

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
AUGUST 28, 2025

The special meeting of the Greater Fall River Vocational School District Committee was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Paul Jennings, with the following persons in attendance, William Flanagan of Fall River, Joan Menard of Fall River, Richard Manuels of Fall River, Donald DiBiasio of Somerset and Jeffrey Begin of Swansea.

Also in attendance were: Brian Bentley, Superintendent/Director, Leslie Weckesser, Assistant Superintendent-Principal, Gregory Brillhante, Legal Counsel and Helena Neves, Executive Secretary.

Mr. Jennings called for the roll call.

Mr. Jennings led the Pledge of Allegiance.

There was no Citizen Input.

Mr. Jennings asked for a discussion on the Director of Finance position.

Ms. Menard stated that she was impressed with all the candidates.

Mr. DiBiasio stated that Ms. Shepherd possessed extensive knowledge and is an accomplished business manager. Mr. DiBiasio further stated that Ms. Petrasso during her interview solved his concerns when she answered his questions correctly.

Mr. Manuels agreed that for the most part the candidates were qualified for the job. Mr. Manuels further stated that he is a believer of promoting within. Ms. Petrasso has the qualities that the district is looking for. Mr. Manuels further stated that he was ready to make a motion to hire Ms. Petrasso as the Director of Finance.

Ms. Menard stated that she was very impressed with Ms. Petrasso and is very interested in having someone who is familiar with the school. Mrs. Menard seconded the motion to hire Ms. Petrasso.

Mr. Jennings stated that there was a motion and a second to hire Ms. Petrasso and asked if anyone else wanted to discuss it further.

Attorney Flanagan stated that upon review of the resumes he felt that on paper, all candidates were qualified. He too is a believer of establishing a culture of growth of promoting through the ranks. Appointing someone who has some knowledge of the MSBA project and knows the building and the people working in it makes sense. Attorney Flanagan further stated that he was in support of appointing Ms. Petrasso.

Mr. Begin stated that like the other members, he feels that all candidates were qualified. He too felt that Ms. Shepherd was very qualified. Mr. Begin further stated that he also believes in promoting within. Although, Ms. Petrasso may lack experience in some areas, he believes that she will learn and come out stronger.

Mr. Jennings agreed with everyone's comments that the candidates were very good. Mr. Jennings stated that in his opinion, Ms. Petrasso came out head.

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It was moved by Mr. Manuels, seconded by Ms. Menard, and voted on a roll call to appoint Melissa Petrasso as the Director of Finance with Mr. Jennings, Mr. DiBiasio, Mr. Begin, Attorney Flanagan, Mr. Manuels and Ms. Menard voting yes.

Attorney Brillhante read the reason to go into executive session.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Attorney Flanagan and voted on a roll call at 5:08 pm to enter into Executive Session with Mr. Jennings, Mr. DiBiasio, Mr. Begin, Attorney Flanagan, Mr. Manuels and Ms. Menard voting yes.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Begin and voted on a roll call at 5:18 p.m. to rise into Open Session with Mr. Jennings, Mr. DiBiasio, Mr. Begin, Attorney Flanagan, Mr. Manuels and Ms. Menard voting yes.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Helena S. Neves
Helena S. Neves, Executive Secretary