

Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
March 10, 2022

The regular meeting of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee was held in the 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	Christopher C. Pilla, Treasurer
Mark J. Potter of Douglas	Anthony E. Steele, Asst. Superintendent/Principal
Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton	Lorna M. Mangano, Business Manager
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale	Eddie Evans, Academic Curriculum Coordinator
Edward D. Cray, III of Mendon	Leah Cook, Student Representative
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury	Emma Conkey, Student Representative
Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chairman	Elise Bogdan, Recording Secretary
Julie H. Mitchell of Sutton	
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge	
David R. Bartlett of Upton	

Members Absent:

Paul J. Braza of Milford
 Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge

Item 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by Chairman Hall. Dr. Fitzpatrick reported that he was notified in advance that Mr. Braza and Mr. Koopman would not be in attendance. As indicated in advance and on the agenda, Dr. Fitzpatrick reminded the Committee that he would transition briefly from the Cafeteria to the Competition Center to congratulate the football team and winter athletes during their award ceremonies held that evening.

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 reading of the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting of January 20, 2022 and to accept the minutes as written.

Item 3. Treasurer's Report – C. Pilla

3.1. The Treasurer's Report was presented dated January 31, 2022. The report reflected an ending balance of \$6,607,757.43 for Total Funds, including \$666,495.51 in Project Funds, and \$5,941,261.92 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was unanimously voted to approve the January 31, 2022 Treasurer's Report as presented.

3.2. The Treasurer's Report was presented dated February 28, 2022. The report reflected an ending balance of \$8,142,000.70 for Total Funds, including \$663,422.00 in Project Funds, and \$7,478,578.70 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was unanimously voted to approve the February 28, 2022 Treasurer's Report as presented.

Item 4. Comments by Student Representatives - Leah Cook & Emma Conkey

The Student Council Representatives provided an update on Council activities. Ms. Cook reported that members would be attending the Massachusetts Association of Student Councils

Annual Conference at Worcester State University on Saturday, March 12, 2022. The one-day state conference offers keynote speakers, student-led workshops, roundtable discussions, leadership training, and a full-day professional development program for Student Council Advisors. Ms. Conkey reported that the Student Council is practicing mindfulness activities focused on self-care and goal setting during Mindful March.

Item 5. Business Manager - L. Mangano

5.1. Ms. Mangano presented the Committee with the Bid Summary for Student Bus Transportation. On a motion by Mr. Bartlett, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was voted to approve and award the Student School Bus Transportation Bid to Vendetti Bus Company (a division of Vendetti Motors, Inc.) of Franklin, MA, the District's current company, as the most responsive and responsible low bidder.

5.2. Ms. Mangano presented the Committee with the Bid Summary for the Energy Management Control System Replacement. The District's current 20+/- year old energy management system, Continuum, is reaching its end of useful life and will no longer be manufactured or supported in approximately two years. Given the anticipated lack of serviceability and availability of system components, as well as advances in technology, the District elected to advance a formal bid solicitation under the procurement provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 149 to replace its current automated energy management system (EMS). Given the District's fiscal austerity, it was recommended that the proposed EMS replacement project be self-funded through the use of Capital Project funds. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was voted to approve and award the Energy Management Control System Replacement bid to contractor, inControl, Inc. of Warwick, RI, as the most responsive and responsible bidder offering the lowest Base Bid price of \$487, 150. The District opted not to include the Add Alternate Bid of \$82,500 in the recommended award, as both the furnishing and installation of network cabling will be provided by the District and its internal electrician performing all necessary wiring/cabling.

5.3. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling, a vote was taken per authorization of the annual budget as presented and voted by the School Committee and its 13 member towns. Per the FY22 Budget Book Page A-1a (Green Sheet), which approved the transfer of \$650,000 from the District's Certified Excess & Deficiency Fund (Account # 1000-00-0302-000-0) into the Program and Facility Expansion Capital Projects Fund (Account # 6100-00-0498-000-0).

5.4. Ms. Mangano presented the Committee with the transfer request for regional transportation. On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was voted to approve the transfer request of \$210,000 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. which represents a portion of the difference between estimated (budgeted) Chapter 71 Reimbursements and final Cherry Sheet allocations, and will be used as a revenue source to offset transportation expenses detailed in the FY23 Operational Budget.

5.5. Line Item Transfer:

5.5.a. On a motion by Ms. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was voted to approve a fund transfer from existing appropriations in available funds totaling \$10,300 for on-campus commencement costs. The identified savings would provide funding for the FY2022

commencement ceremony to be held on BVT's campus versus offsite at the Hanover Theater, as previously planned. Continued COVID-19 pandemic safety protocol requirements currently being followed by the Hanover Theater may constrict full participation of BVT graduates in the commencement ceremony. This request for a change of venue mitigates potential attendance limitations. However, the logistics add unanticipated costs, such as sound systems and video displays.

5.6. Donation Approvals:

5.6.a. 2005 Honda Accord Sedan LX - On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was voted to accept the donation of a 2005 Honda Accord Sedan LX.

5.6.b. Vyteck Laser Cutting System - On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was voted to accept the donation of a Vyteck Fiber Cab Laser Engraving and Cutting CNC machine, as well as its transportation and set-up. The CNC machine will be used for valuable training purposes in the Advanced Manufacturing program.

5.6.c. Aviation Club Donation - Ms. Mangano informed the Committee that the Aviation Club received an anonymous \$6,000 cash donation.

Item 6. Assistant Superintendent-Director's Report - A. Steele

6.1. Graduation Rate Report (DESE) - Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has released the 2021 graduation and dropout rate. BVT's impressive 99.7% graduation rate compares favorably to the state average of an 89.8% graduation rate. BVT has a 0% dropout rate. Mr. Steele anticipates that BVT will have a 100% graduation rate next cycle, which is a credit to the hard work of the students, teachers, and counselors.

6.2. Masking Update – On February 28, 2022, the statewide mandate for masking in schools expired. Mr. Steele informed the Committee that a masking survey to parents and staff as of February 15, 2022, revealed a 5 to 1 (80%) preference for an optional masking policy. Currently, individuals are not required to wear a mask at BVT but may do so if desired with the optional masking policy. However, per federal public health order, masks are required when entering the Nurse's Suite and School Based Health Center.

6.3. Revised 2022-2023 School Calendar & Remote Options - On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was unanimously voted to accept the Blackstone Valley Tech 2022-2023 Calendar as presented in the handout, which includes four optional Remote Work Days if needed.

6.4. Senior Calendar - The School Committee received the 2022 Senior Calendar. The anticipated graduation date is May 26, 2022. All were reminded that the dates and times are subject to change.

6.5. NEASC Update – Mr. Steele was joined by Mr. Evans, who informed the Committee that BVT received its original New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation in 1968. The last decennial review was in 2012, and preparation is underway to receive the NEASC visiting team in December 2022. The self-evaluation process has included drafting rubrics for the school-wide Learning Expectations establishing a newly written mission

and core values statements. Mr. Evans reported that the school is on track for a successful visit.

6.6. MCAS Update - Mr. Evans reported that BVT students had exceptional results on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exams in Mathematics, ELA (sophomores), and Advanced Science (freshmen) that were conducted in the spring of 2021 after being postponed in 2020. Preparations are underway for the current sophomores to take the English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics MCAS exams in March and May, respectively. Students are encouraged to prepare by participating in BVT's MCAS Boot Camps to review practice questions and study techniques. Additionally, a healthy breakfast is provided in the Cafeteria for students on testing day.

6.7. Out-of-State Trips:

6.7.a. Mr. Steele presented an out-of-state field trip request for 42 Construction Technology students and 5 chaperones to be off-campus on March 25, 2022 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to attend the JLC Live Residential Construction Show at the Rhode Island Convention Center in Providence, RI. On a motion by Mr. Potter, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted to approve the field trip to the Rhode Island Convention Center.

6.7.b. Mr. Steele, on behalf of Assistant Principal Mr. Urquhart, presented an out-of-state field trip request for the Class of 2022 to travel to Washington, D.C., for an overnight senior class trip from May 15, 2022, to May 17, 2022, to explore the nation's capital. The total cost for the trip is \$585.00 per student. On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted to approve the class trip to Washington, D.C., as presented.

Item 7. Policy Subcommittee Report - C. Hanratty

7.1. Revised Policies:

7.1.a. Mr. Hanratty presented the policy of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or other legally protected classification. This prohibition includes Sexual Harassment. The District is committed to maintaining a school environment free of unlawful Sexual Harassment and specifically addresses Sexual Harassment, as a form of gender discrimination under Title IX. The District will promptly and reasonably investigate all allegations of sexual harassment through the designated and authorized Title IX Coordinator, as set forth in its policy. On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was unanimously voted to approve the ACAB Policy and Procedures (Title IX - Harassment) as presented.

7.1.b. Mr. Hanratty presented the revised face covering policy. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was unanimously voted to approve and adopt the revised face covering policy as presented.

Item 8. Budget Report - Julie Mitchell

8.1. Public Hearing Report – Mrs. Mitchell explained that the Public Hearing for the FY23 operational budget was held just prior to the School Committee meeting. The Budget Subcommittee based BVT budget projections on the January 2022 state revenue projections within the Governor's House announced budget. The District will increase the total budget by

4.9%. The Budget Subcommittee approved the FY23 budget.

8.2. Results of School Council Vote – Mrs. Mitchell asked Mr. Steele to share the results of the School Council Vote with the Committee. Mr. Steele reported that the School Council voted to support the FY23 budget request for the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District at their March 1, 2022 meeting.

8.3. E&D Authorization – FY23 Budget: On a motion made by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Finn, it was unanimously voted to approve the use of \$225,000 from the District's Certified Excess & Deficiency Funds (E&D) as a funding source for the FY23 proposed budget. The District's commitment to identification of alternative revenue streams and fiscal austerity contributes to its ability to generate E&D. This valuable resource provides a revenue source that created a reduction to member assessments.

8.4. Adopt FY23 Budget – On a motion made by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was unanimously voted to accept the FY23 budget as presented.

8.5. Finance Committee Presentations/Meetings - M. Fitzpatrick

8.5.a. Northbridge – Dr. Fitzpatrick reported that Mr. Koopman could not join him for the District's budget presentation to the Northbridge Finance Committee on March 9, 2022, but the presentation was well received.

Item 9. Superintendent-Director's Report - Michael F. Fitzpatrick

9.1. School Choice – The Committee was informed that at BVT School Council Meeting on March 1, 2022, School Council recommended that the School Committee not adopt a School Choice policy for the 2022-2023 school year. On a motion made by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was unanimously voted not to adopt School Choice for the 2022-2023 school year.

9.2. The Class of 2022 Practical Nursing graduation and pinning ceremony took place at BVT in the Competition Center on January 24, 2022. There were 19 graduates.

9.3. New Scholarships/Awards:

9.3.a. The Committee proposed to offer the James A. Brochu Memorial Award in memory of Jim Brochu, former Director of Construction Management/Facilities, to be used for tuition, books, or tools needed to advance a career in the Electrical field. The \$425.00 award is open to any graduating senior in good standing from the Electrical Department at BVT who has demonstrated a commitment to the trade and their school, with consideration extended to a graduate who resides in Upton with financial needs. On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was voted to approve the James A. Brochu Memorial Award.

9.3.b. The Andrew Cocaine Memorial Scholarship – The Friends of Andrew Cocaine proposed an offer of (1-3) \$1,000 annual scholarship awards. Andrew Cocaine was a 2013 graduate of BVT. The award is to be used for tuition, books, or tools necessary for the student's trade. The annual continuation and amount of this award would be at the donors' discretion. The

award is open to graduating seniors who have are of good character and have given their time volunteering. On a motion by Mr. Bartlett, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted to approve the Andrew Cocaine Memorial Scholarship.

9.4. Notification of Retirements & Resignation:

9.4.a. The School Committee is in receipt of a notification of retirement (effective May 17, 2022) from Tersilia Hughes, Secretary - Facilities Manager, a dedicated member of the BVT family for 25 years.

9.4.b. The School Committee is in receipt of resignation from Ashley Maclure, Art Teacher as of February 7, 2022.

9.5. The members are in receipt of the Parent Newsletter, the Link (Spring 2022).

9.6. The members are in receipt of the Alumni Newsletter, the Connect (Spring 2022).

Item 10. New Business

The Student Opportunity Act funds must be used towards closing the achievement gap for students. Before the pandemic, Mr. Evans explained that the funds would have provided laptops for students needing extra math help. However, with the implementation of BVT's laptop program, all students now have a device. Therefore, Mr. Evans recommended with the agreement of the Committee to repurpose the Student Opportunity Act funds as previously described by the District and as mandated by the Massachusetts DESE to be used towards two acceleration academies for High Needs Students, which are students who are Special Education, English learners, and / or Economically Disadvantaged, which would be offered in February/April 2023 prior to the English and Math MCAS exams.

Notification of Resignation – Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the School Committee that they received a resignation notification (effective March 25, 2022) from Jessica Roberts, Environmental/Life Safety Officer.

Dr. Fitzpatrick informed the School Committee that Sunshine Sign in Grafton had offered to create a plaque in memory of Jim Brochu and we had received the plaque. Mr. Bartlett offered to present it to the Brochu family. The Committee was able to view the plaque, which included a photograph of Jim and the following inscription: James A. Brochu In appreciation to the Brochu Family, on behalf of Jim's extraordinary service to Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School. Employed as the Director of Construction Management/Facilities for fifteen years, his work ethic served as a testament to quality and dedication. As a 1978 graduate of the school's Electrical program, he applied his trade into a highly successful career. The school community conveys heartfelt thanks for his many contributions. Once a beaver, always a beaver.

Item 11. Items for the Good of the Committee:

The monthly compilation of news clippings and correspondence packet was provided at the meeting for members to review individually.

Item 12. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting - J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting will be held on April 14, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Item 13. Meeting Closure:

13.1. The meeting was declared closed by the chair at 7:50 p.m.

13.2. On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, it was voted to adjourn at 7:50 p.m.

Listing of materials used in the meeting:

- Item 2.1. Minutes of Meeting of January 20, 2022
- Item 3.1. Treasurer's Report dated January 31, 2022
- Item 3.2. Treasurer's Report dated February 28, 2022
- Item 5.1. Bid Summary: Result of School Bus Transportation Bid Conducted January 7, 2022
- Item 5.2. Bid Summary: Energy Management Control System Replacement
- Item 5.3. Certified E&D Transfer to Capital Projects
- Item 5.4. Transfer Regional Transportation (Chapter 71)
- Item 5.5.a. Transfer available funds for on-campus commencement costs
- Item 5.6.a. Donation: 2005 Honda Accord Sedan LX
- Item 5.6.b. Donation: Vytex Fiber Cab Laser Engraving and Cutting CNC machine
- Item 6.2. Face Covering Survey Results (Masking preference) as of February 15, 2022
- Item 6.3. 2022-2023 School Calendar
- Item 6.4. 2022 Senior Calendar
- Item 6.7.a. Construction Technology Show Out-of-State Trip
- Item 6.7.b. Senior Class Out of State Trip
- Item 7.1.a. ACAB Policy & Procedure (Title IX - Harassment)
- Item 7.1.b. EBCFA Policy (Face Covering)
- Item 8.2. Memorandum Regarding FY23 Budget Approval - School Council
- Item 8.3. E & D Authorization - FY23 Budget
- Item 8.4. Adopt FY23 Budget
- Item 9.1. Memorandum Regarding School Choice
- Item 9.2. Practical Nursing Graduation (01/24/22) Program
- Item 9.3. James A. Brochu Memorial Award
- Item 9.3.b. Andrew Cocaine Memorial Scholarship
- Item 9.4.a. Notification of Retirement: Tersilia Hughes, Secretary - Facilities Manager
- Item 9.4.b. Notification of Resignation: Ashley Maclure, Art Teacher
- Item 9.5. the Link: BVT Parent Newsletter Spring 2022
- Item 9.6. the Connect: BVT Alumni Newsletter Spring 2022
- Item 11. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted by,

Anthony Yitts, Secretary