

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUDGET/FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, June 17, 2020

A meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Budget & Facilities Subcommittee was held virtually on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, via Zoom Conferencing. Subcommittee Chairperson, Brian Bradshaw, called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Present:

Subcommittee: Brian Bradshaw, Chairperson, Sheila Ellsworth, and John Bento
School Committee and Administration: Adam Ramos, Victor Cabral, Marjorie McBride, Jonathan Brice, Ed.D., Superintendent; Diane Sanna, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent; Tina Fogell, Esq., Chief Operating Officer; Edward Clarke, M.Ed., CAGS, Director of Student Support Services; George Simmons, Director of Facilities; Rose Muller, Director of Information Technology; Joel Harrington, Interim Business Manager; Kathryn Brown, Recording Secretary

I. Approval of Minutes

A. May 4, 2020

MOTION: Mr. Bento made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2020, meeting; seconded by Mrs. Ellsworth.

The motion passed unanimously.

II. FY20 Budget Status

A. Monthly Business Office Reports

Dr. Brice stated that the business office is involved in the end of year close out process which includes reviewing all encumbrances, purchase orders, and contacting vendors to make sure that all final invoices have been received. An accurate depiction of the current financial status will be provided to the subcommittee and school committee before the end of the fiscal year. Due to distance learning, there were some invoices we did not need to pay. The savings seen were in transportation, out of district tuition, day to day substitutes, and Chartwells. The process will continue to be refined as reports are run daily and information will continue to be shared as it is received.

Chairperson Bradshaw asked if there was any discussion, and Mr. Bento and Mrs. Ellsworth responded in the negative.

Mr. Bradshaw commented about the end of year policies and to be mindful of all necessary end of the year exercises for this year and specifically policy DIC which talks about the different portions of fund balance that need to be reported.

Ms. Ellsworth stated that accounting principles should be followed in regards to all goods and services received by June 30, 2020 and all invoices need to be paid within thirty days.

No further discussion on this topic.

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUDGET/FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

B. Discussion of May End of Month Dashboard

Dr. Brice stated there will not be a discussion on the May end of month dashboard, as they continue to clean up the data. The dashboard data will be finalized and provided to the school committee with the numbers needed between now and the end of the month.

Mr. Bradshaw asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. Bento and Ms. Ellsworth responded in the negative.

Mr. Bradshaw reminded the members of the school committee who are not on the subcommittee to feel free to raise their hand if they have any questions or concerns.

III. FY21 Planning

A. Receipt of JFC Letter with Funding Approval

Dr. Brice reported that on Friday, June 12, 2020, he received a letter from the Joint Finance Committee that was consistent with their March vote to provide local funding. Dr. Brice reiterated that BWRSD is thankful to the JFC for their commitment to education and willingness during these times to make education a priority.

Mr. Bradshaw asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. McBride asked if it was policy DIC they wanted to know about in the previous item.

Mr. Bradshaw responded that with the end of the year approaching, does the subcommittee need to direct and recommend to the full committee that the surplus is moved to capital. Does the subcommittee need to meet again to take action?

Mrs. Ellsworth stated they are referring to what is in the fund balance policy. That was the action the committee took last year.

Mr. Bradshaw responded that he did not see it anywhere that it happened automatically.

Mrs. McBride responded that it is on page 2 of DIC and reads a portion of the policy.

Mr. Bradshaw stated that he was thankful for the information.

Dr. Brice indicated that he had one thing to add, which the school committee policy indicates that the remaining funds go to capital improvements, part of what he has been discussing with all districts and RIDE is that the plan the district needs to submit for reopening must included the increased expenditures for transportation, equipment, cleaning, supplies and materials, and any additional staffing. All of this means that the district will not be able to commit the funds to capital improvements, but will need to

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUDGET/FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

have them available in fund balance once the costs for reopening have been identified in the plan due to RIDE in mid-July.

Mrs. Ellsworth stated that the district needs to make sure that there is a special fund for COVID expenses. The CARES Act is clear that districts will be reimbursed for those costs that are directly affected by COVID, such as salaries, graduation, etc.

Mr. Bradshaw asked if there was a specific UCOA code for COVID-19 expenses.

Mrs. Ellsworth stated that it is on the RIDE website and it tells you how to do it. There is a lot of detail.

Mr. Bradshaw responded that the district needed to add that information to the next report.

Mrs. McBride asked if we should ask the auditors.

Ms. Ellsworth stated that we need to make sure we have a 5 year plan for technology, a maintenance plan for larger items, as well as for capital expenditures to make sure we are in a good place financially.

Ms. McBride stated that she agreed.

Dr. Brice stated that the district is currently working on a strategic plan that has 5 project charters: one that works with each of top 5 and 5 topics. Culture and climate is being led by Ed Clarke, Teaching and Learning is being led by Dr. Sanna, Professional development is being led by Tina Fogell, Customer service is being led by Kathryn Brown. Then there is the overall charter, one on technology and one on facilities. This will allow us to generate a model that assists us in creating a new master educational facilities plan with the help of the architect selected by the district and build a new Necessity of Construction for RIDE approval.

Mr. Bento asked if there was school committee representation with the strategic plan.

Dr. Brice stated that it is internal now, and will seek feedback from the school committee and the public before moving it to the school committee to be approved.

Mr. Bento stated that we usually have one or two members sit on strategic planning.

Ms. McBride stated that we also invite the public, but that it is her understanding that the district staff are currently working on the framework and then will be asking for feedback.

Dr. Brice indicated that Mrs. McBride was correct.

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUDGET/FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

No further discussion.

IV. Recommendations, Discussions, and Actions

A. Transportation Bid

Dr. Brice stated that he was going to give the floor to Ms. Fogell to present the bid recommendation.

Ms. Fogell provided the committee with an overview of the bid recommendation for transportation. The recommendation is to accept alternative bid option 1. Although it is a 10.5% increase, it is better than anticipated and it locks in the COLA payment so the district has security in what will be paid.

Dr. Brice stated that the district needed to lock in the transportation provider given all the issues with reopening in the fall.

Mrs. McBride stated that she is disappointed that there was only one bid received but does not remember a time where the district had a choice. She agreed with the fixed costs.

Mrs. Ellsworth asked about out of district transportation costs.

Ms. Fogell explained that out of district transportation is through the state and her team is waiting for those numbers to come in.

Mrs. Ellsworth stated that the district budgeted \$3 million for transportation and should make sure those costs are updated when known so it is budgeted accordingly.

Dr. Brice indicated that we are working on it. The out of district placements are being reviewed to see if the district can provide students with services within the district. If that is possible, the district can save on tuition and transportation.

Mrs. Ellsworth stated that the district is in a good position with this transportation bid, but should keep in mind that there is a total transportation cost that needs to be budgeted when the contract is negotiated for FY21.

Dr. Brice responded the district should have that information by the time the plan is submitted to RIDE for reopening.

Mrs. McBride stated that the district may want to look into transportation waivers.

Dr. Brice stated that this was an ongoing conversation and that he would bring it up at tomorrow's RISSA meeting.

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUDGET/FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Bradshaw asked if there were any comments for discussion.

Mr. Bento asked if the increase was 25%.

Ms. Fogell responded that it was a 10.5% increase.

Mr. Ramos asked about the contract language First Student was asking for and if the district would get stuck with no vendor if First Student did not agree to the terms.

Ms. Fogell responded that they had to accept the bid if it was approved by the school committee. It was her understanding that First Student could not walk away based on other negotiated items.

Mr. Bradshaw asked for a motion to accept the transportation bid from First Student with the alternative one option.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Bento to accept the transportation bid from First Student with the alternative one option; seconded by Mrs. Ellsworth.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bradshaw stated that the subcommittee would make a recommendation to the full committee to accept the bid with a total cost of \$2,264,849.49 for FY 2021.

B. Other Bid Openings

Ms. Fogell stated that we received an offer to purchase the van for \$165.50. We just wanted to notify them per the policy. We did not receive a bid for the two (2) buses at this time.

V. Adjournment

Mr. Bradshaw stated that this concluded the agenda for the evening. He wanted to make sure we review all the policies affecting year end and whether there were line items that needed to be adjusted. He indicated that there would be another meeting scheduled on or before June 30, 2020.

Dr. Brice recommended that the subcommittee meet on June 29, 2020 or June 30, 2020, as the majority of the payroll expenses would have been incurred and there will be a better idea of the fund balance after the last payroll of FY 2020 on June 26, 2020.

Mr. Bradshaw stated that he will discuss a meeting schedule with Dr. Brice and School Committee Chairperson Schofield. He asked to have an update on the Necessity of Construction at the next meeting to make sure all reimbursements will be received.

Dr. Brice stated that the reimbursement requests are due on July 15, 2020.

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUDGET/FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

Mrs. Ellsworth stated that all encumbrances need to be known and to make sure all requirements for Article 9 have been met. The fund balance can be assigned and amended at a later date.

Dr, Brice stated that the district is in compliance with Article 9, which also allows the use of salaries and repairs.

MOTION: There being no more business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Bento to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m.; seconded by Mrs. Ellsworth.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Brian Bradshaw, Chair
Budget/Facilities Subcommittee**

/kb