7000 series). The Fixed Asset budget request totaled \$152,504 or 182.75% from the prior year budget. Mrs. Ferguson, with assistance from Mr. Steele, explained that this budget request consists of the addition of a handicapped bus, carpet extractor, and the replacement of the end of the Nimble server, which has reached the end of its useful life.

Mrs. Ferguson also addressed Mr. Hanratty's question for follow up from a prior meeting, indicating that no municipal discounts are available for the water and sewer rates from the Town of Upton.

In closing, Mrs. Ferguson stated the total FY25 budget as presented reflects an overall increase of \$1.9M or 6.73%, for areas presented to date when compared to the FY24 Budget. It was reiterated that budget items reviewed to date were first pass Department Requests and as the Subcommittee continues through the process presented budgets will be evaluated further in the Administrative review.

Special Note: Consistent with the District's standard budget building process [at this juncture] the Budget Subcommittee will continue to receive and review all departmental spending requests. Once fully collected, the Subcommittee will explore and investigate all options (including grants and donations) to secure items prior to including it within local municipal assessment consideration.

The next scheduled meeting is set for Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Motion: to adjourn made by Mrs. Ferguson at 5:48 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Finn; motion voted and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jacquenette Raad, Recording Secretary