

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

251 STONEHAVE ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA

DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM

DECEMBER 16, 2021

The regular meeting of the Greater Fall River Vocational School District Committee meeting was called to order at 5:38 p.m. by Chairman Paul Jennings, with the following persons in attendance: Joan Menard, Rajiv Nehra and Fr. Jay Mello of Fall River, and Donald DiBiasio of Somerset. Also, in attendance were Paul Kitchen, Elvio Ferreira, Superintendent Director, Andrew Rebello, Assistant Superintendent/Principal and Atty. Gregory Brilhante, Legal Counsel.

Mr. Jennings called for the roll call.

Mr. Jennings made the following announcement: In accordance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 30A, Section 20(f), any member of the public may make an audio or video recording of this public meeting. A member of the public who wishes to record a meeting must first notify the chair and must comply with reasonable requirements regarding audio or video equipment established by the chair so as not to interfere with the meeting. Mr. Decio Matos will be recording.

Mr. Jennings led the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Nehra, and voted unanimously to approve the November 18, 2021 minutes, as submitted.

There was no citizen input.

Dr. Ferreira reported on Superintendent's End-Cycle Summative Evaluation for 2021.

Dr. Ferreira reported out on the staffing coverage position; at this time we do not have any interested candidates. If the stipend is increased, we may have an interested candidate.

Mr. DiBiasio is concerned with a teacher doing the staffing coverages, his concern is with an educator being interrupted throughout the school day. Dr. Ferreira is open to any suggestions from the committee members.

Mr. DiBiasio suggested hiring a full time substitute to do staffing coverages and substitute in a classroom.

Dr. Ferreira discussed the process with staffing coverages.

Fr. Jay suggested attaching the staffing coverage duties to another position.

Attorney Brilhante reported that the DAA has had coverages removed from their contract.

Attorney Brilhante stated staffing coverages is not an easy job.

Mr. DiBiasio feels it should be an administrative position, assigning teachers to coverages should derive from an administrator.

Attorney Brilhante stated that staffing coverages has been removed from the DAA contract.

Mr. Rebello discussed the current rate for the staffing position. He suggest an increase in the stipend.

If the stipend was increased, an educator would be interested in the position until the end of the school year.

Fr. Jay suggested putting together a full time job that would include staffing coverages and other duties.

Attorney Brilhante stated that a new position would need to be created to include the duties needed including staffing coverages.

Attorney Brilhante reported that it was assumed that a clerical person would apply for the position. There was discussion of decreasing the stipend because they felt the stipend was too high.

Mr. Kitchen left the meeting at 5:52 p.m. and returned at 6:03 p.m.

Dr. Ferreira left the meeting at 5:53 p.m. and returned at 5:53 p.m.

Attorney Brilhante requested to come back to 2.2 after executive session.

Mr. Jennings discussed hiring three building substitutes with benefits.

Mr. Rebello discussed the number of substitutes coming in every day.

Dr. Ferreira state we need at least 20 substitutes a day to not use the inverse order.

Mr. Rebello stated teachers have stepped up and have been accommodating.

Fr. Jay is concerned with taxing our teachers; he feels we should hire additional substitutes and increase the daily rate.

Dr. Ferreira discussed the cost to the district. If the substitute pay increases to 175.00 a day it would cost the district around \$75,000.

Fr. Jay reported his concerns with classes being held in the student cafeteria.

Dr. Ferreira discussed that one of the three building substitute was going to assist in the Nurse's Suite with COVID protocols.

Mr. DiBiasio doesn't understand why additional help is needed in the nurse's suite.

Dr. Ferreira stated that the test and stay nurses are only at Diman from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. every day.

Dr. Ferreira requests one contracted position for the nurse's office.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mrs. Menard and voted unanimously to approve the increase in daily and long-term substitute rates. The daily substitute rate will be increase to \$150.00 per day and the long-term substitute rate will increase to \$215.00. The increase effective date will be on January 3, 2022.

Dr. Ferreira reported out on the annual report.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Nehra and voted unanimously to approve the request from the Relay for Life for the use of Room 251 for meetings on January 19, 2022, February 16, 2022, April 12, 2022, May 18, 2022, and June 15, 2022 from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. and to waive the use fees.

Dr. Ferreira reported on the strategic plan update; the strategic plan has expired. Dr. Ferreira has requested the ability to contract with the Massachusetts Association of Schools Superintendents and the Massachusetts School Committees to put together a new strategic plan.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mrs. Menard and voted unanimously to approve the request to contact the Massachusetts Association of Schools Superintendents and the Massachusetts School Committees

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to accept the following donation of end mills from Gorilla Mill to the Advanced Manufacturing Program.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Fr. Jay and voted unanimously to accept the following donation from Dutchman Dental to cover the transportation costs associated with the Dental Assisting Field Trip to the Yankee Conference.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Fr. Jay and voted unanimously to accept the following donation from Dr. Philip Robitaille to cover the transportation costs associated with the Dental Assisting Field Trip to the Yankee Conference.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Nehra and voted unanimously to accept the following donation of various tools to Electricity, Carpentry, and Metal Fabrication from Ms. Cindy Rodzem.

MSBA – Kaestle Boos Presentation by Craig Joynt, Project Architect. Discussed the wrapping up of the first phase of the MSBA process. Mr. DiBiasio reported that the relation with Diman and Kaestle Boos has been delightful and educational.

Dr. Ferreira reported on the expenditure approvals.

\$15,035.00	2022001406	12/01/2021	RAMS Sheet Metal Equipment	MFW
\$5,225.00	2022001368	11/29/2021	CERTIFIED RESCUE COURSES LLC	MAIN OFFICE
\$32,900.00	2022001325	11/22/2021	COLLISION TOOLS INC	SPED GRANT

It was moved by Mr. Nehra, seconded by Mr. DiBiasio and voted unanimously to approve the expenditures.

Dr. Nehra reported on the sick bank committee.

It was moved by Ms. Menard, seconded by Fr. Jay and voted unanimously to approve the request for the use of sick bank for Evan Schofield and Sarah Sprague.

Attorney Brilhante reported out on the Grievance Sub Committee. It is abeyance and the Grievance Sub Committee will meet in January.

Attorney Brilhante reported there will be no votes taken on contracts.

Mr. Kitchen reported out on the Monthly Financial Report.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Fr. Jay and voted unanimously to approve the transfer from available funds.

Dr. Ferreira provided report on the Superintendent's Report.

Dr. Ferreira and Mr. Rebello reported out on the number of applications submitted thus far.

Dr. Ferreira reported out on the MSBA update. Our project has unanimously been approved by the board of directors. Our grant has been awarded in the amount of \$145,772,694.00.

Attorney Brilhante left the meeting at 6:28 p.m. and returned at 6:29 p.m.

Mr. DiBiasio provided the breakdown costs of the project.

Craig Olsen and Gregory Joynt, Kaestle Boos Associates, Inc. reported on the drastic construction cost increases; they are seeing an annual increase of 12 to 13 percent in construction costs.

Dr. Ferreira reported out on the estimated tax payer increase per town.

Mr. DiBiasio requested that any time Dr. Ferreira meets with the mayor or a member of the towns to invite the corresponding committee member.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Fr. Jay and voted unanimously to renew our contract with Lyon Consulting through June 30, 2022.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Fr. Jay and voted unanimously to approve the Diman construction project and accept grant award from MSBA.

Pursuant to the agreement establishing the Greater Fall River Vocational School District, and the provisions of Section 6(d) of 703 of the Acts of 1962, as amended, I hereby notify you that the following is a true copy of the vote passed by the Regional District School Committee at a meeting held on December 16, 2021:

VOTED: That the Greater Fall River Vocational School District Committee hereby appropriates the amount of \$293,479,760 for the purpose of paying costs of designing, engineering, constructing and equipping the New Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School and related athletic facilities located at 251 Stonehaven Road, Fall River, MA 02723 including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto (the "Project"), which school facility shall have an anticipated useful life as an educational facility for the instruction of school children of at least 50 years and for which the District may be eligible for a school construction grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority ("MSBA"), said amount to be expended at the direction of the Greater Fall River Vocational School Committee. To meet this appropriation the District is authorized to borrow said amount, under and pursuant to Chapter 703 of the Acts of 1962, as amended, the District Agreement, as amended, or pursuant to any other enabling authority. The District acknowledges that the MSBA's grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need as determined by the MSBA, and any Project costs the District incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the District; provided further that any grant that the District may receive from the MSBA shall not exceed the lesser of (1) seventy-nine and seventy-seven one hundredths percent (79.77%) of eligible, approved Project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA, and that the amount of borrowing authorized pursuant to this vote shall be reduced by any grant amount set forth in the Project Funding Agreement that may be executed between the District and the MSBA. No amounts shall be borrowed pursuant to this vote in the event that a member city or town of the District shall express disapproval of the debt authorized by this vote within sixty (60) days of the date of adoption of this vote, unless otherwise agreed by all parties.

FURTHER VOTED: That within seven (7) days from the date on which this vote is adopted the Secretary be and hereby is instructed to notify the city council of the city and the board of selectmen of each town comprising the District as to the amount and general purposes of the debt herein authorized, as required by the District Agreement and by Chapter 703, Section 6(d), of the Acts of 1962, as amended.

Dr. Ferreira provided report on calendar of events.

The next School Committee Meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2022.

Mr. Kitchen is requesting a transfer request and expenditure for interpreter and translation services.

Attorney Brilhante left the meeting at 6:55 p.m. and returned at 6:56 p.m.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Fr. Jay and voted unanimously to approve the transfer request.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mrs. Menard and voted unanimously to approve the expenditure.

Fr. Jay requested Dr. Ferreira speak on the morale issues at Diman.

Dr. Ferreira reported that it has been a long taxing time for all of the staff, everyone has been working to capacity. Dr. Ferreira stated that staffing coverages has been a nightmare.

Mrs. Menard left the meeting at 6:58 p.m. and returned at 7:02 p.m.

Dr. Ferreira believes that the majority of the staff members feel comfortable to meet with him and Mr. Rebello.

Fr. Jay would like to see an open forum for faculty members to voice their concerns positive or negative.

Mr. DiBiasio reported that teachers are feeling left out and not heard by the administrators. Mr. DiBiasio recommends that the administration team go into the classrooms or shops daily. Mr. DiBiasio believes the educators should see their department head to address their concerns. Mr. DiBiasio stated that the department heads don't do any more than create budgets.

Mr. Rebello stated he is concerned with the staff and educators and believes the administration team can be visible more. He takes the concerns seriously.

Fr. Jay asked if we could go back to in person meetings. He suggests the administration team be allowed in person.

Attorney Brilhante suggest holding meetings in the auditorium.

Fr. Jay requests the administration team be invited to in person meetings.

Mr. Decio Matos reported to the board that they do have an audience logged in and they can contribute to the meeting. It is a difficult format, but please remember you do have an audience. He requested, to the members, to feel free to reach out.

The next School Committee Meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2022.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mrs. Menard, and voted unanimously on a roll call at 7:16 p.m. to enter into Executive Session for the following: Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a), paragraph 3, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares: Grievance SY 2022-01, AFSCME c. Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a), paragraph 2, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel: Individual Contracts –Assistant Superintendent-Principal, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Recording Secretary to the School Committee

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Nehra, and voted unanimously on a roll call at 7:47 p.m. to rise into Open Session.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Dr. Nehra, and voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Amy Bosse*

Materials Included:

November 18, 2021 Minutes

Monthly Financial Report

FY21 Transfers

FY22 Transfers

Superintendent's Report