

Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
October 15, 2020

The regular meeting of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee was in the BVT School Cafeteria. The following members, staff and others were present:

Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury	Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chairman	Barbara Auger, Treasurer
Paul J. Braza of Milford	Anthony Steele, Asst. Supt.-Dir./Principal
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge	Lorna Mangano, Business Manager
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale	Amy Sutherland, Recording Secretary
Jeff Koopman of Northbridge	
David R. Bartlett of Upton	
Dennis Braun of Mendon	

Members Absent:

Anthony Yitts of Grafton, Secretary
Julie H. Mitchell of Sutton
John C. Lavin, III of Douglas
Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone
Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chairman

Item 1. Call to Order

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

A moment of silence was recognized for the recent passing of long-term retired School Committee member from Sutton, Kelton Johnson.

Item 2. Secretary's Report

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to waive the reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of September 17, 2020 and to accept the minutes as presented.

2.2. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to waive the reading of the minutes of the special meeting of September 24, 2020 and to accept the minutes as presented.

Item 3. Treasurer's Report – B. Auger

3.1. The Treasurer's report was presented dated September 30, 2020. The report reflects an ending balance of \$7,252,057.63 for Total Funds, including \$945,330.02 in Project Funds, and \$6,306,727.61 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Koopman, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to approve the September 30, 2020 Treasurer's Report as presented.

3.2. School Committee members are in receipt of the account level operating statement for the Little Beaver Enrichment Center Revolving Account for a period from July 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020. The current balance in this account is \$90.00.

Item 4. Student Recognitions – Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick

4.1. The following students noted below were recognized for their academic accomplishments by the National Merit Scholarship Program. These students placed among the top 50,000 of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2021 competition by taking the 2019 preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

4.1.a. Madison Gannon of Uxbridge (Engineering & Robotics) – National Merit Commended Scholar

4.1.b. Rohi Kaushik of Hopedale (Information Technology) – National Merit Commended Scholar

4.1.c. Nicholas Kirby of Millville (Engineering & Robotics) – National Merit Commended Scholar

Item 5. Comments by Students Representatives – Hunter Claflin and Haley Moore

Student Council Executive Board student representatives Hunter Claflin and Haley Moore were present to provide an update on various student activities. There was a zoom meeting with student council representatives. The student council is using social media to stay connected with the student body. The student council is selling tee shirts with the school theme “Go with the Flow.” There is also a community activity which has clean up days throughout the 13 district communities. Zoom activities which include Spirit Friday are also scheduled.

Item 6. Business Manager’s Report – L. Mangano

6.1. The FY20 Audit Report presentation by Hague, Sahady & Co., P.C. needed to rescheduled. Ms. Mangano did mention, however, that the audit came back with no findings, which was great news.

6.2. The School Committee was presented with Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District’s FY22 Budget Subcommittee Meetings Timetable. The first meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2020 at 5:00 pm. This meeting will include electing the Chair of Subcommittee and verifying subsequent meeting dates.

6.3. Donation Approvals – No donations were received.

Item 7. Assistant Superintendent-Director’s Report – A. Steele.

7.1. The School Committee was informed that the Little Beaver Enrichment Center is up and running. The space has been decorated and is warm and welcoming for the young students. There has been excitement and enthusiasm for the staff who are taking part in this program.

7.2. At the previous School Committee meeting an updated mask requirement was put in place. A one-month timetable was allowed to fully implement the change. Mr. Steele reported that the both the student body and staff are now in full compliance.

7.3. BVT remains stable with the October 1 enrollment headcount. There are 1,243 students attending. Students continue to show interest in attending BVT. There were 318 freshman accepted to attend. Eleven students communicated that they would not attend due to COVID and other related reasons. Other students who were on the wait list were offered spots. An updated enrollment report is being compiled.

7.4. Out-of-State Trip Approval

7.4.a. The School Committee is in receipt of an out-of-state field trip request scheduled for the Culinary Arts seniors on May 12 - 14, 2021. On a motion made by Mr. Koopman, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to approve the out-of-state field trip for May 12 - 14, 2021 to Portland, Maine contingent upon reexamination as the trip date nears.

7.5. A General Advisory status report was given which indicated that the traditional annual dinner, as held in previous years, had been cancelled. Individual breakout meetings will, however, still meet. A video was produced to be shared with General Advisory members which offered introductory comments, BVT's challenges in dealing with COVID-19, and a thank you to the over 500 members for their service and commitment to BVT. To date, General Advisory Committee members have met twice this year.

Item 8. Superintendent-Director's Report – M. Fitzpatrick

8.1. A proposed 2021 School Committee meeting calendar was provided to all members.

8.2. The school is in the process of looking at new alternative fund raising initiatives (inclusive of pursuing multiple small grants) to supplement the school's annual budget since the state's budget is estimated to have a \$3.5 billion deficit. These initiatives shall be pursued by BVT's new grant writer who is tasked with pursuing these grants.

The School Committee is in receipt of checks in the amount of \$3,500.00 from Homefield Credit Union and \$1,000.00 from Milford Federal Bank to subsidize the cost of the student transportation vehicles. Additionally, upon the recommendation of Paul Lazar, the school received a \$500.00 Community Spirit 9/11 mini-grant from the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation.

Member Hanratty inquired regarding the status of the implementation of the collective bargaining agreement. It was explained that the Commonwealth remains in a temporary one-twelfth (1/12th) budget process scenario and no new FY21 state budget has (yet) been approved.

8.3. BVT continues to engage in conversations with our local and state representatives to lobby for Chapter 70/71 support. Governor Baker sent a revised fiscal 2021 state budget recommendation to the legislature. This would match the Chapter 70 January 2020 commitment. The revised budget is built on a projection that state tax revenues will be \$3.5 billion lower. The state budget would fund Chapter 70 school aid at \$5.28 billion to ensure that municipalities and school districts receive at least the same amount as last year. The budgets continue to be reviewed.

8.4. The School Committee was informed that on a split vote the Town of Douglas did not approve BVT's FY22 annual budget at their town meeting. Based on the Mass General Laws regarding a two-thirds member town rule as it pertains to Valley Tech's annual budget, the Town of Douglas will need to approve Valley Tech's FY22 budget at a subsequent Douglas Special Town Meeting. With twelve of its thirteen member communities already voting in support of BVT's FY21 budget, this action by Douglas was greeted with disappointment. Douglas' assessment was attributable to a significant increase in its enrollment and the Commonwealth directed absolute minimum obligation of some \$120,000.

8.5. The School Committee was provided with the Superintendent's goal themes for FY21. This is Step #1 in a multi-step process. The document provided identified themes for subsequent goal development. Each theme and eventual measurable performance goal is aligned with state standards.

Item 9. New Business

Member Hanratty inquired (as it pertained to our current COVID-19 status) the possibility of increasing shop student numbers. Mr. Steele responded that he is looking into a variety of scenarios regarding the next phase of increasing numbers. The other consideration being discussed is looking into different configurations within the tiers. Any change in plan/tier will be impacted by district towns designations which are going from green to red. Mr. Hanratty wanted to know what the cost would be for more busing. He also let the Committee know that there is a thermal testing machine which is \$2,400.00.

9.1 The School Committee is in receipt of the BVT 2020 Annual Report.

Item 10. 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 11. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting – J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on November 19, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

Item 12. Meeting Closure

12.1. The meeting was closed as declared by Chairman Hall.

12.2. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Listing of Materials Used in the Meeting:

- Item 2.1. Minutes of Regular Meeting of September 17, 2020
- Item 2.2. Minutes of Special Meeting of September 24, 2020
- Item 3.1. Treasurer's Report dated September 30, 2020
- Item 3.2. Little Beaver Enrichment Center Revolving Account Update
- Item 6.2. Proposed List of Budget Subcommittee Meeting Dates
- Item 7.4.a. Out-Of-State Trip Approval
- Item 8.1. Proposed Calendar 2021 School Committee Meetings
- Item 8.2. New Alternative Fund-Raising Initiatives
- Item 8.5. FY21 Superintendent Draft Goal Themes Linked with State Standards Only
- Item 9.1. Annual Report Booklet
- Item 10. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted by,

Anthony M. Yitts, Secretary