

**Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee**  
**Minutes of Regular Meeting**  
**November 14, 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:

Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton  
John C. Lavin, III of Douglas  
Julie H. Mitchell of Sutton  
Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone  
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury  
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge  
Dennis P. Braun of Mendon  
David Bartlett of Upton  
Gerald M. Finn of Millville  
Paul J. Braza, Milford

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director  
Anthony Steele, Asst. Supt./Principal  
Sean Nugent, Assistant Principal  
Barbara Auger, Treasurer  
Amy Sutherland, Recording Secretary

**Members Absent:**

Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chairman  
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge  
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale

Members Jeff Koopman and Mitchell Intinarelli are taking part in BVT's on-campus Curriculum Night and will attend the meeting if reaching a quorum is an issue.

**Item 1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Mr. Finn.

**Item 2. Secretary's Report – A. Yitts**

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was unanimously voted to waive the reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of October 17, 2019 and to accept the minutes as presented.

**Item 3. Treasurer's Report – B. Auger**

3.1. The Treasurer's report was presented dated October 31, 2019. The report reflects an ending balance of \$8,711,833.79 for Total Funds, including \$1,078,517.94 in Project Funds and \$7,633,315.85 in Local Funds.

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

**Item 4. Student Recognitions – Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick**

4.1. Commended Students in the 2020 National Merit Scholarship Program – Nolan Ballard of Upton (Construction Technology); Thomas Buckley of Hopedale (Electronics & Engineering Technology); \*Abigail Cook of Blackstone (Health Services), and Daniel McDonald of Grafton (Information Technology) were recognized as being the 2020 National Merit Scholarship recipients.

4.2. Perfect Scores (600) – Project Lead the Way “End-of-Course” Exam – \*Madison Gannon of Uxbridge (Engineering & Robotics); and \*Grant Van Dyke of Blackstone (Engineering & Robotics) were recognized for receiving perfect scores on Project Lead the Way “End of-Course” Exam.

\* Those students who could not attend the November School Committee meeting shall be invited to attend the December 19, 2019 meeting.

Item 5. Comments by Student Representatives – Logan Keefe & Isabella Caccavelli

The Committee was informed that BVT hosted a Fall Conference on November 7, 2019 for over 700 students. This was a leadership event for students across Central MA. There will be a bonfire on November 26, 2019 inclusive of the annual Turkey Run. This is a great community event. The school will be preparing Thanksgiving meals for over 15 families. The school is receiving donations for the preparation of these meals.

Item 6. Academic Development Presentation – Ashley MacLure

6.1. Ms. MacLure provided a presentation about what students accomplish within the Visual Arts Department. The students have the freedom to be creative. Students are assisted in making a curriculum choice based on interest whether it is painting, drawing, ceramics, sculpture or print making. The students work is evaluated in these shop areas. Students can research, explore and brainstorm through a creative formative assessment based on the National Based Standards. One of the favorite projects was the “Trashen Show.” The goal is to learn the process of art over the end product. The expanded facility area has benefitted this department. A classroom snapshot was shown to School Committee members.

Item 7. Facilities Subcommittee Report – David Bartlett

Mr. Bartlett stated that the Facilities Subcommittee held their meeting last night. To date, 100% of the summer projects have been completed. There was discussion about the snow removal preparation for this fiscal year. There is a plan in place. The snow fleet contains older vehicles which are becoming expensive to repair. The Committee would like to begin discussion on updating the Master Plan. The Committee needs to see what it would cost to do the updating. The school has many grants which are on track. The Facilities Subcommittee did a building tour in preparation of Open House.

Item 8. Asst. Supt. for Finance/Operations-K. Johnson

8.1. Since the representative from Hague, Shady & Co., P.C. was not present, agenda numbers 8.1 & 8.2 were held until later in the meeting.

8.3. E & D Certification Status – The unreserved fund balance/excess and deficiency amount as of submission date of October 21, 2019 is \$908,637. The total certified unencumbered excess and deficiency amount is \$898,566. The unencumbered E & D Excess of 5% calculation for operating and capital budget is \$24,641,915 and 5% of budget is \$1,232,096. The numbers presented are conservative. Dr. Fitzpatrick communicated that as we enter the collective bargaining season, this money is not available for salaries and things of that nature.

8.4. E & D Transfer – On a motion made by Mr. Braun, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was unanimously voted to approve the transfer of \$500,000 from district’s certified excess and deficiency fund (account #1000-00-0302-000-0) into the Program and Facility Expansion Capital Projects Fund.

8.5. Security Window Film Contract Award – On a motion made by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Lavin, it was voted unanimously to award the security window film contract to Window Film Depot in the amount of \$24,207.50.

8.6. Donation Approval – On a motion made by Mr. Lavin, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was voted unanimously to accept the donation from Tattersall Machining for a battery-operated floor scrubber.

8.1. Presentation of FY19 Audit Report – Hague, Sahady & Co., P.C.

a. FY19 Financial Audit – Mary Sahady provided a presentation for year ending June 30, 2019. The independent audit report reviewed financial statements of governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information. She provided a thorough review of the Management Discussion and Analysis section of the audited financial statements, anticipated changes, and management’s responsibilities. She explained the differences between the District’s Financial Statements (submitted to the Department of Revenue) and the audited Government-Wide Financial Statements (for external stakeholders). For example, the Government-Wide includes not only the results of operations from the General Fund, but also incorporates capital assets, bonds, pension liability and OPEB liability; as with most municipalities, the largest impact is driven by the OPEB liability. There was a brief discussion concerning strategies relative to reducing OPEB costs.

b. FY18 Student Activity Agreed Upon Procedures Audit – Mary Sahady presented the findings for the Student Activity Agreed Upon Procedures for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018. Ms. Sahady reviewed the six findings and the District’s response (i.e. Corrective Action Plan) and noted the findings were not significant in relation to findings her firm normally encounters. In many cases, procedures are in place but there are no formal documented policies or procedures. She then complimented the district on the overall record keeping for student activities.

8.2. Student Activity Audit Response (B. Auger/A. Steele) – Hague, Sahady & Co., P.C. performed an independent audit of Student Activity funds for the year ending June 30, 2018. The management of the District is responsible for the Student Activity funds. One of the recommendations is to provide more focused training to club and class advisors. This training will include an overview of policies and procedures that govern student activities, role of students, allowable costs, required documentation, use of credit cards, and planning annual activity events with related fundraising activities. A formal internal annual audit process will be put in place. The District Treasurer and School Business Official will coordinate internal audits of the Principal’s Student Activity Records for off-cycle years.

8.7 Line Item Transfers – no transfers needed.

Item 9. Assistant Superintendent – Director’s Report – A. Steele

9.1. National Honor Society Induction Ceremony Report – The National Honor Society Induction Ceremony was held on November 13, 2019. There are 94 new members.

9.2. Vocational Career & Curriculum Night Report – Curriculum Night took place on November 14, 2019 for new Freshman parents. During the evening, parents took part in a four-station rotation of the various shops.

9.3. The Abigail Adams Award Ceremony will take place on November 20, 2019. There are 81 recipients for this year’s award. Recipients are eligible to receive tuition to a state school for four years.

9.4. School Committee members were provided the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School 2019-2020 School Cancellation Contacts. The school is looking into possible blizzard bags for alternative learning assignments for potential snow days. There will be a detailed proposal at the next month’s meeting.

Item 10. Budget Subcommittee Report – J. Mitchell

Ms. Mitchell, Budget Subcommittee Chair, informed the School Committee that the Budget Subcommittee held their first meeting. Mr. Lavin was thanked for serving as Chairman for the past several years. The Subcommittee noted that members were needed if anyone is interested in serving; meetings take place on Thursday nights. The full School Committee reviewed the budget schedule.

Item 11. Superintendent-Director’s Report – M. Fitzpatrick

11.1. Special Lobbying

- a. Future Pension Withholding Formula – The Commonwealth of Massachusetts House Docket No. 48 has legislation filed which includes a provision that reimbursement currently outstanding to the state retirement board under paragraph (c) of sub-section (4) of section 28 of Chapter 32 for calendar years 2013, 2014, and 2015 shall not be required. This would allow BVT forgiveness of \$180,000 for each year. The pension formula is being reviewed.
- b. Capital Skills Grant – BVT is sending letters of support for this grant valued at \$820,000. The group met this week to discuss the funding and the school does not have an update on the deliberations. The school will continue to monitor this.
- c. Chapter 74 Regulations – Regulations are currently being reviewed at the state level. The Board of Education this week discussed modifications based on those standards. The school will do whatever is necessary to protect Vocational Education and the standards which drive quality and measured accountability.

11.2. The School Committee is in receipt of the FY20 Superintendent Goals. This is a five-month milestone status report. Goal #1 will be part of the collective bargaining. There are

multiple pre-negotiation activities underway. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has recently altered the noted rubric. The presented version did not change the goals but repositioned the goals to align with the newest standards set by DESE. This is now in alignment with the state. Dr. Fitzpatrick will provide periodic reports regarding this process.

11.3 As cross referenced in Item 9.3, BVT has been officially notified that 81 students in the Class of 2020 have been awarded John and Abigail Adams Scholarships.

11.4. An Insurance Strategy Workshop, sponsored by MARS & Borislow Insurance, will be held at BVT on Thursday, December 12, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

#### Item 12. New Business:

Member Yitts communicated that in the past the Committee had discussed how the school is saving money on energy bills. He requested that an updated report be provided at a future meeting on how much the solar panels and furnace (which uses two different types of fuel) have saved the District. Dr. Fitzpatrick responded that this could be provided. He also explained that BVT has entered into an agreement with several solar fields and there is a grid that we draw from with discounted energy. The Superintendent gave credit to the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations for his stewardship in this cost savings endeavor. The off-campus solar sources save energy while not disrupting limited on-campus opportunities.

Member Hanratty communicated that the Committee has discussed the snow fleet and the age of the vehicles and it was his recommendation to get an estimate of how much it would cost to lease a piece of equipment over five years. The current equipment is mostly 20 years old. He suggested acquiring something sooner than later. The option of purchase versus lease will be researched and reported back to the Committee. Mr. Hanratty also indicated that he would volunteer to be a member on the Budget Subcommittee.

12.1. Dr. Fitzpatrick is in receipt of a resignation letter dated November 13, 2019 from Megan Marszalek.

#### Item 13. Items for the Good of the Committee:

The monthly compilation of news clippings and correspondence were made available for the School Committee to review. All members were informed that Blackstone Millville Regional High School Band won the National Championship. The Superintendent and School Committee members conveyed their congratulations for this sending school system's accomplishment.

#### Item 14. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting – December 19, 2019

#### Item 15. Executive Session Per MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) #2 & #3

On a motion by made by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, a roll call vote was taken at 8:25 p.m. to enter into Executive Session to approve executive session minutes and discuss non-collective and collective bargaining strategies per MGL Chpt. 30A, Section 21(a) #2 & #3,

as discussion in an open session would be detrimental to the District. The roll call was as follows:

Roll Call:

Joseph A. Broderick	aye	Dennis P. Braun	aye
James H. Ebbeling	aye	Anthony M. Yitts	aye
Chester P. Hanratty	aye	John C. Lavin	aye
Gerald Finn	aye	Julie H. Mitchell	aye
David R. Bartlett	aye	Paul J. Braza	aye

15.1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes – On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was voted to accept but not to release the minutes of the executive session of October 17, 2019 as written.

15.2. Non-Collective Bargaining Strategy – Discussed in Executive Session

15.3. Collective Bargaining Strategy – Discussed in Executive Session

Item 16. Decide: Release Status of Executive Session Minutes of 10/17/19

On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Broderick, a roll call vote was taken to accept but not to release the minutes of the executive session of October 17, 2019 as written.

Item 17. Meeting Closure:

17.1 The meeting was closed as declared by Member Finn.

17.2 On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

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

Item 2. Minutes of Regular Meeting of October 17, 2019  
 Item 3. Treasurer's Report November 8, 2019  
 Item 8.1. a. Hague, Shady & Co., P.C. Basic Financial Statements  
 Item 8.1. b. Hague, Shady & Co., P.C. Student Activity Report  
 Item 8.3. E & D Certification Status  
 Item 8.4. E & D Transfer  
 Item 8.5. Security Window Film Contract Award  
 Item 8.6. Donation Approvals  
 Item 9.4. 2019-2020 School Cancellation Contacts  
 Item 11.a. Future Pension Withholding Formula  
 Item 11.2. Superintendent-Director's Goals  
 Item 11.3. John and Abigail Adams Scholarships Notification  
 Item 11.4. MARS & Borislow Sponsored Insurance  
 Item 12.1. Resignation Megan Marszalek  
 Item 13. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted by,

Anthony M. Yitts, Secretary