

**Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
March 4, 2021**

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

Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chairman	Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone	Anthony Steele, Asst. Supt./Principal
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury	Business Manager, Lorna Mangano
Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton	Dr. Matthew Connors, Vocational Director
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge	Barbara Auger, Treasurer
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge	Amy Sutherland, Recording Secretary
David Bartlett of Upton	
Gerald M. Finn of Millville	
Paul J. Braza, Milford	
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale	
Julie H. Mitchell of Sutton	

Members Absent:

John C. Lavin, III of Douglas
Dennis P. Braun of Mendon

Item 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Chairman Hall.

A Moment of Silence was held for the loss of former BVT employees: Retired Plant Maintenance Instructor Samuel D'Angona and Retired Custodian Donald Rivers.

Item 2. Secretary's Report – A. Yitts

2.1 On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was unanimously voted to waive the reading of the minutes of the regular meeting of January 21, 2021 and to accept the minutes as written.

Item 3. Treasurer's Report – B. Auger

3.1 The Treasurer's report was presented dated January 31, 2021. The report reflects an ending balance of \$6,489,353.27 for Total Funds, including \$815,792.42 in Project Funds and \$5,673,560.85 in Local Funds. On a motion made by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Braza, it was unanimously voted to approve the January 31, 2021 Treasurer's report as presented.

3.2. The Treasurer's report for Little Beavers dated January 31, 2021. The report reflects an ending balance of minus (\$80.00). The statement dated February 28, 2021 has an ending balance of (\$650.00). On a motion made by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to approve the January 31, 2021 and February 28, 2021 Little Beavers report. As schools gradually are permitted to transition to greater "in-person" learning, this program has served its purpose and will be discontinued.

Item 4. Superintendent Recognitions – Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick

4.1 Riley Holt from Uxbridge and Cullen Jacene from Northbridge received perfect scores on the Digital Electronics “End-of-Course” exam.

Item 5. Comments by Student Representatives – Emma Conkey & Leah Cook

The student representatives informed the School Committee that “Kindness” is the goal for the month. The bulletin boards around the school have been decorated with this theme. Rocks were painted with messages of kindness and then placed around building and throughout the community. This month was also teacher appreciation month. Student Council made appreciation packages and notes for the staff. It was noted that the Student Council will participate virtually this year in the MASC Conference held on April 9-10th.

Item 6. Vocational Department Presentation – M. Connors

6.1. A presentation was provided by Dr. Connors on the Biotechnology Department. The School Committee was informed that the elaborate nature of the DESE application process for this has taken over a year. One of the last portions of approval is due March 12, 2021. The construction portion of the project will be completed late March. The facility will be inspected in April 2021. The final approval should be provided in June 2021. The Biotech program should be in place for fall. The State currently only has 15 programs. There was an information session provided to the BVT families. There were over 140 participants in this session. There are only 16 seats available for this program. A rendering of the classroom was shown. The classroom will be ADA compliant. Each room will have smart panels. There is an Advisory Committee meeting on March 9, 2021. The Committee needs to have up to 13 members.

Item 7. Business Manager – L. Mangano

7.1. Certified E & D Transfer to Capital Projects – Mrs. Mitchell moved, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, to approve the transfer of \$400,000.00 from the District’s Certified Excess & Deficiency Fund into the Program and Facility Expansion Capital Project Fund. It was unanimously voted to approve. The vote was taken per authorization of the annual budget as presented and voted by the School Committee and its 13 member towns per the FY21 budget book page A-1a.

7.2. Transfer Regional Transportation – Mrs. Mitchell moved, seconded by Mr. Finn, to approve the transfer of \$83,000 of Chapter 71 Transportation Reimbursement revenues from the General Fund to the Regional Transportation Reimbursement fund in accordance with M.G.L. c.71, Section 16 C. The transfer represents a portion of the difference between estimated budgeted Chapter 71 Reimbursement and final cherry sheet allocation. This will be used as a revenue source to offset transportation expenses as detailed in the FY22 Operational Budget.

7.3. Line Item Transfers:

a. Technology Switches – Mr. Finn moved, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, to approve the transfer \$41,900 from available funds from the Tech Department and into the Capital Tech-School Data account due to unexpected power surge created off campus. Four (4) ten plus year

old HP switches sustained damage (modules burnt) and were rendered inoperable. It was unanimously voted to transfer these funds. These switches were critical in connecting the District's computer network traffic to the main server room. With Coronavirus Relief and Cares Act Funds shared with the District by member towns, the District was able to procure four (4) Ruckus switches to replace the damaged HP switches.

b. Food Dump Truck – Mr. Intinarelli moved, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, to approve the transfer from available funds: Utilities-Water/Sewer/HazMat \$30,000.00 and Utilities-Electricity Usage \$16,700 into the Motor Vehicles account (total transfer in the amount of \$46,700.00). It was unanimously voted to transfer these funds. The funds were being requested to replace an existing 2000 Ford F350 dump truck that needs costly mechanical and body/frame repairs with a 2021 Ford F350 dump truck. Additional funds were made available through lower utility usage; generated as a result of this year's hybrid learning with fewer individuals in the school building.

7.4. Donation Approval – There were no donations.

Item 8. Assistant Superintendent-Director's Report – A. Steele

8.1. COVID-19 Tier Status – The School Committee was provided a status update of the remainder of the year as it related to COVID-19. The operations plan is being updated. The third term is set to begin on March 22, 2021. The Governor announced that he would like to get the students back in person at schools. The current spacing requirements have not changed. The busing requirements have changed to allow two (2) students in a seat. A survey was completed by parents and staff and the results indicated that getting the kids back, even for a few days, is better than not at all and remaining remote. The school will be moving to a tier three schedule inclusive of two grade levels at half capacity in academics (Cohort A & Cohort B), and one full grade level in shop at a time. The total school wide capacity on any given day will be 50%.

8.2. Senior Calendar – The School Committee received a copy of the 2021 Senior Calendar. The anticipated graduation date is May 27, 2021. All were reminded that the dates and times are subject to change.

8.3. NEASC Update – The School Committee was informed that there was a virtual meeting with a NEASC representative about the upcoming schedule. The NEASC representative indicated that they are having difficulty filling visiting committee roles as staff are uncomfortable going to schools during the COVID pandemic. There is still a goal to move forward and stay on track, but it was agreed to do this on a tentative basis with the hope of coordinating a mutually agreeable plan where the visiting team may eventually visit BVT.

8.4. Out-of-State Trips:

a. Aviation Club: April 6th - April 13, 2022 – On a motion made by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted unanimously to tentatively approve the Aviation Club Field Trip to be held on April 6th through April 13, 2022.

b. Robotics Team: November 10th - November 15, 2021 – On a motion made by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted unanimously to tentatively approve the Robotics Team Trip to be held on November 10th through November 15, 2021.

Item 9. Budget Report – J. Mitchell

9.1. Public Hearing Report – Mrs. Mitchell explained that the Public Hearing for the FY22 operational budget was held just prior to the School Committee meeting. The Budget Subcommittee based BVT budget projections on the January 2021 state revenue projections within the Governor’s House announced budget. The District will increase the total budget by 3.1%. Total member assessments sustained a 4.41% increase over prior year which was driven by a 3.62% escalation in state mandated minimum contributions. The Budget Subcommittee approved the FY22 budget.

9.2. Results of School Council Vote – Anthony Steele shared that the School Council voted to support the FY22 budget request for the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District at their February 23, 2021 meeting.

9.3. E&D Authorization – FY22 Budget: Mrs. Mitchell moved, seconded by Mr. Finn, to approve the use of \$225,000 from the District’s Certified Excess & Deficiency Funds (E&D) as a funding source for the FY22 proposed budget; it was unanimously voted. The District’s commitment to identification of alternative revenue streams and fiscal austerity contributes to its ability to generate E&D funds. This valuable resource provides a revenue source that created a reduction to member assessments.

9.4. Adopt FY22 Budget – On a motion made by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to adopt the FY22 budget of \$26,396,702.00 as presented.

9.5. Finance Committee Presentations/Meetings – M. Fitzpatrick

a. Douglas – The budget presentation with the Town of Douglas will be rescheduled.

b. Millville – Dr. Fitzpatrick and Gerry Finn provided a budget presentation to the Town of Millville Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen.

Item 10. Superintendent-Directors Report – M. Fitzpatrick

10.1. School Choice – The School Committee was informed that at the February 23, 2021 BVT School Council meeting, the Council recommended that the School Committee not adopt a School Choice policy for the 2021-2022 school year. On a motion made by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was unanimously voted to not adopt School Choice for 2021-2022 school year.

10.2. Practical Nursing Graduation Report – The Practical Nursing graduation took place on February 8, 2021. There were 18 graduates.

10.3. AASA National Conference Report – Dr. Fitzpatrick took part in a virtual conference on February 18, 2021 through February 20, 2021 as part of his Professional Development.

10.4. Notification of Retirements – BVT received retirement notifications for the following individuals as noted below:

a. The School Committee is in receipt of a letter of retirement from Shaun Wersted effective June 18, 2021.

b. The School Committee is in receipt of a letter of retirement from Thomas Finnell effective June 30, 2021.

10.5. Notification of Resignation – BVT received a resignation notification for the following individual as noted below:

a. The School Committee is in receipt of a letter of resignation from Jeanette Finnell effective February 26, 2021.

10.6. The School Committee members are in receipt of the Parent E-Newsletter (the Link Spring 2021).

10.7. The School Committee members are in receipt of the BVT Alumni Newsletter (the Connect Spring 2021).

Item 11. New Business

The Town of Blackstone is currently searching for a new Town Administrator. There has been an interim appointed. The Town of Millbury has a new Town Administrator.

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

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be April 15, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Item 14. Meeting Closure

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

14.2. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Listing of Materials used in the Meeting:

Item 2.1. Minutes of Regular Meeting of January 21, 2021

Item 3.1. Treasurer’s Report January 31, 2021

Item 3.2. Little Beaver Budget Sheets dated January 31, 2021 & February 28, 2021

Item 7.1. Transfer from Certified Excess and Deficiency Fund

Item 7.2. Chapter 71 Transportation Reimbursement

Item 7.3.a. Transfer of Funds to Capital Tech-School Data Infrastructure

Listing of Materials used in the Meeting (continued):

- Item 7.3.b. Transfer of Funds to Motor Vehicles
- Item 8.4.a. Out of State Field Trip
- Item 8.4.b. Out of State Field Trip
- Item 9.2. FY22 Budget Approval
- Item 9.3. Certified Excess & Deficiency Funds
- Item 10.4.a. Letter of Retirement Shaun Wersted
- Item 10.4.b. Letter of Retirement Thomas Finnell
- Item 10.5.a. Letter of Resignation Jeanette Finnell
- Item 10.6. Parent E-Newsletter (the Link Spring 2021)
- Item 10.7. BVT Alumni Newsletter (the Connect Spring 2021)
- Item 14. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully Submitted by,

Anthony M. Yitts, Secretary