

Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District

Budget Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes February 2, 2023

Members in Attendance:

Gerald Finn of Millville
Chester Hanratty of Millbury
Christopher Pilla, District Treasurer
Lorna Mangano, Business Manager

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Anthony Steele, Asst. Superintendent-Principal
Nicole Ferguson, Assistant Business Manager

Members Absent:

Edward Cray of Mendon
Joseph Hall of Bellingham

Guests in Attendance:

Michele Denise, Vocational Coordinator

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m. by Mr. Finn in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

Approval of minutes from prior meeting

Mr. Finn asked members to review minutes from the January 26, 2023 Budget Subcommittee meeting.

Motion: On a motion moved by Mr. Hanratty to approve the Budget Subcommittee meeting minutes of January 26, 2023 as revised, seconded by Dr. Fitzpatrick; motion voted and unanimously approved.

Agenda items

Ms. Ferguson and Ms. Denise opened the meeting with a review of the District-Wide Technology budgets which showed a total increase of \$38,896 or 18.18% from the prior year budget. The main drivers of the increase related to the following items:

Technology Hardware [\$30.3K increase]

- \$90.5K *Information Tech*: 44 laptop computers with 3D modeling ability
- \$ 3.0K *Painting & Design*: Addition of 3 desktop computers for laser engraver, printer, and vinyl cutter
- (\$ 0.8K) *Humanities*: Removal of laptop purchased in FY23, offset by addition of new color printer
- (\$62.4K) *Engineering*: Removal of technology hardware and devices purchased in FY23

Technology Software [\$8.3K increase]

- \$3.2K *English*: Addition of grammar software that integrates digital tools into curriculum
- \$2.8K *Math*: Mainly Kuta software 3-year renewal and slight increase in Delta Math
- \$1.5K *Auto Tech*: Software updates on 2 scan tools, and addition of lift safety software
- \$0.8K *Foreign Language*: New online pen-pal speaking program for upper level students

A discussion ensued regarding the migration of desktop computers to laptops in the Information Technology shop. In an effort to maintain framework elements required by the state, laptop computers that are capable of doing 3D modeling are the standard. The discussion shifted to overall price increases and industry standards. The District provides students and teachers access to software that is currently used in their respective industries. Mr. Finn inquired about the District's vocational certification opportunities, and questioned which

shops have the ability to obtain industry recognized certifications. Ms. Denise will provide that information at a subsequent budget meeting.

Moving on, Ms. Mangano directed attention to the Technology Department budget which had an overall increase of \$227,866 or 49.34% from the prior year budget. Ms. Mangano, with assistance from Mr. Steele, explained the major components of the budget change as follows:

- \$225.7K Tech Dept (Tech-Hardware): Driven by the 5 year replacement plan for obsolete computers and the removal of one-time COVID funds used in prior year
- \$ 9.9K Tech Dept Contract Services: Mainly support and training of the new Student Information System implemented in FY23
- \$ 4.9K Tech Dept (Tech-Software): Mainly driven by price increases for Microsoft Office and Remind, and addition of asset tracking software
- \$ 3.1K Instructional Tech Software: Price increases for various classroom software programs that include web filtering, video libraries, remote video conferencing, and managing electronic class content
- \$ 1.3K Library Tech-Contract Services: Increased cost for EBSCO database and NewsBank subscription
- \$ 1.0K Tech Dept S&M-Non Instruction: Increased cost for replacement parts, based on prior trends
- (\$ 18.0K) Bldg Network/Maint (Tech-C/S): Removal of anti-virus support (included with Microsoft Office license) and newly negotiated internet service provider contract, offset by increase in firewall support cost

Considerable discussion took place regarding the replacement of obsolete computers, and potential cost offsets by selling or re-purposing older computers. It was noted that in prior years the district was able to implement a one to one device program with the availability of various COVID related funds.

Ms. Mangano directed attention to the next budget area for review which was Fixed Assets (7000 series). The Fixed Asset budget request totaled \$147,000 which was a decrease of \$6,278 or 4.10% from the prior year budget. Ms. Mangano, with assistance from Mr. Steele, explained that this budget request consists of Ruckus switches. With a lower price quote the District plans to replace 12 switches, which aligns with the infrastructure replacement.

In closing, Ms. Mangano stated the total FY24 budget as presented reflects an overall increase of \$2.2M or 7.79%, which reflects first-pass Department budget requests. These requests will be evaluated further and Administrative recommendations will be developed to begin balancing the budget to anticipated revenues.

The next scheduled meeting is set for Thursday, March 2, 2023 at 4:30 p.m.

Areas for follow-up:

Mr. Finn’s request for remedies to help offset the increase in electricity usage	Open Item at this time
Mr. Finn’s request for a listing of vocational certification opportunities	Open Item at this time

Adjournment

Motion: to adjourn made by Ms. Mangano at 6:10 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Finn; motion voted and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by,
Nicole Ferguson, Recording Secretary