Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional District School Committee
Minutes of Regular Meeting
April 13, 2023

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

Joseph M. Hall of Bellingham, Chair
Joseph A. Broderick of Blackstone
Mark J. Potter of Douglas
Anthony M. Yitts of Grafton
Mitchell A. Intinarelli of Hopedale
Edward D. Cray, III of Mendon
Paul J. Braza of Milford
Chester P. Hanratty, Jr. of Millbury
Gerald M. Finn of Millville, Vice Chair
James M. Mitchell of Sutton
Tyler D. Bartlett of Upton
James H. Ebbeling of Uxbridge

Members Absent:
Jeff T. Koopman of Northbridge

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Michele Denise, Vocational Director
Christopher C. Pilla, Treasurer
Lorna M. Mangano, Business Manager
Mike Norton, Electronics & Engineering Instructor
Russell Boisvert, Electronics & Engineering Instructor
Peter Wojnar, Chair General Advisory Board
Mr. Brad DiDio, Upton Men's Club representative
Elise Bogdan, Recording Secretary

Item 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by the Chair, Mr. Hall. Dr. Fitzpatrick was notified in advance that Mr. Koopman and the Student Council Representatives - Bradley Lyon & Ellie Poitras, would be unable to attend.

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 March 23, 2023, and to accept the minutes as written.

Item 3. Treasurer's Reports – C. Pilla

3.1. Mr. Pilla presented the Treasurer's Report dated March 31, 2023. The report reflected an ending balance of $2,740,366.00 for Total Funds, including $1,402,648.51 in Project Funds and $1,337,717.49 in Local Funds. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Cray, it was unanimously voted to approve the March 31, 2023, Treasurer's Report as presented.

Item 4. Student Recognitions - Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick

4.1. Dr. Fitzpatrick was proud to recognize student Troy Cami, a Douglas Scouts BSA Troop 316 member who earned the rank of Eagle Scout. Troy, a Millbury resident, is a senior in the Health Services program at BVT. Troy's project involved constructing a community pantry at Millbury's Federated Church. Dr. Fitzpatrick was notified in advance that Troy had a work conflict and would not be able to attend the meeting but that his parents would. Dr. Fitzpatrick addressed Troy's parents and congratulated them on their son having earned the Boy Scouts of America's highest rank.

4.2. Dr. Fitzpatrick was proud to recognize student Soumith Madadi of Grafton, a junior in the Information Technology program at BVT. He was named a Rensselaer Medalist for his academic achievement in math and science. Dr. Fitzpatrick presented Soumith with the Rensselaer Medal Award certificate. This $30,000 per year merit scholarship is guaranteed for four years (five years for the School of Architecture program) for each Medalist who applies, is accepted, and chooses to enroll at Rensselaer. The official Medal is presented to enrolling Medalists in the fall of their first year at Rensselaer. Soumith was supported by his father who was in the audience.

Item 5. Comments by Student Council Representatives - Bradley Lyon & Ellie Poitras

Dr. Fitzpatrick was notified in advance that the Student Council Representatives would be attending the CDMASC Regional Spring Conference and, therefore, unable to attend the April 13, 2023, school committee meeting. The Student Council members were busy with events between the conference and the senior cookout. The Representatives will have much to report on at the next meeting.

Item 6. July 4th Festivities Presentation (06/24/23) – Brad DiDio

Mr. Brad DiDio, Upton Men's Club representative, explained to the Committee that he had requested the use of BVT's facilities for the Annual July 4th Festivities to take place on Saturday, June 24, 2023. The event typically runs from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., with the rain date for the following day. On a motion by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, the Committee voted unanimously to endorse the support of hosting the July 4th Festivities at the school on Saturday. June 24, 2023.

Item 7. Vocational Department Presentation – M. Norton

7.1. Electronics & Engineering Technology Instructor, Mr. Michael (Mike) Norton began the vocational department presentation by introducing Mr. Russell (Russ) Boisvert, the other Electronics & Engineering Instructor in the department. He started with the enrollment: Freshmen, 18 male students. Sophomores, 14 male students: 3 female students. Juniors, 15 male students. Seniors, 13 male students: 2 female students. The department is working on balancing the male/female ratio by having female industry-related guest speakers and having the upperclassmen speak with the underclassmen about the shop. The presentation also included before and after pictures of the vocational shop highlighting a new project room with a workspace for laptops. A new related room with desks, cabinets, improved storage, with more workspace room. New laser tools and state-of-the-art technology to exhaust fumes when working. Co-op job opportunities examples: Columbia Tech, Engineering Assistant, Waters Corporation, and Polytec Inc. As well as examples of BVT graduates going to college and entering trade-related fields using BVT skills and or certification/licensures post-college. Related job examples include Computer networking, Electrical Engineering, and Military. Next, Mr. Norton introduced a former student, a 2019 Electronics & Engineering Technology graduate, Kevin Healy, a senior at UMASS Lowell. Mr. Healy addressed the Committee and shared how his vocational shop experience made his college experience a breeze and gave him time to focus on a business he started as a sophomore at BVT.

Mr. Yitts asked about the curriculum and if power electronics, with power distribution and solar electricity/circuits big industry, was part of the curriculum. Mr. Norton explained that if a student is interested in a specific area, we try to fit the student's interest into their curriculum, like a straight line with branches off based on the expressed interest for a more individualized experience. Mr. Hall asked if there was anything else on the wish list for the shop. Mr. Norton thanked the Committee and said they were pleased with their shop.

7.2. FIRST Robotics Club:

a. Mr. Norton gave a recap of the BVT's First Robotics Club season and shared a video of TEAM 61: The Intimidators winning the First Impact Award, the most prestigious award at FIRST. The Committee also viewed the Team 61 Impact Award submission video. Next, Mr. Norton introduced Jackson Doan of Northbridge, a Drafting & Design Technology program senior at BVT, who is the Mechanical Officer for BVT's First Robotics Club. Jackson spoke about the First Robotics Design Innovation Scholarship Video he created for WPI. The video was played and viewed by the Committee. Lastly, Dr. Fitzpatrick thanked Jackson for his contributions and the innovative way he used technology to apply for the scholarship with the video.

Item 8. Vocational Director/Admissions Update – Michele Denise

8.1. A SkillsUSA Massachusetts District V Leadership Conference accomplishment report was shared with the Committee. BVT students brought home a total of 104 medals, earning 37 gold, 37 silver, 30 bronze medals, and 11 sweeps at the district event.

8.2. The 37th annual MAVA Outstanding Vocational Award Banquet was held at Mechanics Hall on April 13, 2023. The Outstanding Vocational Award recognizes those students whose scholastic and vocational technical achievements have significantly contributed to their local school district and, thus, to the total vocational technical education delivery system in the Commonwealth. Vocational Director Dr. Connors represented BVT at the award banquet with BVT's MAVA Outstanding Vocational Award recipient, Valedictorian Katelyn Steele.

8.3. With the capable assistance of Vocational Director Michele Denise, an Admissions Status Report for 2023 (as of April 13, 2023) was made available at the meeting with a total enrollment of 1,221 students. The final application numbers for the 2022-2023 Admission Season were shared (743 freshmen applicants, 95 upperclassmen, 341 initial offers of admission, and 32 current declines), acceptances by town (historically from 2016 to 2023), and first choice shop selections based on the initial application were also shared. Aware that some candidates apply to multiple schools, Mr. Finn requested a final decline list in the fall.

8.4. Peter Wojnar provided the General Advisory Committee Update. The update began with Career Nights, which introduces parents to shops and encourages them to listen to their students when discussing the exploratory process. The General Advisory meetings have been well-attended. Internally and externally, people are impressed with BVT students being well-prepared for the real world. Kudos to the staff for keeping everyone motivated and going.

General Advisory was also involved with NEASC visit input. Program Advisory Membership for 2022-2023: 410 members – representing industry, community, parents & students.

8.5. The Committee approved the General Advisory Committee member list, which was available at the meeting. Dr. Fitzpatrick thanked Mrs. Denise and Mr. Wojnar for their presentations and guidance in coordination with General Advisory.

Item 9. Business Manager - L. Mangano

9.1. Line Item Transfer:

a. Ms. Mangano presented a year-end line item transfer. On a motion made by Mr. Braza, seconded by Mr. Bartlett, it was unanimously voted to transfer available funds ($70,000), not to exceed the amount listed below from the following accounts: (1000.36.2305.300.8 TA-Mftg Tech Support Salaries $38,344) and (1000.49.2305.110.4 TS-Health Services $31,656) Into the account identified as:1000.76.3530.500.8 SkillsUSA $70,000.
Identified savings from available appropriations will be used to provide additional funding for the SkillsUSA State and National Conferences. The need for additional funds for the State Conference is due to unexpected cost increases of approx. $100/attendee, mainly driven by hotel lodging, which is being reinstated since COVID pandemic. The estimated cost of the National Conference (based on approx. 30 attendees) is $68,400, which includes airfare, lodging, and competition registration. Similar to prior years, students will be responsible for their own meals and baggage check costs. Also, fundraised money in Student Activity funds will cover competition equipment, uniforms, supply container shipping costs, as well as transportation to and from the airport. Mr. Hanratty asked if the transfer would negatively impact the reserve fund and Ms. Mangano said it would not.

9.2. Donation Approval:

a. On a motion made by Mr. Intinarelli, seconded by Mr. Hanratty, it was unanimously voted to approve the donation from Jeremy Levine of a new Williamson/Weil-McLain GWC 105 Hot Water Boiler, which will be used for instructional and valuable training purposes in the Plumbing program at BVT. The estimated value of this item is $2,500.

Item 10. Budget Report – G. Finn

10.1. Mr. Finn indicated that the FY24 budget process continues smoothly and shared a status report regarding the town Finance Committee presentations/meetings currently underway.

10.2. Finance Committee Presentations/Meetings – M. Fitzpatrick

a. Douglas (03/28/23) – Mr. Potter joined Dr. Fitzpatrick at the Douglas Finance Committee presentation. It was professional, business as usual, no press back.

b. Uxbridge (04/06/23) – Mr. Ebbeling joined Dr. Fitzpatrick at the Uxbridge Finance Committee presentation and was impressed with the smooth presentation. It went well.

c. Milford (04/12/23) – Mr. Braza joined Dr. Fitzpatrick at the Milford Finance Committee. It went status quo, with a few questions asked and answered and resulted in a favorably unanimous vote.

10.3. Warrant Language and Budget Distribution - State budget - regional transportation Chapter 70, has more money than what the Governor put in. House also increased the based aid per student. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared that the annual budget distribution is underway and that a digital copy is available on the school website. Town meetings begin on May 1st.

Item 11. Superintendent-Director's Report – M. Fitzpatrick

11.1. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared with the Committee that BVT hosted the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC) Accreditation team from March 21 through March 24, 2023. As the visiting team exited the building, it was clear that each member was impressed with our staff and students. Because of their late departure, the exit interview was scheduled for the following week with the Chair and Vice Chair. The exit interview went well, and their full report is anticipated to be available for us to read and review next October or November. The Superintendent mentioned that the extensive evaluation represented the long-term contribution of all BVT members. That shared, he conveyed special appreciation to Ed Evans, Michele Denise, Matt Williams, the Facilities Department, and BVT students.

11.2. Dr. Fitzpatrick provided a report on the highly successful 29th annual Superintendent's Gourmet Dinner, which was held at the school on March 16, 2023. The gala event is a significant fundraiser for the school, which invites the Blackstone Valley to celebrate quality career and technical education each spring with a lavish reception and an elaborate dinner. This five-star dining experience is planned, prepared, and served by students, faculty, and graduates of the Culinary Arts program and, by design, gives current students a taste of the skills necessary for success in the food, beverage, and hospitality industry. The Culinary Arts Department, with contributions from the Facilities Department, Construction Technology, and Painting & Design Technology, did a wonderful job transforming the competition center into a tropical dining oasis to accompany the "Polynesian" theme the students had chosen. The students take pride in their culinary training and maximize their portfolio with the work done at the dinner.

11.3. The Class of 2022 One Year Alumni Study was shared with the Committee.

11.4. The School Committee members traditionally contribute to an annual scholarship award. Dr. Fitzpatrick encouraged the members to consider their ability to contribute in the range of thirty-five dollars.

11.5. Dr. Fitzpatrick shared a revised 2023 School Committee Meeting Calendar with the Committee, which reflected the following scheduling change: moving the previously scheduled October 19, 2023, School Committee Meeting to October 12, 2023.

11.6. Visits/Tours:

a. Dr. Fitzpatrick reported that Michael Nicholson, a Milford Finance Committee member, visited the school on March 29, 2023, to examine the summer maintenance request of $50,000, which Milford's Finance Committee subsequently agreed to for that purpose. It is an

alternative way of adding resources.

b. Dr. Fitzpatrick reported that Town of Uxbridge public officials joined Assistant Superintendent-Director/Principal Steele and Vocational Director Dr. Connors at BVT for a school tour on March 30, 2023.

11.7. Notification of Retirement:

a. A retirement notification of Raymond Lehner, Science Teacher, effective June 30, 2023, was shared. Dr. Fitzpatrick noted an appreciation for his years of service. Ray has been an invaluable contributor to our highly successful science program. It has been a pleasure to work with him.

11.8. Out-of-State Field Trips:

a. The School Committee is in receipt of an out-of-state field trip request from the Culinary Arts Department to tour the Culinary and Hospitality campuses of John & Wales University in Providence, RI, with the junior class on May 18, 2023. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the trip as presented.

b. On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the out-of-state field trip request from the Painting & Design Technology Department to take 15 students to tour the New England Institute of Technology campus in East Greenwich, RI on May 3, 2023

Item 12. New Business

After coming out of the Executive Session at 7:43 p.m., there was a new business item. Consistent with the posted April 13, 2023, School Committee agenda, a vote to approve the potential new three-year contract was acted upon in open session on a motion by Mr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling; it was unanimously voted to approve the potential agreement.

Item 13. 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 14. Next Regularly Scheduled School Committee Meeting - J. Hall

The next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting will be held on May 18, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Item 15. Executive Session Per MGL Chpt. 30A, §21(a) #2

On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Ebbeling, a roll call vote was taken to go into executive session at 7:20 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. Broderick – Yes Mr. Potter – Yes

Mr. Yitts – Yes	Mr. Intinarelli – Yes	Mr. Cray – Yes
Mr. Braza – Yes	Mr. Hanratty – Yes	Mr. Finn – Yes
Mr. Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Bartlett – Yes	Mr. Ebbeling – Yes

On a motion by Mr. Hanratty, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, a roll call vote was taken to come out of executive session at 7:43 p.m. The roll call was as follows:

Mr. Hall – Yes	Mr. Broderick – Yes	Mr. Potter – Yes
Mr. Yitts – Yes	Mr. Intinarelli – Yes	Mr. Cray – Yes
Mr. Braza – Yes	Mr. Hanratty – Yes	Mr. Finn – Yes
Mr. Mitchell – Yes	Mr. Bartlett – Yes	Mr. Ebbeling – Yes

Item 16. Decide: Release Status of Exec. Session Minutes of March 23, 2023

On a motion by Mr. Yitts, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted not to approve the release of the minutes of the executive session of March 23, 2023 because discussion of this subject in open session would be detrimental to the School District.

Item 17. Meeting Closure:

17.1. The meeting was declared closed by the chair at 7:45 p.m.

17.2. On a motion by Mr. Broderick, seconded by Mr. Intinarelli, it was voted to adjourn at 7:45 p.m.

Listing of materials used in the meeting:

Item 2.1. Minutes of Meeting of March 23, 2023
Item 3.1. Treasurer's Report dated March 31, 2023
Item 8.1. SkillsUSA MA District V Leadership Conference BVT Total Medal Count
Item 8.3. Admissions Status – available at meeting
Item 8.5. Advisory Board Membership listing 2022-2023 – available at meeting
Item 9.1.a. Suggested Motion for Line Item Transfer(s)
Item 9.2.a. Donation Approval: Hot Water Boiler
Item 11.3. Class of 2022 One Year Alumni Study
Item 11.5. Revised 2023 School Committee Meeting Calendar
Item 11.7.a. Notification of Retirement: Raymond Lehner, Science Teacher
Item 11.8.a. Out of State Field Trip: Culinary Arts, Johnson & Wales University: 05/18/23
Item 11.8.b. Out of State Field Trip: P&D, NEIT: 05/03/23 (East Greenwich, RI)
Item 13. Items for the Good of the Committee

Respectfully submitted by,

Anthony M. Yitts, Secretary