

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
June 12, 2025

The regular meeting of the Greater Fall River Vocational School District Committee was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Paul Jennings, with the following persons in attendance, William Flanagan of Fall River, Richard Manuels Jr. of Fall River, Joan Menard of Fall River, and Donald DiBiasio of Somerset.

Absent: Jeffrey Begin of Swansea.

Also in attendance were: Brian Bentley, Superintendent/Director, Leslie Weckesser, Assistant Superintendent-Principal, Paul Kitchen, Director of Finance and Operations, Attorney Gregory Brilhante, and Helena Neves, Executive Secretary.

Members of the Diman Teachers Association were in attendance in person and remotely.

Mr. Jennings called for the roll call.

Mr. Jennings made the following announcement: In accordance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 30A, Section 20(f), any member of the public may make an audio or video recording of this public meeting. A member of the public who wishes to record a meeting must first notify the chair and must comply with reasonable requirements regarding audio or video equipment established by the chair so as not to interfere with the meeting.

Mr. Jennings led the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels, and voted unanimously to approve the May 8, 2025 minutes, as submitted.

Mr. Bentley introduced student representatives of BPA, DECA and SkillsUSA organizations for a brief report. Students expressed gratitude to the School Committee Members for the continued support which provides them with many opportunities to showcase their skills. The success of each student participant is a reflection of the support received from the School Committee.

Mr. Bentley stated that a picture of three Diman female students made the front cover of the SkillsUSA Nationals magazine. They were the 1st all female team to win the Automated Manufacturing competition in SkillsUSA history.

There was no Citizen Input.

Mr. Bentley began the discussion of the after school sports/events pay rate. Mr. Bailey, at the request of the School Committee, contacted local districts to inquire about their rate of pay for sports games/events workers. Westport has one paid staff member but it mostly depends on student volunteers. Mr. Bailey stated that the concern is that staff is making more money than officials which makes it more beneficial to work a game instead of coaching. Mr. Kitchen stated that there are games that the district is paying \$2,500 per game which the admission charge, if any, doesn't cover the cost of staff. A comparison of rates and narrative was provided to all members.

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
June 12, 2025

It was moved by Ms. Menard, seconded by Attorney Flanagan, and voted on a roll call to keep the after school sports/events pay rate as \$75.00. *Mr. DiBiasio voted no.*

Mr. DiBiasio provided the MSBA School Building update. The project is 46% built and is on schedule to move in next year. Installation of sheetrock and rooftop equipment is underway. Fireproofing is done. Roughing will continue for the next few months. Windows testing for leakage will take place on June 16th. Work on the maintenance storage building will begin over the summer months.

Mr. DiBiasio stated that he along with Mr. Bentley and Mrs. Weckesser met with the construction team to discuss bus drop offs, student drop off and staff parking. The construction team will report back if there are any changes to what was discussed. Diman will be very busy for the next two summers. The temporary staff parking lot will become the softball fields once the permanent parking is finished.

Mr. DiBiasio provided a summary of Prime Contract Change Order (PCCO) No. 005 and PCCO No. 006 which were approved by the School Building Committee.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels and voted unanimously to reaffirm PCCO No. 005 for a total amount of \$112,428.52.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan, and voted unanimously to reaffirm PCCO No. 006 for a total amount of \$106,529.22

Mr. Kitchen provided an overview of the MSBA project expenditures. Invoices from Colliers, KBA and Suffolk reflect the billing for the month of May for the project.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Ms. Menard, and voted unanimously to approve the following MSBA Project expenditures: Colliers Invoice #0001058850 dated 5/31/2025 for the amount of \$118,818.55, KBA invoice #20006.01-35 dated 5/29/2025 for the amount of \$115,537.00, Suffolk Construction application no. 20 dated 5/31/2025 for the amount of \$10,654,648.82.

Mr. Kitchen stated that MSBA has made a grant payment totaling \$12,951,257.

Mr. Bentley reported on personnel appointments, reappointments, resignations and retirements, anticipated vacancies and Advisory Board appointments.

It was moved by Mr. Manuels, seconded by Attorney Flanagan, and voted unanimously to appoint Brian Franco to the Carpentry and Cabinetmaking Program Advisory Board for a term of three years.

Agenda Item 3.1.c – Individual Employment Agreement was taken up after executive session.

Mr. Bentley reported on the student travel requests

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels and voted unanimously to approve the out of stated travel request submitted by Anne Marie Zenni, Business Technology Department Head, for a

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
June 12, 2025

student to compete in the Microsoft Office Specialist Competition in Dallas, Texas from June 15, 2025 through June 18, 2025.

It was moved by Attorney Flanagan, seconded by Mr. DiBiasio and voted unanimously to approve the out of state travel request submitted by Aaron Soares, Track Coach for a student to compete in the Track Nationals from June 20, 2025 through June 21, 2025 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted unanimously to approve the out of state travel request submitted by the SkillsUSA Advisors for students to attend the SkillsUSA National Competition in Atlanta, Georgia from June 23, 2025 to June 28, 2025.

Mr. Bentley reported on the request to establish a new club. Mr. Daniel Mitchell has submitted a request to establish the Badminton Club. A student's PowerPoint presentation was made available to all members. The club will allow Badminton to be more accessible for all students. Mr. Mitchell has agreed to be the club advisor. The advisor will not be compensated as the club is not in the DTA contract.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to approve the request to establish the Badminton Club. The advisor will not be compensated as the club is not in the DTA contract.

Mr. Bentley stated that a request was submitted by the Diversity Club Advisors to change the name of the club. The intent is to reflect the mission to celebrate the culture of the diverse student population. The proposed name is the Diman Culture Club.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted unanimously to approve name change of the Diversity Club to the Diman Culture Club.

Mr. Bentley stated that the 25-26 school calendar needs to be changed due to the SkillsUSA National Competition being changed to the first week in June. Graduation Rehearsal will change from June 2nd to June 8th, Awards Night will change from June 3rd to June 8th and Graduation will change from June 4th to June 9th.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted unanimously to approve the 25/26 School Calendar changes, as submitted.

Mr. Bentley reported on the use of facilities requests.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels, and voted unanimously to approve the request by the Diman PTO to use the student parking lot on Sunday, September 7, 2025 from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm for their annual Car Show Scholarship Fundraiser and to waive all use of facilities fees.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Ms. Menard, and voted unanimously to approve the request by the Diman PTO to use the Gymnasium on Friday, November 7, 2025 from 2:30 PM on to set up for the craft fair and on Saturday, November 8, 2025 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM for their annual Craft Fair Scholarship Fundraiser and to waive all use of facilities fees.

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
June 12, 2025

Mr. Bentley reported on the acceptance of gifts.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted unanimously to accept the donation of \$1,900 from an anonymous benefactor and to award \$100 to the OVS student from each of the vocational programs.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels and voted unanimously to accept the donation made by Bill Farrer, owner of the St. James Irish Pub of food for staff during the Staff Appreciation Week.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted unanimously to accept the donation made by Richard Robitaille form RJR Solutions of \$2,000 in tools to the Electricity Program to be given to a senior that may need them.

It was moved by Mr. Manuels, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted unanimously to accept the donation made by John Futoma, from Carl's Collision of a 2008 Toyota Highlander (estimated value \$3,000) to the Auto Collision Program.

Mrs. Weckesser provided an update on the Vision of the Graduate. The Vision of the Graduate stakeholders group was made up of staff, parents and community members who worked to develop the plan which identifies the chosen characteristics that stand for the word BENGAL. The group came up with four different renditions of what BENGAL stands for. A survey was sent out to all stakeholders and the final results are as follows:

- B** – Balanced: Proven technical skills and growth mindset to thrive in both their careers and personal lives
- E** – Empowered: Confident in their abilities to bring innovative ideas and solutions to real-world challenges
- N** – Navigators of Change: Adaptable and forward thinking individuals who thrive in evolving environments and embrace growth
- G** – Genuine: Authentic, honest and true to themselves and others
- A** – Accountable: Takes ownership of actions and outcomes
- L** – Leader: Inspire and guide other toward positive change

Attorney Flanagan asked if a time capsule is being planned for the new building. Mr. Bentley stated that the goal is to have a time capsule that captures the spirit and essence of Diman and save it for future generations. Mr. Bentley further stated that events will be planned to allow the community to tour the current building before it is demolished.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels and voted unanimously to approve the Vision of the Graduate, as submitted.

Mr. Bentley stated that agenda item 3.1.k – Prom Transportation Cost was added as a suggestion of the School Committee to discuss the cost associated with the buses used to transport students to prom. Students and their guests are not permitted to drive. Eight coach buses were needed for the 24/25 prom. Prom tickets were sold but the funds raised were not sufficient to cover all the costs. The District contributed the funds needed to cover the remainder of the costs which ended up being the cost of the transportation. Mr. DiBiasio asked if there is a designated budget line item for prom costs. Mr. Kitchen stated that there's not. The District has covered any deficits that have come up. Mr. Jennings asked if transportation costs increase every year. Mr. Kitchen stated that they do. Mr. Kitchen further stated that the advisors do a phenomenal job with fundraising and keeping costs to a minimum. Mr. Kitchen suggested not earmarking transportation costs but instead just make them as whole if a negative

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
June 12, 2025

balance is anticipated. Mr. Jennings stated that he does not want to see the price of the prom tickets increase because of the cost of transportation. Mr. Kitchen stated that a conversation should take place if a ticket increase is proposed. Mr. Jennings stated that no action will be taken. The cost of the transportation for prom will be revisited if needed.

Mr. Kitchen provided a summary of the monthly financial report.

Mr. Kitchen provided an overview of the expenditures in excess of \$10,000.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted unanimously to approve the expenditures in excess of \$10,000, as submitted.

Mr. Kitchen provided an overview of the transfer of revenue. The recommendation is to transfer Two Hundred and Eleven Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Six Dollars 63/100 (\$211,796.63) and One Hundred and Forty Nine Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Nine 47/100 (\$149,659.47) from FY 25 Interest and FY25 Sales, as well as June's interest and sales to the E & D Capital Fund for the purpose of developing the new athletic fields on the campus.

It was moved by Attorney Flanagan, seconded by Mr. DiBiasio and voted unanimously to transfer Two Hundred and Eleven Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Six Dollars 63/100 (\$211,796.63) and One Hundred and Forty Nine Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Nine 47/100 (\$149,659.47) from FY 25 Interest and FY25 Sales, as well as June's interest and sales to the E & D Capital Fund for the purpose of developing the new athletic fields on the campus. *The wrong fiscal year was included in the motion. The conversation reflected interest and sales from the current fiscal year.*

Mr. Kitchen provided an overview of the FY26 Encumbrances. The encumbrances are for annual expenses that begin on July 1st.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted unanimously to approve the FY26 Encumbrances, as submitted.

Mr. Kitchen provided an overview of the Surplus of Books and Equipment.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted unanimously to approve the Surplus of Books and Equipment, as submitted.

Mr. DiBiasio deferred to Mrs. Torres for the Community Projects update. Mrs. Torres stated that it was another successful year for the community projects. A lot of our communities were serviced with some pretty big projects completed. A couple of projects will be carried over into next year, because there really isn't enough time to do everything with the house.

Mr. DiBiasio stated that the 24/25 Housebuilding Program house is almost finished. Mrs. Torres stated that an open house will be held on Tuesday at Tess Abigail Lane, in Swansea from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. There were a couple of change orders that the homeowner did that didn't allow time to be able to finish some things such as the pantry and some painting. The homeowners will be doing that on their own.

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
June 12, 2025

Mr. DiBiasio deferred to Mrs. Torres for the 25/26 Housebuilding Project update. Mrs. Torres stated that the house is in Westport for a private owner. The contract has been signed by the homeowners and is ready approval of the School Committee.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted unanimously to approve the 25/26 Housebuilding Program Contract, as negotiated.

There was no Policy Sub-Committee report as the meeting was cancelled.

Mr. Bentley provided the Superintendent-Director's report which included an update on student enrollment, admissions, cooperative education and the LPN Program.

The next meeting will be July 10, 2025 at 5:30 PM.

Attorney Brillhante stated the reasons to go into executive session.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted on a roll call at 7:00 pm to enter into Executive Session with Mr. Jennings, Mr. DiBiasio, Attorney Flanagan, Mr. Manuels and Ms. Menard voting yes.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Manuels and voted on a roll call at 8:00 p.m. to rise into Open Session with Mr. Jennings, Mr. DiBiasio, Attorney Flanagan, Mr. Manuels and Ms. Menard and voting yes.

Agenda Item 3.1.c – Individual Employment Agreements

It was moved by Attorney Flanagan, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to approve the individual employment agreements for Brian S. Bentley, Superintendent-Director, Kyle Cabral-Morais, Storekeeper, Steven Cunha Paraprofessional, Stephanie Ferreira, Human Resource/Benefits Coordinator, Director of Finance and Operations, Christopher Lopez, Paraprofessional, Idalina Moniz, Paraprofessional, Melissa Rodrigues, Paraprofessional, Kendra Rossi, Paraprofessional and Andre Sylvia, Systems Administrator, as negotiated.

It was moved by Attorney Flanagan, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Helena S. Neves

Helena S. Neves, Executive Secretary

Materials Included:

May 8, 2025 Minutes
After School Sports/Events Pay Rate Analysis
Prime Contract Change Order No. 005
Prime Contract Change Order No. 006
MSBA Project Expenditures
Vision of the Graduate Plan
Monthly Financial Report

Student Activity Agency Accounts Report
Expenditure Report
FY26 Encumbrances
Surplus of Books and Equipment
Community Projects List
Superintendent-Director Report