

**Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
June 15, 2023**

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, Chair	Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone	Anthony E. Steele, Asst. Superintendent/Principal
Mark J. Potter of Douglas	Lorna M. Mangano, Business Manager
Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton	Dr. Matthew Connors, Vocational Director
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale	Michele Denise, Vocational Director
Edward D. Cray, III of Mendon	Robert Dolegiewicz, Facilities Manager
Paul J. Braza of Milford	Martha Pellegrino, Nutrition Educator
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury	Leonard O'Neil, Social Studies Teacher
Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chair	Ellie Poitras, Student Council Representative
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge	Mark Biron, V.P. of Product Support at MiltonCAT
James M. Mitchell of Sutton	Elise Bogdan, Recording Secretary
Tyler D. Bartlett of Upton	
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge	

Members Absent:

Christopher C. Pilla, District Treasurer

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 in remembrance of a former employee, Robert Genoa, an Electronics instructor. Mr. Genoa, 86, died on May 21, 2023.

Item 2. Secretary's Report – A. Yitts

2.1. On a motion by Mr. Yitts seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to waive the reading of the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting of May 18, 2023, and to accept the minutes as written.

2.2. Review Exec. Session Min. for Possible Declassification: Item 2.2. A review by central office personnel suggested that legal matters and collective bargaining referenced within the executive session minutes of September 19, 2013, January 22, 2015, and April 16, 2015, have reached closure and will not impact the District by their public release. On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, and at the recommendation of Dr. Fitzpatrick, it was agreed to hold the Non-Released Executive Session Minutes. The motion failed to carry by a majority vote, and the minutes shall not be released.

Item 3. Treasurer's Reports – C. Pilla

3.1. Dr. Fitzpatrick was notified in advance that Mr. Pilla would not be able to attend the meeting. It was agreed that Mr. Pilla would present the May 31, 2023, Treasurer's Report at the next regularly scheduled School Committee Meeting on August 17, 2023.

3.2. The School Committee was presented with the Right-to-Borrow paperwork. On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was voted to move to allow the District Treasurer authorization under the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 16(G) as amended by Chapter 134 of the Acts of 1972, and with approval of the Chair of the District Committee, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of revenue for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, and to issue a note as may be given for a period of less than one year in accordance with General Laws Chapter 44, Section 17.

Item 4. Comments by Student Council Representatives - Ellie Poitras

Ellie Poitras provided an update on Student Council activities. First, she reported that Council members volunteered at the Community Harvest Project in Grafton on Friday, June 9, 2023. It was an amazing experience learning about sustainability and giving back. The Council is also preparing over the summer for freshmen orientation.

Item 5. Community Recognition - Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick

5.1. Dr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Steele, Vocational Directors Dr. Connors, and Ms. Denise formally recognized Mark Biron, Vice President of Product Support at MiltonCAT, presenting him with the MassCTE Certificate of Recognition Presentation - Friend of Vocational Technical Education Award. Mr. Biron accepted the award and spoke of the need for skilled employees.

5.2. On behalf of the School Committee, staff, and students, Dr. Fitzpatrick thanked Mark Biron and Milton CAT for the \$60,000 donation for heavy equipment simulators in the Construction Technology program.

Item 6. Annual Wellness Assessment Report - Martha Pellegrino

Martha Pellegrino presented the annual end-of-year cafeteria and wellness report. The goals and objectives for the 2022-2023 school year were provided, including student and employee wellness and initiatives. Mr. Finn asked about health trends. Martha has noticed that more students use the fitness room, eat breakfast and lunch, and participate in sports. Mr. Yitts asked, with the noticeable increase in students getting more meals, are we doing more cooking and using fresh foods in the cafeteria? Martha responded, yes, a cook position was added, and we do a lot of scratch cooking. Dr. Fitzpatrick thanked Martha for her skill set and contributions.

Item 7. Out-of-Country Field Trips - Len O'Neil

7.1. Len O'Neil informed the school that a trip is being planned for June 16, 2025, to June 27, 2025, for 30-36 students to visit Tokyo, Japan. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Koopman, it was unanimously voted to pre-approve the trip as requested.

7.2. The School Committee is in receipt of a request for a field trip during April vacation 2024 for 70 students to travel to Europe, which has sold out. Mr. Yitts asked how the students found out about the trip. Len said through posters and daily announcements. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Broderick, it was unanimously voted to approve the European field trip as requested.

Item 8. Vocational Directors Update - M. Denise & M. Connors

8.1. All community projects are reviewed and selected based on relevance to the curriculum, available school resources, and the district calendar. Projects are usually accepted and completed between September 1st and May 1st of each school year. Dr. Connors provided the Committee with an overview of recent projects. A few examples of the FY23 community projects included: An eyeglass collection box for the Lions Club was a multi-shop project involving skilled students in our Drafting & Design Technology, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication, Automotive Collision Repair & Refinishing, and Painting & Design Technology working together. A team of our Multimedia Communications students worked on a logo redesign project for the Municipal Police Institute (MPI). Based in Grafton, MA, this non-profit organization provides cutting-edge training for Massachusetts law enforcement officers.

8.2. A Cooperative Education Report (spring 2023) was shared with the Committee members at the meeting. The Cooperative Education Program (Co-op) held its 3rd annual Career Signing Day on May 12th. The ceremony celebrated senior co-op and career placement students who announced their career plans and signed a commitment letter to work with their employer after graduation. The Class of 2023 had 134 seniors participate in a Co-op placement. According to the report, the students worked 54,500 hours and earned \$847,000 in combined wages.

8.3. Career Signing Day (05/12/23): The Cooperative Education Program (Co-op) held its 3rd annual Career Signing Day on May 12th. The ceremony celebrated the senior Co-op and career placement students who announced their career plans and signed a commitment letter to work with their employer after graduation. One hundred thirty-four seniors participated this year, representing double the number of job placements from the previous two years and illustrating the local demand for skilled employees. These employable young adults have worked 54,500 hours collectively since April 2022, earning an estimated salary of \$874,000 over the past year.

Item 9. Business Manager - L. Mangano

9.1. Ms. Mangano presented a year-end line item transfer. She explained that these transfers are needed to fund unanticipated costs associated with three expenditure line items. Diesel fuel cost increases related to the bus contract rose earlier in the school year and have since normalized. Electricity costs mainly driven by higher usage offset somewhat by unplanned solar credits; the District has taken action to mitigate this increase with conservation measures with our energy management system and installation of variable frequency drives. Lastly, natural gas supplier cost per them rate increases.

9.1.a. On a motion made by Mr. Braza, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was voted to transfer available funds in the amount of \$15,000 from the following account: (1000.86.5268.000.8 Ins.-Unemployment) into (account: 1000.54.3300.400.8 Transportation Contracted Day).

On a motion made by Mr. Braza, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was voted to transfer available funds in the amount of \$20,000 from the following account: (1000.86.5268.000.8 Ins.-

Unemployment) into (account: 1000.84.4130.500.8 Utilities-Electricity Usage).

On a motion made by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was voted to transfer available funds in the amount of \$10,000 from the following account: (1000.86.5268.000.8 Ins.-Unemployment) into (account: 1000.84.4120.570.8 Utilities-Building Heating Gas).

9.2. On a motion made by Mr. Braza, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was unanimously voted to award the contract for the removal of the underground storage tank and associated work to Brighter Horizons Environmental Corporation of Ayer, MA, as the most responsive and responsible eligible bidder offering the lowest base bid amount of \$100,000. The project consists of the decontamination, removal, and disposal of the 30-year-old, double-wall steel, 20,000-gallon #4 fuel oil underground storage tank that has reached its end of life and is no longer in use. Associated work includes, but is not limited to, pumping and disposing of remaining waste oil, excavating and disposing of unsuitable soil, and backfilling the excavated site. This project will be self-funded through the use of Capital Project funds.

Item 10. Assistant Superintendent-Director's Report - A. Steele

10.1. Summer Projects - R. Dolegiewicz: The School Committee received a Facilities Department 2023 Proposed Summer Projects handout. Mr. Dolegiewicz outlined the proposed planned projects, which include: painting the old gym and the Construction Technology shop; a tank removal project; DLC project: building new storage and workstations for the Technology department; replacing grease traps in the Culinary Arts and the Cafe area; replacing a dishwasher in the Cafe; planning for a Welding shop update; Superintendent's and Business Office floor replacement; baseball infield replacement; circuit breaker testing; replacement of the center of the football field; and tech server room wall cut in addition to other annual summer projects, routine maintenance, and inspections.

10.2. The Senior Class Day and Senior Memorial Scholarship Night were held on May 23, 2023.

10.2.a. A Scholarship Report was shared with the Committee. The report showed a grand total of 2023 dollars awarded at \$1,896,651.00 with a renewable value of \$6,972,144.00.

10.3. Mr. Steele reported that the Class of 2023 Commencement Ceremony was held at the Hanover Theatre & Conservatory for the Performing Arts, Worcester, MA, on May 25, 2023. The evening ceremony celebrated the accomplishments of 294 graduates with all the pomp and circumstance they deserve. Mr. Steele shared graduation programs with the Committee. Mr. Koopman suggested that having screens in-house might be nice during future ceremonies. Mr. Intinarelli liked having large jumbotron screens at the outdoor graduation ceremonies held at BVT. The Hanover Theatre was at capacity. BVT is investigating other venues and costs for future graduations.

10.4. Mr. Steele reported that Sports Awards Night honoring its student-athletes was held at the school on June 13, 2023. Mr. Steele shared a program of events from Spring Sports Award Night with the Committee. Two hundred eighty-nine students participated in spring sports in 2023.

10.5. End-of-Year Procedures - Assistant Superintendent Steele informed the members that the End-of-Year Procedures for seniors have been completed. The last day of school on June 16th kicks off the summer projects – updating databases, summer cleaning, and preparing the building for a return to school.

Item 11. Signatory Authorizations - J. Hall

11.1. On a motion by Mr. Koopman, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling, it was unanimously voted to empower Superintendent-Director, Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, as an authorized signatory for the Regional School District for the school year 2023-2024 as it pertains to District contracts, grants, and other legally binding documents between the District and any/all outside agencies.

11.2. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was unanimously voted to empower Business Manager, Lorna Mangano, as an authorized signatory for the Regional School District for the school year 2023-2024 as it pertains to District purchase orders, contracts, grants, and other legally binding documents between the District and any/all outside agencies.

Item 12. Capital Planning Subcommittee Report

12.1. Mr. Hall informed the Committee that a School Committee Capital Planning Subcommittee meeting was held on June 8, 2023, at 3:30 p.m. in the Superintendent's Conference Room. The agenda included: Electing the Chair of the Capital Planning Subcommittee. Mr. Hall was elected to hold that position; Examining and revisiting the original capital improvement list; Separating and classifying items for bond or other acquisition strategies; and Reviewing sample bond authorization steps.

Item 13. Budget Report – G. Finn

13.1. An FY24 Budget Status Report as of June 15, 2023, was shared with the Committee.

13.2. Annual Town Meeting Actions - M. Fitzpatrick: Mr. Finn shared information on the annual town meeting actions on the District's budget and stated pride in the budget securing unanimous approval by all thirteen member towns.

13.2.a. The Town of Milford voted in favor of the budget on May 22, 2023. Mr. Braza reported that Dr. Fitzpatrick did an amazing job presenting at the town meeting and that the budget received a favorable vote. The Superintendent also secured a special article authorization of \$50,000 for summer maintenance.

13.2.b. The Town of Bellingham voted in favor of the budget on May 24, 2023. Mr. Hall was unable to attend. Dr. Fitzpatrick reported that he attended the town meeting and that the budget received a favorable vote.

13.2.c. The Town of Blackstone voted in favor of the budget on May 30, 2023. Mr. Broderick reported meeting Dr. Fitzpatrick at the town meeting for his presentation, and the budget received a favorable vote.

Item 14. Superintendent-Director's Report - Michael F. Fitzpatrick

14.1. The BVT Annual Golf Tournament was held on Monday, June 12th, at Highfields Golf and Country Club in Grafton under an overcast sky and warm temperatures. It was a fun-filled successful day raising an estimated \$14,000 to enhance educational opportunities and athletic activities for BVT students.

14.2. The School Committee is in receipt of the FY23 Grants-to-Date summary as of June 5, 2023, with an FY23 grand total to-date listed as \$2,872,238.

14.3. Superintendent's FY23 Goal Attainment Confirmation: goal milestone reports were shared with the School Committee on September 15, 2022, November 17, 2022, and May 18, 2023. On a motion by Mr. Koopman, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was unanimously voted to approve the successful completion of the Superintendent's FY23 performance goals and its contractually defined incentive reoccurring compensation. It was noted that the Standards Rubric (scoresheet) should be returned to Jenna Brault by the end of the day, Friday, June 23, 2023. The final tally will be included in the annual timely submittal to the Department of Education.

14.4. Notification of Resignations:

14.4. a. Notification of Resignation – A Notification of Resignation letter dated May 25, 2023, from Emily Robinson - Teacher Assistant, was accepted with an effective date of June 16, 2023.

14.4. b. A Notification of Resignation letter dated June 5, 2023, from Julie Cavanaugh - Teacher Assistant, was accepted with an effective date of June 16, 2023.

Item 15. New Business

The new Upton Community Center opened earlier this month, offering enlarged spaces for the town's library and senior center. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared that he attended the Dedication Ceremony on June 14, 2023, at 6:30 p.m., followed by an open house.

Dr. Fitzpatrick continues to seek support from local legislation on the pension relief bill.

Item 16. 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 17. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting - J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting will be held on August 17, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Item 18. *Executive Session Per MGL Chpt. 30A, Section 21(a) #2

On a motion by Mr. Finn, seconded by Mr. Braza, a roll call vote was taken to go into executive session at 7:55 p.m. because discussion of this subject in open session would be detrimental to the School District. The roll call was as follows:

Mr. Hall – Yes
Mr. Cray – Yes
Mr. Intinarelli – Yes
Mr. Mitchell – Yes
Mr. Koopman – Yes

Mr. Broderick – Yes
Mr. Potter – Yes
Mr. Braza – Yes
Mr. Bartlett – Yes

Mr. Finn – Yes
Mr. Yitts – Yes
Mr. Hanratty – Yes
Mr. Ebbeling – Yes

Item 19. Decide: Release Status of Exec. Session Minutes of May 18, 2023

On a motion by Mr. Braza, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted not to approve the release of the minutes of the executive session of May 18, 2023 because discussion of this subject in open session would be detrimental to the School District.

Item 20. Meeting Closure:

20.1. The meeting was declared closed by the chair at 8:24 p.m.

20.2. On a motion by Mr. Braza, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted to adjourn at 8:24 p.m.

Listing of materials used in the meeting:

- Item 2.1. Minutes of Meeting of May 18, 2023
- Item 2.2. Review of CONFIDENTIAL Non-Released Executive Session Minutes
- Item 3.1. Treasurer’s Report dated May 31, 2023
- Item 3.2 Suggested Motion - BVVR, Treasurer's Right-to-Borrow
- Item 5.2. Donation for Heavy Equipment Simulators (Construction Technology)
- Item 6. Wellness Committee End of Year Report SY2022-23
- Item 7. Out-of-Country Field Trip Request: Japan - June 2025 (Pre-Approval)
- Item 7.2. Out-of-Country Field Trip Request: Europe - April 2024 (Final Approval)
- Item 8.1. Vocational Project Report: Available at meeting
- Item 8.2. Co-op Placement Report: Available at meeting
- Item 9.1.a. Suggested Motion for Year-End Line Item Transfer(s)
- Item 9.2. Underground Storage Tank Removal Contract Award
- Item 10.1. Summer Projects - R. Dolegiewicz
- Item 10.2.a. 2023 Scholarship & Awards Report
- Item 11.1. Suggested Motion Signatory Authorization: Dr. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
- Item 11.2. Suggested Motion Signatory Authorization: L. Mangano, Business Manager
- Item 13.1. BVT FY224 Budget Status Report dated June 15, 2023
- Item 14.2. Summary FY23 Grants and Donations dated June 5, 2023
- Item 14.3. Suggested Motion Superintendent's FY23 Goal Attainment Confirmation
- Item 14.4.a. Notification of Resignation: Emily Robinson - Teacher Assistant
- Item 14.4.b. Notification of Resignation: Julie Cavanaugh - Teacher Assistant
- Item 16. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted by,

Anthony M. Yitts, Secretary

