

**Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
May 21, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee was held remotely by livestream through a Zoom platform. The following members, staff and others were present:

Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury
Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chairman
Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chairman
Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton, Secretary
Paul J. Braza of Milford
Julie H. Mitchell of Sutton
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Kurtis Johnson, Asst. Supt. for Finance and Operations
Amy Sutherland, Recording Secretary

Members Absent:

Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale
John C. Lavin, III of Douglas
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge
David R. Bartlett of Upton
Dennis P. Braun of Mendon

Absent

Barbara Auger, Treasurer

Item 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Hall.

Item 2. Secretary's Report – A. Yitts

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mr. Finn, Committee members individually reported out their votes from their remote stations and the vote was unanimous to waive the reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of April 16, 2020 and to accept them as written. *(Dr. Fitzpatrick indicated that Lorna Mangano was part of the Grafton Finance Committee meeting and she participated remotely and extended technical assistance.)*

Item 3. Treasurer's Report – C. Hanratty

3.1. Treasurer Auger presented a report dated April 30, 2020. The report reflects an ending balance of \$8,502,082.81 for Total Funds, including \$1,398,338.73 in Project Funds and \$7,103,744.08 in Local Funds.

On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, Committee members individually reported out their votes from their remote stations and the vote was unanimous to approve the April 30, 2020 Treasurer's report as presented.

Item 4. School Committee Fiscal Year 2021 Appointment

4.1. District Treasurer (Term 7/1/20-6/30/21) - On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, Committee members individually reported out their votes from their remote stations and the vote was unanimous to move the appointment of Barbara A. Auger as District Treasurer for the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District for a period of July 1, 2020 through and including June 30, 2021 pending acceptance of appointment from Barbara Auger.

4.2. Recording Secretary (Term 7/1/20-6/30/21) - On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mr. Braza, Committee members individually reported out their votes from their remote stations and the vote was unanimous to appoint Amy Sutherland as Recording Secretary for the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District for a term of office commencing July 1, 2020 and concluding June 30, 2020, pending acceptance of appointment.

Item 5. Student Recognition – Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick

5.1. Casey Goyette was recognized as being a District Champion Semi-Finalist for the New England First Robotics Competition Dean's List.

Item 6. Staff's Recognition – Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick

6.1. Dr. Fitzpatrick recognized Martha Pellegrino for receiving the Three School Nutrition Association's Employee of the Year Award on the National Level in addition to the State and Northeast Regional levels. This award speaks to the passion and dedication that Ms. Pellegrino brings to her position.

Item 7. Comments by Student Representatives – Logan Keefe

Student Representative, Logan Keefe was present and informed the School Committee that virtual spirit week was held. There were themes planned for each day of the week. Attendance and participation for these events was great. Haley Moore was elected to the Regional Board as President and will sit on the State Board. The E-board elections will be held over the next few weeks. Logan created a video highlighting the seniors and what their plans are for next year. This will be released to all tomorrow. A question was asked if we can keep track of these students and what they are pursuing. The class officers are thinking of ways to stay connected.

Item 8. Vocational Director Report – M. Denise

8.1. Michelle Denise provided the Admissions Status Report for 2019-2020. Eight Hundred and twenty freshman applicants were received; of that, a total of 313 students accepted and 43 declined. There was an increase of over 50 applications from the previous year. Acceptances by Town were provided. The 2019-2020 Admission Season Highlights were reviewed which began with a kickoff admissions breakfast on September 17, 2019. The tours and presentations took place in October-November. There was an open house on November 20, 2019. Interviews took place on February 1 – March 4, 2020. The first round of acceptance letters were emailed on March 30, 2020. The first-choice shop selections were indicated from applications prior to the exploratory. Health Services, Engineering and Multimedia were the top selections. There will be an orientation series conducted as part of the Freshman Orientation. This will be a three-night series June 1, 2nd, and 3rd. A question was asked if there had been any situations where a student did not attend BVT due to not accessing the course they desired. The only case would be farming, and agricultural which Norfolk Aggie has as part of their program.

Item 9. Asst. Supt. For Finance/Operations – K. Johnson

9.1. Mass Skills Capital Grant Update (Biotech Labs) - Mr. Johnson provided an update on the two-year MA Skills Capital Grant which totals \$830,106. Equipment and services to be purchased in year one (valued at \$203,000) includes architect/engineering services, laptop carts, 3D printers, microscopes, tables & stools, and a neutralization tank for a Chapter 74 Biotech Program & Biotech/Chem Laboratory space. The Request For Qualifications (RFQ) for architect

designer services was released on May 6, 2020 with a proposal deadline of May 20, 2020. A pre-proposal walkthrough was held on May 11, 2020 with four vendors attended. Five proposals were received and will be reviewed by the Selection Committee. Final rankings will be determined and the top three firms selected for interview by May 22, 2020. The Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations will attempt to negotiate within the range fee as set forth in the RFQ with the top ranked firm. However, the negotiated amount must be within the budget as approved in the grant. It was noted that there is an existing School Committee Policy (FEB) that governs the Selection of Architects by the S.C. The district also acknowledges that it accepts the State's Model Designer Selection Procedures to ensure compliance with M.G.L. Ch. 7, also known as the Designer Selection Law. The School Committee was informed that there will likely be a need to convene a special School Committee meeting to vote the contract. The goal is to get this secured by May 28, 2020 in order to meet the aggressive timeline defined in the RFQ.

9.2. Line Item Transfer(s) (*if needed*) – There were no line item transfers but determining the COVID-19 costs will be provided next month.

9.3. Donations Approvals (*if needed*) - There were no donations.

Item 10. Budget Report – J. Mitchell

Julie Mitchell provided a budget update indicating that budget presentations continue in a zoom fashion.

10.1. Finance Committee Presentation Meetings – M. Fitzpatrick

- a. Gerry Finn informed all that there was a meeting with the Millville FinCom on April 29, 2020. The budget was reviewed, and Millville was pleased with results and the lesser amount requested. The Finance Chairman and Vice Chairman are concerned due to the States acknowledgement of a five-billion-dollar deficiency. They are concerned about a comeback request for additional funds. We assured the Town of Millville that the budget provided will not be changed. This put the Fincom at ease. The meeting went well. Ms. Mitchell indicated that she has had email communications with FinCom members from Sutton and explained similar concerns. Dr. Fitzpatrick informed all about the scheduled town meetings as put forth in item 10.2 below.

10.2 Annual Town Meetings (*Overall Summary*) – Dr. Fitzpatrick provided an overview of the upcoming town meetings. There are many strategies being discussed due to the unpredictability of these scenarios with which all have been faced.

Known Town Meeting schedules (subject to change) are as follows:

- Town of Mendon June 1, 2020
- Town of Grafton June 20, 2020
- Town of Uxbridge June 17, 2020
- Town of Blackstone May 26, 2020
- Town of Millville June 22, 2020
- Town of Bellingham June 22, 2020
- Town of Sutton June 22, 2020
- Town of Hopedale June 23, 2020

- Town of Millbury June 23, 2020
- Town of Upton June 23, 2020
- Town of Northbridge June 23, 2020
- Town of Milford June 29, 2020
- Town of Douglas Not yet scheduled

Item 11. Assistant Superintendent -Director's Report – A. Steele

11.1. Mr. Steele provided an update on Distance Learning. He is extremely happy with how things are going. Teachers have gone above and beyond. The seniors finished classes on May 15, 2020. All seniors are graduating and have met expectations. There are two phases of getting items from seniors. Graduation (which is planned for July 11, 2020) has three options. One option is at the Hanover Theater. The second option is graduation outside on field with the date being July 11, 2020. The third option is to have graduation take place with smaller groups (i.e., shop by shop). The parents do not want a zoom graduation and would rather postpone until possible. Just today, the Governor released information indicating that no graduations can take place until July 19, 2020. Based on this new information, the school would need to rethink the postponement date. An update will be provided at the next meeting. The underclassman will do the check-out procedure in the Fall.

11.2 Calendar Events Status Report:

- a. Senior Calendar was provided with all the noted events.
- b. Superintendent's Gourmet Dinner will not be cancelled but postponed probably until the Fall.
- c. BVT Annual Golf Tournament is cancelled this year.

11.3. Business Technology Shop will not bring in a Freshman Cohort. This shop is currently struggling in meeting BVT's high standards. It is recommended to do a gradually phased out closure. The charts indicate that only 11 students have expressed interest in the shop over the past three years. Following this year's exploratory, only three students wanted the program. There has also been high instructor turnover. It is recommended to not take Freshman into the program. This has been discussed with the State and they are in support. Most of these programs have been dropped and it has been a trend across the State. Next procedures include notification to the instructor and the Advisory Board Chair. The Department of Education has indicated a preference for all BVT programs to maintain Chapter 74 rigor. Several trade credentials and software applications such as MS Word or MS Excel will continue to be made available via the multi-media program option. The use of computers will be in career enrichment programs. There are many options being looked at but there will be a slow phase out that will not hurt current students. There will be communication with the families of the 11 students giving them an opportunity to select a different shop. This will be done by next Friday.

11.4. Faculty Appreciation Day was held on May 5, 2020. This event was celebrated the whole week. A staff Zoom meeting is scheduled for Friday. The students prepared a video for staff which will be shared at that time.

Item 12. Policy Subcommittee Report – C. Hanratty & A. Steele

Mr. Hanratty and the Policy Subcommittee have been working a diligently on the rewording

of the policies. There is a list of the changes through the discussions which have already occurred.

12.1. Handbook Approvals

- a. 2020-21 BVT Student Handbook was shown with noted changes. The Committee received the document and have reviewed it. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling, Committee members individually reported out their votes from their remote stations and the vote was unanimous to accept the 2020-2021 BVT Student Handbook. Dr. Fitzpatrick noted that the full Committee had received highlighted changes and they reviewed it prior to the meeting.
- b. 2020-21 Practical Nursing Faculty Handbook – Joann Monks was present on the Zoom meeting call. There were several handbook changes in wording and policy. The changes reflected new verbiage as outlined in the summary shared. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling, Committee members individually reported out their votes from their remote stations and the vote was unanimous to accept the 2020-21 Practical Nursing Faculty Handbook with reflected changes.

12.2. New Policies – Enacted Under Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)
The Committee was informed that the polices noted below are directives from the Federal Government. The school's attorney, Mr. Terry, has reviewed the documents.

- a. Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA)- GCCD. On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling, Committee members individually reported out their votes from their remote stations and the vote was unanimous to accept the new policy under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act as presented.
- b. Emergency Paid Family and Medical Leave Act (EFMLA) – GCCE. On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling, Committee members individually reported out their votes from their remote stations and the vote was unanimous to accept the Emergency Paid Family and Medical Leave Act as presented.

There was a question if there was a cost analysis of what this would cost.

12.3. Revised Policies

- a. Vacation Carryover – This vacation carryover is a temporary amendment. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Finn, Committee members individually reported out their votes from their remote stations and the vote was unanimous to approve the Vacation Carry Over beyond June 30, 2020.

This is a one-year situation and would not be for instructional staff. This is for full year staff.

Item 13. Superintendent-Director's Report – M. Fitzpatrick

13.1. SkillsUSA District Competition Results

Skills Advisors: Becky Corda, Robert Jordan & Kat Manoogian

The students took part in the high school Chapter of SkillsUSA at Bath Path R.T.H.S. District V Conference on March 11, 2020. BVT has a total of 89 medals. There were 36 gold

medals, 26 silver medals, and 27 bronze medals. There were also nine (9) sweeps which earned gold, silver, and bronze recognition. Anika Koopman received recognition at the National Level. Congratulations were extended to all the students for their accomplishments. The families of these students received written congratulatory acknowledgement.

13.2. Multiple Zoom Style Meetings Update:

The list below are some of the Zoom informational meetings in which Dr. Fitzpatrick took part in over the last month.

- a. District Superintendents' Consortium: 4/17/20, 4/28/20
- b. Representative Soter: 4/21/20, 4/27/20, 5/4/20, 5/11/20, 5/18/20
- c. MAVA Subgroup DESE-CTE Drop-in: 4/21/20, 4/27/20, 5/4/20, 5/11/20, & 5/18/20
- d. Commissioner Riley: 4/21/20
- e. BVT Admin Team: 4/22/20, 5/6/20, 5/8/20, 5/18/20, 5/21/20
- f. US Dept. Of Ed – COVID-19 Briefing: 4/23/20
- g. MARS/DESE - FY21 Budget Process: 4/27/20
- h. UniBank Annual UFS Bancorp: 4/28/20
- i. Voc Tech Consortium: 4/30/20
- j. MAVA Legislative Subcommittee: 5/1/20
- k. NESDEC Bd. Of Dir. & Annual Meeting: 5/7/20
- l. MAVA Check-in Session: 5/7/20, 5/8/20
- m. BVT Staff Meeting: 5/8/20
- n. MAVA – Career & Tech Initiative: 5/12/20
- o. M.A.S.S./MASBO Joint Meeting: 5/14/20, 5/20/20
- p. M.A.S.S. Executive Board: 5/14/20
- q. M.A.S.S. Professional Development Committee: 5/14/20
- r. DESE - Grade 12 Competency Determination: 5/15/20

Item 14. New Business

The Uxbridge Finance Committee will have a remote (Zoom) meeting on May 28, 2020. Dr. Fitzpatrick plans on participating in this meeting.

The Sutton Finance Committee will be holding their public hearing via Zoom on Tuesday, June 9, 2020. School Committee Member Julie Mitchell and Dr. Fitzpatrick will participate in this hearing.

Former School Committee member Bob Snow's wife recently passed away. Condolences were sent out to the family. Mr. Snow sent in a check for the BVT School Committee Scholarship Fund. The School Committee Fund will be providing three (3) \$200.00 awards to the graduating class.

Dr. Fitzpatrick wanted to get a sense if the School Committee would be comfortable holding a traditional meeting on June 18, 2020. The meeting could be set with the necessary distance guidelines set by the Commonwealth. There needs to be discussion about and work done regarding collective bargaining negotiations. The current contract with BVT collective bargaining members expires on June 30, 2020 and there needs to be a plan devised to avoid a lapse in the contract's duration (June 30th).

Item 15. 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 16. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting – J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on June 18, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. with the venue to be determined.

Item 17. Meeting Closure

17.1. The meeting was declared closed by Mr. Hall at 8:00 p.m.

17.2. On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Braza, it was voted to adjourn at 8:00 p.m.

Listing of Materials Used in the Meeting:

Item 2. Minutes of Regular Meeting of April 16, 2020

Item 3. Treasurer's Report May 15, 2020

Item 4.1 BVVR District Treasurer Appointment

Item 4.2 BVVR Recording Secretary Appointment

Item 8.1 Admissions Status Report 2019-2020

Item 9.1 MA Skills Capital Grant

Item 11.2.a 2020 Senior Calendar

Item 12.1.a District Policy Changes 2020-2021 Student Handbook

Item 12.1.b Faculty Handbook for Practical Nursing Program Changes 2019-2020

Item 12.2.a Emergency Paid Sick Policy

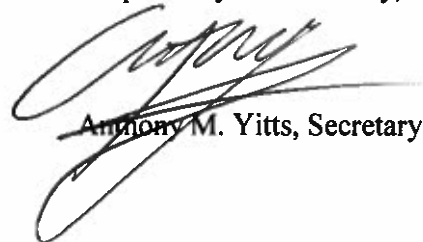
Item 12.2.b Emergency Family and Medical Leave Policy

Item 12.3.a Temporary Amendment to District Vacation Policy GP-1

Item 13.1 Skills USA Massachusetts

Item 15. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted by,



Anthony M. Yitts, Secretary