

**Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee**  
**Minutes of Regular Meeting**  
**April 11, 2019**

The regular meeting of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee was held in the Three Seasons Restaurant at the school. The following members, staff and others were present:

Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone  
John C. Lavin, III of Douglas  
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale  
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury  
Julie H. Mitchell of Sutton  
David R. Bartlett of Upton  
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director  
Kurtis Johnson, Asst. Supt. for Finance and Operations  
Barbara Auger, Treasurer  
Ray Lehner, Science Instructor  
Amy Sutherland, Recording Secretary

Members Absent:

Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chairman  
Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chairman  
Anthony Yitts of Grafton, Secretary  
Dennis Braun of Mendon  
Paul J. Braza of Milford  
Jeff Koopman of Northbridge

Item 1. Call to Order

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Dr. Fitzpatrick. The Committee was informed that the leadership of the Committee was not able to take part in the meeting. Therefore, the floor was opened for an acting Chair to run the meeting. The most senior member of the Committee is John Lavin.

Acting Chairman:

On a motion made by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was recommended to nominate John Lavin as the acting Chairman. Mr. Lavin accepts the nomination. On a motion made by Mrs. Mitchell and seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, nominations were closed. All committee members voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Secretary:

On a motion made by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was recommended to nominate Mr. Hanratty as the acting Secretary. All committee members voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Item 2. Secretary's Report – C. Hanratty

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was unanimously voted to waive the reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of March 7, 2019 and to accept them as written.

Item 3. Treasurer's Report – B. Auger

3.1. Treasurer Auger presented a report dated February 28, 2019. The report reflects an ending balance of \$6,104,663.65 for Total Funds, including \$1,164,423.76 in Project Funds and \$4,940,239.89 in Local Funds. The member assessments were due on February 1, 2019. All are paid in full, no collection issues. The cash balance is healthy at the end of February 2019.

On a motion by Mr. Bartlett, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was unanimously voted to approve the February 28, 2019 Treasurer's report as presented.

Dr. Fitzpatrick inquired whether research was done on securing the higher interest rates from Unibank. Mrs. Auger explained that she did speak with the UniBank representative and it was communicated that Unibank is looking for higher balances and we have limited capacity for higher balances since we are a school district. The school is keeping the majority of the money in a money market account. As of the end of March the District earned \$38,000 in interest for the general fund. Overall a total of \$48,000 has been earned. \$10,000 of that earned was split between OPEB and student activity and scholarship funds.

3.2. Treasurer Auger presented a report dated March 31, 2019. The report reflects an ending balance of \$5,176,347.12 for Total Funds, including \$1,161,287.76 in Project Funds and \$4,015,059.36 in Local Funds.

On a motion by Mr. Hanretty, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was unanimously voted to approve the March 31, 2019 Treasurer's report as presented.

Item 4. Comments By Student Representative – Jake Stevens & Logan Keefe

Students Jake Stevens and Logan Keefe provided an update on various activities. Twenty students took part in the conference in Hyannis along with participating in the polar plunge. BVT was awarded a gold member at the State level. The school student body recognized facilities appreciation day. Posters were hung up and staff were provided with candy buckets. The school also submitted paperwork to be a gold book winner at the National level. The upcoming events are teacher appreciation week and senior sign off events.

Item 5. Aviation Club Advisor – Ray Lehner5.1. Follow-up Report of Kennedy Space Center Trip: April 2019

Mr. Lehner reported the Aviation Club's trip to Florida was a success. The students were treated to indoor sky diving, an air show, and got an inside look at the production of airplanes. The students also took part in the STEM Program Education. Students were invited up to discuss their experiences. Those who spoke about their experience were Conner Christensen, Jacqueline DiCecco, and Jessica Nordquist. Ms. Williams, who is the mother of Jessica Nordquist, explained what a wonderful experience this is for the students. Dr. Fitzpatrick and Mrs. Mitchell complimented the advisor and students on a most professional presentation.

5.2. Out-of-State Trip Approval

On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was voted to approve the Aviation Club's out-of-state field trip request to the Kennedy Space Center April 1-8, 2020.

Item 6. Academic Department Presentation – Ray Lehner (32min)

## 6.1. Science Department - Mr. Lehner

Mr. Lehner provided an overview of the Science Department. There are currently nine full-time teachers. With the retirement of Kathy Shea, the District has hired Jeszenia McGuire as the Chemistry/Biology teacher. Mr. Lehner felt she will be a great fit for the department. The Science Department works collaboratively and the conduct many activities together. The Science Department retreat after school was held in New Hampshire. This was a retreat where the teachers gained greater insight about STEM Programs. One of the activities the staff took part in was In-Door Skydiving. An overview of MCAS was provided. The Science Department currently prepares the sophomores and freshman for the MCAS test. The Department has created two new freshman courses; Honors Advanced Biology and Honors Advanced Intro to Physics. More than half of the freshman class is enrolled in the one-year course and take the MCAS exam in their respective discipline in June of their freshman year. The results of the MCAS from 2012 have improved significantly. In 2018, 94% of his students are at Advanced/Proficient. There are currently two new science labs created from the renovated space that was the electrical shop. There is also a state-of-the art chemical storage room with a Chemical Hygiene Officer who ensures chemicals are disposed of properly and that they are not stored in a manner that might lead to accidental reactions. Color-coded shelves made by Construction Tech and painted/labeled by Painting Design Tech, ensure proper storage. There are detailed construction plans developed and the department is hopeful there will be renovations to room 340 in the science wing. Given the highly sophisticated presentation, the Superintendent asked if anyone was surprised with our impressive MCAS scores.

Item 7. Facilities Subcommittee Report – J. Lavin

Mr. Lavin reported that the Committee met on April 9, 2019 and there will be a future tour of the automotive department. Mr. Morin provided a report about the exhaust ventilation system. It is fully installed. The floor is in the process of being completely sealed. There is currently a full night time custodial staff.

Kurtis Johnson provided a memo dated April 11, 2019 which provided a MSBA Recap. This is for the roof project. Kevin Sullivan and Hamed Babrak met with Kurtis today and commended BVT on getting our projects done on an accelerated process and how we effectively close out the projects. There were 60 projects in FY18 versus 83 projects in FY19. There is greater competition for funding this year. The MSBA has an annual allocation of \$50 million and the intent of this money is to try to serve as many districts as possible. If we are invited to the Accelerated Repair pipeline, we would be invited to the June 26, board meeting. From this meeting the school would have 60 days to appropriate funding for schematic design. Within 90 days, the Initial Compliance Certification and the Completion of the Maintenance and Capital Planning Questionnaire that focuses on capital maintenance processes and related budgeting would need to be submitted. Both prior and future budgets will be reviewed. The estimated cost of the project will be \$800,000 to \$900,000 with a 53.53% reimbursement. Our current funding sources include \$716,622 in the Roof Repair Capital Project Fund. Once the questionnaire is submitted the MSBA will assign the Owners Project Manager (OPM) Designer. It is the school's responsibility to execute the contract with OPM/Designer (NTE fee of \$15,000). The schematic design work will need to be done within 30 to 60 days. If approved, the District has 90 days to secure 100% of project funding. It is a recommendation that if the District has excess and deficiency available at the close of the fiscal year 2019, it is suggested to take \$200,000 so that the roof project's proposed budget will be at almost \$1,000,000.00 and the school would not need to borrow money.

Dr. Fitzpatrick commended the work in shaping the detailed FY20 budget. The process of promoting budget has commenced fully. We have avoided taking on debt by self-funding various project and working closely with the Department of Revenue. We are creating consistent strategies for replenishing funds which allows these projects to be completed.

Item 8. Assistant Supt. For Finance Operations – K. Johnson

The Committee members were provided a Fiscal Year 2019 Grant and External Funding Activity sheet. The amount of grant money being sought is about \$2.2 million. We have experienced significant success in securing highly competitive grants. This takes considerable time and effort to get this done. There are a lot of moving parts when submitting a grant to make sure the grant is integrated meaningfully. The MA Skills Capital Grant for \$487,588 is currently under review. The school is hopeful that it will receive the \$80,000 for the MA Executive Office of Public Safety (Security Enhancements) and the MetroWest Health Foundation (vaping) grant in the amount of \$5,000. Mr. Johnson will be writing another vaping grant in the amount of \$15,000.

Dr. Fitzpatrick commented that the quality of the applications submitted are superior regardless of the awarding. We are working hand-in-hand with local officials in seeking letters of support for various projects. This complements the investment we are asking of the towns in the FY2020 budget.

8.1. Line Item Transfers – No Line Item Transfers

8.2. Donations Approval – No donations for approval

Item 9. Budget Report – J. Lavin

9.1. Finance Committee Presentations/Meeting – M. Fitzpatrick

a. Douglas 3/12/19 Mr. Lavin reported that the meeting went very well and there were a few questions. They do support the school. One member wanted to see where BVT students were attending regarding colleges. Dr. Fitzpatrick followed-up with this request. The school received a nice letter back from the Chairman of the Finance Committee member thanking us for providing the information.

b. Millbury 3/18/19 Mr. Hanratty reported that things went extremely well. The Town Manager was happy that the number requested was in-line with the per student assessment request of last year. The Annual Town meeting in Millbury is the same night as in Northbridge. Anthony Steele will attend Millbury and Dr. Fitzpatrick will attend Northbridge.

c. Grafton 3/20/19 Dr. Fitzpatrick noted that he and Anthony Yitts attended the meeting in Grafton. It was well received by the Finance Committee. Mr. Yitts provided a presentation at the Board of Selectmen meeting. Grafton was one of the Towns that did not allow our students to give presentations to potential applicants. The Grafton students were only allowed to tour our campus on Halloween which was a half day for the Grafton students. We hope the students in Grafton will be afforded the same opportunity to visit as the other schools in surrounding districts.

d. Northbridge 3/20/19 Dr. Fitzpatrick explained that both he and Mr. Koopman presented in Northbridge. The Town Manager communicated that he could not be present, but we have communicated with him throughout the budget process. He was recruited to be a presenter in the negotiation team for health insurance. The Health insurance had a 0% increase and he clearly helped with this result. The presentation was well received.

e. Blackstone 3/25/19 Dr. Fitzpatrick explained that the Chairman of the Finance Committee in Blackstone is a proud alumnus of BVT. Our presentation was well received. The Finance Committee was pleased with the OPEB contributions the school was making.

f. Mendon 3/27/19 Dr. Fitzpatrick noted that the meeting date in Mendon had several changes but eventually a presentation was made to the Finance Committee. They were complimentary and supportive.

The House of Representatives came out with their budget on April 10, 2019 with an increase of \$30.00 per student which is exactly what we built into the budget.

#### Item 10. Superintendent-Director's Report – M. Fitzpatrick

10.1. Dr. Fitzpatrick reported that prior to the meeting, a public meeting was held on the topic of school choice. The School Council formally met on February 26, 2019 and recommended the District not participate in school choice.

On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was voted to not adopt a School Choice policy for the 2019-2020 school year at Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District.

10.2. Dr. Fitzpatrick said the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Superintendent's Gourmet Dinner was a success. The theme was "Greece."

10.3. Dr. Fitzpatrick invited the Committee members to consider a \$35 to \$50 contribution to the School Committee Scholarship. Several members stepped forward in support of our students.

10.4. Kairos Conference – The Commissioner of Education and his staff coordinated the Kairos Conference with 400 participants. It was a great network of people present with a focus upon student learning.

10.5. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared a financial donation to the District:

a. Homefield Credit Union donated \$3,500 for student transportation van support.

10.6. Visitors:

a. State Representative Michael J. Soter visited and had a tour of the school. We look forward to working with him.

10.7. MCAS Infrastructure Readiness – Dr. Fitzpatrick received notification that, like other school systems, we were obligated to have staff receive training for MCAS. After providing documentation to the State, BVT has exceeded the State requirements for training.

10.8. SkillsUSA Accomplishments – Dr. Fitzpatrick reported that the students won 95 different medals for technical skills at the regional level. State competitions will be held April 26<sup>th</sup>.

10.9. Winter Sports Update and Football Awards Ceremony. There was a great presentation of the rings which were made possible via outside funding. A date to attend the State house is set for April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

10.10. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared the BVT Connect Alumni Newsletter Spring 2019 issue with the Committee.

Item 11. New Business

Mr. Hanratty suggested the school look into a renovation project to accommodate more students since there is such a great number of students who we cannot accommodate. We receive about 800-900 applications and only accept just over 300. Dr. Fitzpatrick noted that this would necessitate a feasibility study.

Dr. Fitzpatrick received notification dated April 11, 2019 that Karen VanKeuren, long-term staff member for Title One, will retire June 30, 2019. We accept this with regret.

Item 12. Items for the Good of the Committee

The monthly compilation of news clippings and correspondence was made available for the School Committee's review.

Item 13. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting – J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on May 16, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the Three Seasons Restaurant.

Item 14. Meeting Closure

14.1. The meeting was declared closed by Mr. Intinerelli at 7:33 p.m.

14.2. On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was voted to adjourn at 7:33 p.m.

**Listing of Materials Used in the Meeting:**

Item 2. Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 7, 2019

Item 3.1. Treasurer's Report – February 28, 2019

Item 3.2. Treasurer's Report - March 31, 2019

Item 5.2.a. Out-of-State Field Trip to Kennedy Space Center - Florida

Item 6.1. BVT Science Department School Committee Presentation April 11, 2019

Item 7. MSBA Meeting Recap

Item 8. Grant and External Funding Activity

Item 10.1. School Choice

Item 10.5.a. Letter from Homeland Credit Union

Item 10.8. SkillsUSA Accomplishment Report

Item 10.10. the BVT Connect Alumni Newsletter Spring 2019 Issue

Item 12. Items for the Good of the Committee

Item 13. Letter of Retirement Dated April 11, 2019 from Karen VanKeuren

Respectfully submitted by,

Anthony M. Yitts, Secretary