

Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District

Budget Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2025

Members in Attendance

Gerald Finn of Millville
Edward Cray of Mendon
Joseph Broderick of Blackstone
Tyler Bartlett of Upton
Jacquenette Raad, Assistant Business Manager

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent-Director
Christopher Pilla, District Treasurer
Anthony Steele, Asst. Superintendent-Principal
Nicole Ferguson, Business Manager

Members Absent

Jaime Patriarca, Assistant Business Manager

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 4:36 p.m. by Mr. Finn in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

Approval of minutes from prior meeting

Mr. Finn asked members to review the revised minutes from the January 16, 2025 meeting and the minutes from the January 23, 2025 meeting.

Motion: On a motion moved by Dr. Fitzpatrick seconded by Mr. Broderick it was unanimously voted to accept and approve the Budget Subcommittee meeting revised minutes of January 16, 2025 and minutes of January 23, 2025, as written.

Agenda items

Mr. Steele opened the meeting by presenting handouts prepared by Ms. Denise regarding open inquiries from prior meetings. The first handout provided an update of all the industry recognized credentials that are earned by students, as prescribed by the DESE CTE framework. The second handout provided a 5-year analysis of Federal Perkins Grant allocations, and how they help supplement the operating budget. Lastly, Mr. Steele presented a 5-year cost analysis of copper, steel, lumber, and aluminum, which showed an overall average 5.69% increase from the prior year.

Ms. Ferguson then presented the FY26 Administration Proposed Changes in comparison to the FY26 Initial Department Requests. She noted that several adjustments were necessary to balance total revenues to total expenditures, while attempting to minimize the financial impact to member towns when feasible.

Total revenues included the recently published FY26 Governor's Local Aid Proposal for Chapter 70 School Aid (adjusted for PN allocations) and Chapter 71 Regional Transportation, however these amounts are subject to change as the FY26 Local Aid budget progresses through the House, Senate, and Conference Committee. Also included in revenues were recently published FY26 Minimum Required Contribution amounts for each town, in addition to all other miscellaneous revenue sources for the District. Mr. Steele explained that a reconsideration of needs and trends were taken into account when determining which expenditures could be reduced to balance the anticipated revenues presented. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding changes to the proposed budget revenues, including the elimination of debt, increased investment income, and necessary adjustments to the use of unreserved fund balance to

help offset the total member town assessments. The subcommittee agreed to make a few necessary changes as discussed, and move forward with the FY26 Budget process.

Ms. Ferguson then presented the administrative proposed budget summary scorecard, with proposed changes, represents a final expenditure increase over FY25 of 5.77% or \$1,758,149, with the total increase in member assessments being 7.04% or a total of \$1,335,562.

Next, Mr. Finn presented the subcommittee with an analysis of the member assessment increases in relation to state mandates and the District's total operating budget, over the past six years. A lengthy discussion ensued, regarding the operational budget, grant funding, and any other potential revenue sources to help supplement other needs of the District going forward.

Motion: On a motion moved by Mr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Cray, it was unanimously voted to approve the FY2026 Budget as presented, with proposed changes, on the Budget page A-1 'General Fund FY2026 Summary of Revenues, Assessments and Expenses' document [\$32,225,637] and to recommend said budget to the full school committee for approval which, in turn, will be presented at the public hearing on March 13, 2025 and to Member Towns.

Motion: On a motion moved by Mr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Cray, it was unanimously voted to include the footnote regarding use of Excess & Deficiency Funds up to [\$700,000] on Budget page A-1.

Motion: On a motion moved by Mr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Cray, abstained by Mr. Pilla, the motion carried to apply a total of [\$450,000] of Unreserved Fund Balance, inclusive of \$200,000 pension relief as a funding source to the FY2026 Budget.

Mr. Finn reminded subcommittee members of the FY26 Budget Public Hearing set for 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 13, 2025 in the Cafeteria.

Adjournment

Motion: to adjourn made by Mr. Finn at 7:00 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Bartlett, voted and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jacquenette Raad, Recording Secretary