

GREATER FALL RIVER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
251 STONEHAVEN ROAD, FALL RIVER, MA
DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM
MARCH 9, 2023

The regular meeting of the Greater Fall River Vocational School District Committee was called to order at 5:38 p.m. by Chairman Paul Jennings, with the following persons in attendance: Fr. Jay Mello of Fall River, Donald DiBiasio of Somerset, Jeffrey Begin of Swansea and Rajiv Nehra of Fall River. Joan Menard of Fall River was absent.

Also in attendance were: Brian Bentley, Interim Superintendent/Director, Andrew Rebello, Assistant Superintendent/Principal, Paul Kitchen, Director of Finance, Gregory Brilhante, Legal Counsel and Helena Neves, Executive Secretary.

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.

Mr. Jennings called the Budget public hearing to order.

The floor was open to the public for questions regarding the proposed FY24 Budget. As there were no questions, the budget public hearing was closed.

Mr. Jennings called the School Choice public hearing to order.

The floor was open to the public for questions regarding School Choice. As there were no questions, the school choice public hearing was closed.

All members of the committee were provided with a copy of the proposed FY24 ahead of the meeting and it was also posted on the website.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Dr. Nehra and voted unanimously to dispense with the reading of the February 9, 2023 minutes and approved them, as recorded.

Ryan Nadeau provided the student report which included an update on the current happenings such as clubs, sports and student events.

There was no Citizen Input.

Attorney Brilhante provided notification that due to a decision rendered by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, changes pertaining to Citizen Input may be forthcoming. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

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Mr. DiBiasio stated that the contract for Suffolk Construction has not been finalized and is hoping to have it ready for the April meeting.

Mr. Jennings deferred to Mr. Kitchen for the FY24 Budget,

Mr. Kitchen provided a presentation on the proposed FY24 budget. Mr. Kitchen stated that overall the budget will see an increase in the required district contribution and Chapter 70 funds. Mr. Kitchen stated that there is a new component in the proposed budget, which is the interest on the \$25 million dollar bond for the new building. Assessment notifications will be sent to the sending communities after tonight's vote to approve the budget.

Mr. Jennings stated that there is an error with the Westport enrollment. There are six additional students being charged to Westport. Mr. Kitchen stated that the six Westport students in question have elected to attend an alternative vocational setting. This creates a reduction in the sending school tuition and Chapter 70. Mr. DiBiasio asked if those students are children of staff members of the district, which is a local contract and not school choice. Mr. Bentley and Mr. Kitchen will gather more information on the Westport enrollment error.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, and seconded by Fr. Jay and voted unanimously to approve the FY'24 Budget as presented.

Mr. Bentley recommended that the District not offer school choice for the 2023-2024 school year because of its inability to accept all students wanting to enroll from the four district communities.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Begin and voted unanimously that the Greater Fall River Vocational School District, Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School, not offer school choice for the 2023-2024 school year because of its inability to accept all students wanting to enroll from the four district communities.

Mr. DiBiasio provided the MSBA SBC report. He stated that the OPM, Designer and CM at Risk are meeting bi-weekly and working together to plan schedule, procurement and site logistic items. The Design Development Package was submitted to MSBA and comments received were in line with the level of value management that was required to balance the budget. A request for additional funds was submitted to MSBA to offset the increase in materials due to inflation. MSBA has responded stating that funding adjustments will not be allowed as per the funding agreement and encouraged continued collaboration with the local Legislative Delegation to advocate for such funds. A meeting has been scheduled for March 23rd with MSBA to allow the architects the opportunity to respond to the comments received and provide clarification.

Mr. Jennings stated that he is concerned that the contract for Suffolk Construction, CM at Risk, has not been finalized. Mr. Jennings suggested holding back payment as a way of getting the contract negotiations to move along and finalized.

Mr. DiBiasio stated that holding payment will affect sub-contractors that have been working and don't have anything to do with contract negotiations.

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Attorney Brillhante stated that there seems to be a disconnect among some of the key players. The latest version of the contract with amendments and/or questions has been sent to Suffolk. Indemnification clause and insurance were the two major sticking points. Dr. Nehra asked where the contention to finalizing the contract is. Mr. DiBiasio stated that the biggest problem has been that Suffolk does not want to include Colliers and Kaestle Boos in the indemnity part of the contract. Fr. Jay asked if payment can be withheld. Mr. Kitchen stated that the Kaestle Boos invoice was received in a timely manner and included in the packet and recommended approving it. Colliers invoice was received after the packets were sent out and Suffolk did not submit an invoice. Attorney Brillhante stated that although the contract with Suffolk Construction has not been finalized, they have continued to work on the project and have been very responsive.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Being and voted to approve the invoice from Kaestle Boos for the amount of \$269,100. The motion passed with 5 votes in favor. Mr. Jennings opposed.

Mr. Bentley reported on personnel.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Being and voted unanimously to approve the following student travel requests:

The National Honor Society has submitted an out of state travel request for an out of state trip to the 9/11 Museum in New York, NY on Friday, April 7, 2023.

The Dental Assisting Program has submitted an out of state travel request for the DANB/ICE Exam which is being administered in Warwick, RI on Tuesday, March 14, 2023.

Mrs. Maria Torres has submitted an out of state travel request to the RI Convention Center in Providence , RI on Tuesday, March 28, 2023 to set up for the RI Home Show.

Mrs. Maria Torres has submitted an out of state travel request Bryant University, Smithfield, RI for the unveiling of the playhouse for Rosemary's Wish Kids on Wednesday, April 5, 2023.

Mr. Bentley reported that the Special Recognition Committee is proposing that Mr. Paul Jennings and Mr. Steve Marciszyn receive the 2023 Distinguished Graduate award and Mr. Glenn Benevides the 2023 Honorary Diploma.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Dr. Nehra and voted unanimously to accept the Special Recognition Committee's recommendation and approve the 2023 distinguished graduate award recipients as Paul Jennings and Stephen Marciszyn and the honorary diploma recipient as Glenn Benevides.

Mr. Bentley reported on the National Technical Honor Society Chapter proposal.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to establish a NTHS chapter and to post for two advisors at the same DTA stipend as the NHS Advisors.

It was moved by Ms. Menard, seconded by Mr. DiBiasio and voted unanimously to accept the donation by the Gene HAAS Foundation. The donation amount is for \$18,000 and it is to support scholarships.

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Mr. Kitchen provided an overview of the FY'23 Budget Adjustment. The adjustment is needed due to the district not meeting net school spending for FY'22. The carryover amount of \$1,423,773 will be placed in the extraordinary maintenance line.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Begin and voted unanimously to transfer the carryover amount of \$1,423,773.00 to the extraordinary repairs line item.

Mr. Kitchen provided the monthly financial report. The FY'23 budget adjustment will cover the negative balance. Mr. Kitchen stated that he met with department heads to make sure that shops and classrooms are equipped with supplies that can be brought to the new building. The FY'24 has built in funds to purchase furniture and furnishings.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Begin and voted unanimously to approve all expenditures as submitted.

<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Requestor</u>	<u>Amount</u>
MAZAK CORPORATION	Skill Capital Grant - Equipment	\$82,100.00
THORNLEY DEGRASSE RIGGING CO	Advanced Manufacturing-Repairs	\$13,400.00
GRANITE CITY ELECTRIC SUPPLY	Advanced Manufacturing-Repairs	\$8,935.08
MIDWEST ELECTRICAL TESTING & MAINT. CO	Advanced Manufacturing-Repairs	\$13,945.00
REALITY WORKS	Medical Asst. - Equipment	\$13,116.00
RICHIE & SONS, INC.	Metal Fab – Equipment	\$7,010.00
TOTAL WELDING SUPPLY	Metal Fab – Equipment	\$73,400.00
AIRGAS EAST	Building & Property-Supplies	\$5,590.96
WB MASON	Office Technology-Equipment	\$11,717.68
		\$ 12,134.00

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Begin and voted unanimously to approve all transfers as reported.

From	100.2305.4.000.107	Teacher Salary	\$ 51,825.00
	100.4300.8.000.623	Maintenance of Plant – Extraordinary	<u>\$ 134,515.00</u>
			\$ 186,340.00
To:	100.1210.8.315.101	Superintendent Director - Salary	\$ 51,825.00
	100.2420.4.528.610	Medical Assisting – Equipment	\$ 13,116.00
	100.2420.4.514.503	Repairs – Advanced Manufacturing	\$ 36,281.00
	100.2420.4.515.610	Metal Fabrication – Equipment	\$ 73,400.00
	100.2420.4.519.610	Office Technology-Equipment	<u>\$ 11,718.00</u>
			\$ 186,340.00

Mr. Kitchen reported on the Student Activity Account balances. He has been in contact with the Class of 2022 senior advisors and a decision was made to donate the account balance to purchase a gift to be placed in the new building.

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It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Fr. Jay and voted unanimously to accept the donation from the Class of 2022 to purchase a gift to be placed in the new building.

Mr. Kitchen provided an overview of the FY'22 End of Year Financial Report. There were no incidents of non-compliance reported.

Mr. Kitchen requested approval to align the practice of approving expenditures to policy DJE. The current practice requires a vote to approve any expenditure \$5,000 or more. Policy DJE states that expenditures of \$10,000 or more require school committee approval.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Dr. Nehra and voted unanimously to raise the expenditure requirement to the sum of \$10,000 dollars to align with Policy DJE.

Mr. Kitchen reported on the technology equipment to be approved as surplus.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Begin and voted unanimously to approve the surplus of technology equipment as submitted.

Attorney Brillhante requested that agenda items 3.1.q and 3.1.r be discussed after Executive Session.

Mr. Bentley deferred to Ms. Gehan for the LPN Program update.

Ms. Gehan stated that currently there are 69 total applicants for next year. She has been using Facebook to advertise the program and has been holding informational sessions two times per month.

Mr. DiBiasio deferred to Mrs. Torres for the Community Projects and the 22/23 Housebuilding project update.

Mrs. Torres stated that students are working on a playhouse which is expected to be finished by the end of the month. The theme of the playhouse is mystical gardens. Students, in collaboration with a community partner, learned how to make faux stone for the playhouse. The playhouse will be on display at the Rhode Island Home Show.

Mrs. Torres stated that the 22/23 Housebuilding project is moving along nicely. Students have painted the doors and trim. Electrical and plumbing will soon begin working on the project.

Mr. DiBiasio stated that the 23/24 Housebuilding Project has been tabled. Mrs. Torres and Mr. Cabral will meet with the applicant to discuss concerns and gather more information.

Mr. Rebello provided an overview of the Principal's report which included an update on current school events and happenings.

Mr. Bentley provided the Superintendent's report which included an update on student admissions, enrollment and co-op placements.

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The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at 5:30 due to a conflict with the OVS banquet.

Mr. Bentley provided an overview of the correspondence. Mr. Bentley will send tentative meeting dates to discuss the Day on the Hill event.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Fr. Jay and voted unanimously on a roll call at 7:12 p.m. to enter into Executive Session with Mr. Jennings, Ms. Menard, Fr. Jay, Mr. DiBiasio, Mr. Begin and Dr. Nehra voting yes.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Mr. Begin and voted unanimously on a roll call at 7:29 p.m. to rise into Open Session with Mr. Jennings, Ms. Menard, Fr. Jay, Mr. DiBiasio, Mr. Begin and Dr. Nehra voting yes.

Agenda Item 3.1.q and 3.1.r were taken out of order and voted on as follows:

It was moved by Dr. Nehra, seconded by Ms. Menard and voted unanimously to enter into contract with Andrew Rebello, Assistant Superintendent/Principal, as negotiated.

It was moved by Mr. DiBiasio, seconded by Dr. Nehra voted unanimously to enter into contract with Brian Bentley, Superintendent-Director, as negotiated.

It was moved by Ms. Menard, seconded by Mr. DiBiasio and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Helena S. Neves
Helena S. Neves

Materials Included:

February 9, 2023 Minutes
Proposed FY'24 Budget
Monthly Financial Report
Expenditure Report
Transfers Report
Student Activity Agency Account Report
FY'22 End of Year Financial Report
Surplus of Technology Equipment List
LPN Program Update Report
Community Projects List
23/24 Housebuilding Application
Principal's Report
Superintendent's Report