

MINUTES OF THE BOARD EDUCATION AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Thursday, April 14, 2022, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

PRESENT

Trustee Johanne Kemmler, Acting Chair
Trustee Rob Hutchins
Trustee Candace Spilsbury
Trustee Barb de Groot
Trustee Elizabeth Croft
Trustee Joe Thorne
Jason Sandquist, Secretary-Treasurer
Robyn Gray, Superintendent
Sheryl Koers, Associate Superintendent
Tom Longridge, Associate Superintendent
Larry Mattin, Director of Instruction
Richard Dyble, Director of Operations
Erin Egeland, Associate Secretary-Treasurer
Mike Russell, Director of Communications
Claire Spencer, Recording Secretary

APOLOGIES

Trustee Randy Doman

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Kemmler called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. and respectfully acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on the traditional and ancestral lands of the Coast Salish people where we live, learn and play.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

2.1 Motion to Adopt Agenda

Moved by Trustee de Groot
Seconded by Trustee Spilsbury

"That the Board Education and Business Committee adopts the agenda of the April 14, 2022 Special Board Education and Business Committee meeting."

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS

3.1 Updated Year-End Projection

An updated year-end projection was provided to give Trustees the most up-to-date information on the potential surplus available for balancing the 2022-2023 budget.

Revenues are now \$722K above previous estimates due to: an increase in the Provincial Grant as a result of the February enrolment count; higher-than-anticipated International Student Program revenues and registration fees; and rental income from Charles Hoey. Salaries and benefits are both projected to come in under budget, but this savings is offset by increased costs for supplies and utilities. The revised surplus for the current budget year is now \$1.5M.

3.2 2022-2023 Annual Budget

The Secretary-Treasurer reviewed the 2022-2023 Budget Guiding Principles and the four priorities of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.

The opening operating budget shortfall of \$2.4M identified at the March 29, 2022 BEBC meeting has been increased to \$2.9M to reflect an additional \$400K due to the amendment to the *Employment Standards Act* granting five days of annual paid illness and injury leave to all casual employees, and \$100K for the addition of an Early Years Manager per the Board's motion at the April 5, 2022 Open Board Meeting. There are both revenue and expenditure reduction options to reduce this shortfall, including:

Revenue Options (which would reduce the shortfall to \$834K):

- The projected available surplus as at June 30, 2022 is \$4.8M, which at 5.1% of the budget exceeds the Board's 1-3% contingency policy. Appropriating \$2M of surplus would leave approximately 3% in unrestricted surplus;
- Interest revenue can be adjusted to include an additional \$76K to reflect increasing interest rates.

Trustee Hutchins joined the meeting at 4:23 p.m.

Expenditure Reduction Options (further reducing the shortfall to \$395K):

- USW Benefit premiums can be reduced by \$50K due to a "benefit holiday" resulting from an overpayment;
- CUPE (EA) budget formula adjustment will provide a cost savings of \$289K;
- Average Teacher salary adjustment due to newer teachers at lower pay bands replacing retirees \$100K.

The Board may wish to consider adding the following expenditures to the Budget:

- COVID contingency \$100K;
- Principal/Vice-Principal/Exempt Compensation Adjustment (increases are not funded, and reflect increases paid to teachers) \$185K;
- Literacy Teacher Program (continuation of one of the two positions which are currently funded through a grant) \$106K;
- Technology dashboard for data extraction/management \$25K;
- Technology installation (can no longer be funded through the Annual Facilities Grant) \$40K;
- Website update \$30K;
- Transportation routing adjustments \$11K;
- Transportation lead hand restoration \$39K;
- Automated Dispatch System (net zero cost);
- Industry Training Authority student payments \$16K.

Addition of all the above items would increase the opening operating shortfall to \$946K.

Options to consider for balancing the budget include:

- Additional surplus could be utilized while still staying within the Board's contingency policy of 1-3%;
- International Student Program revenues could be increased as the world begins to open for students learning abroad;
- Interest revenue could be increased due to the Bank of Canada's recent interest rate hikes;
- The average teacher salary could be reduced beyond the existing \$100K due to the anticipated number of retirements;
- The Literary teacher position on the option list above could be achieved through redistributing resources;
- As the COVID contingency could be a one-time expense, it would be an appropriate use of surplus;
- Wage increases for Principals/Vice-Principals/Exempt staff could be looked at in the fall, after wage increases for unionized staff are known.

There were no major changes to the Special Purpose Funds, which were reviewed.

The Board will receive feedback from the Budget Survey, rights holder meeting, partner liaison meetings, and public consultation meeting as well as options for balancing the budget at the April 26, 2022 BEBC Meeting. A Special BEBC Meeting will be held on April 28, 2022, at which the Committee may recommend the budget to the Board for adoption at its meeting on May 3, 2022. The staffing process for the 2022-2023 school year will begin May 4, 2022.

4. ADJOURNMENT

4.1 Motion to Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Moved by Trustee de Groot
Seconded by Trustee Croft

"That there being no further business, the meeting be adjourned."

CARRIED