



BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

Monday, January 14, 2019
Special Board of School Commissioners Meeting Minutes
Champlain Elementary
800 Pine Street, Burlington, VT
6pm

Commissioners Present: Chair Wool, Commissioners Pillsbury, Fisher, Wick, Curry, Barlow, Gulick, Olwell, Carey, Waltz, Ivancic

Absent: Commissioner Gorman

District: Superintendent Obeng, Nate Lavery

Meeting called to order:

6:10pm

Approval of Agenda

Motion to add #5 Facilities & Finance Committee and the pre-qualified construction companies able to bid on the Edmund's Phase II project (Commissioners Pillsbury/Fisher).

Approve agenda - motion passes unanimously.

Public Comment

No public comments

Budget Discussion

Commissioner Fisher sent out outline for tonight's discussion. 5 minute then 2 minute round for each commissioner.

Superintendent Obeng: We will have another meeting on Thursday if needed. We've produced a budget that has balance. Based on current information, the tax impact is estimated at slightly more than 4% and reflects changes to the coaching model. We targeted Behavior coaches -- it's our dollars and we're just getting into it so we haven't invested much training, etc.

Revised budget scenario: Not the best strategy to find dollars, but we have some data that we used to come up with this. Our list of additions are consistent with what the Board has asked.

1st five additions were added this time. Frisbee and bowling are not currently subsidized by the district -- next year will add some consistency. both inclusive activities -- they don't have to be a star athlete and more people can participate.

EMS Band para: Really good response previously and desire to continue.

#5 EL teacher will be at elementary level

Tax impact is estimated at 4.06%

Discussion:

Chair Wool: Some things are not included -- such as mentoring. We need to organize what mentoring is as far as the district. Data driven information is so important and we are not prepared at this time to have mentoring until we figure it out. Emerging sports at high school - Board approves varsity sports. The sports have to be acknowledged in order to compete with other schools, We need to do the process to introduce these sports at BHS.

Commissioner Wick: Thanks to Nate Lavery and Superintendent Obeng for redoing the budget quickly. 5 additions and 4 reductions that didn't make the cut (in new document). If the mentoring program doesn't make it this year, the Board is comfortable asking Superintendent Obeng to put a proposal together. The 5 adds: If we don't have the SA and Flynn teachers in the budget, is there a way to accomplish what we want? Superintendent Obeng: Mentoring is happening now but we want it better. We need to have a discussion of class sizes, etc. class policy is 22 and 25. SA and Flynn are approaching that -- needs bigger data discussion. change policy for all schools.

Commissioner Waltz: 1.6 PLP #6 -- meeting needs of high school? The kids need help applying to colleges. Superintendent Obeng: Addressing needs that we have.

Commissioner Pillsbury: Pleased with the new presentation. Concern: Mentors (looks like we are doing this and will make it better). Magnet schools -- do we have a real commitment to this?

Commissioner Olwell: .5 kinder - how much help is this? #8 preserving two teachers that we put at SA and Flynn - at minimum that and max another 2 teachers to lessen the mixed grade classes at SA. Support magnet schools. Important to have at least 1 guidance counselor at middle schools. Superintendent Obeng: Magnet coaches are still there -- magnet schools have been here for 10 years and up for review -- see see what is working and not working. PTOs and principals have contacted him to get discussion going. To split classes - we don't have the space in any school. PreK needs to find space so the schools get that space.

Commissioner Ivancic: Doesn't know when we changed from interventionist to coaching model. Teacher cuts at SA and Flynn - we've been fighting for that -- passed in November. Why out now? SA needs it's 10th teacher to spread things around. A full time coach also needed. IAA flourishing, SA is struggling -- needs full time magnet coach. Supports mentoring program. Each middle school needs their own guidance counselor. District lead principal position - needs explanation on why this is so important.

Commissioner Gulick: Alot of assumptions in these needs. Example: EMS band para but none for Hunt -- Hunt has serious needs Advocating again for an Activities Director -- only D1

school that does not have one. There is a vaping epidemic and we need to be addressing wellness, healthy behavior, physical sports. #6 - positions should be a teacher and doing this as well as coaches. Superintendent Obeng: We had feedback from with this process -- everyone comes with a bias. Took months to get to this point. Some issues we figured out how to do things without putting on budget. He holds them accountable. We listen and give the respect to their feedback and needs.

Nate: As previously presented, principals were instructed to meet with teachers to develop budget process and needs. This was not the product of principal input alone.

Commissioner Fisher: Needed additional FTE at Flynn - so hired. System wide allocation to whole district. EMS band para - too many kids and he needs help. Kinder paras - if you can't add a classroom, paras are very needed and valuable. Frisbee - they self referee and they self - police. Supports data position. We need data driven discussions. District Lead Principal - Board want the information on this position. Superintendent Obeng will send out the information on the District Lead Principal position. We need district alignment between schools and Central Office. Requirement is to have principal mentors -- normally you have to pay for that -- the District Lead Principal plays that role and has more contact than hiring someone from the outside. Instructional leadership very valuable. Principals are supportive of this position. Principals are the 2nd most important position in the school. Teaching them to go into classrooms, walk abouts, consistent approach, equity that has been lacking, a lot of training, etc. Will have a presentation on what has been done.

Commissioner Curry: How much are we permanently inflating the budget? Budget contingency - \$300,000? Nate: Yes, remains that amount. Costs covered special ed funding? Nate: Process won't begin in FY20 - future years we will have a block grant. Contracted out for health and sex ed? Current positions couldn't do this -- bargaining agreement. Superintendent Obeng: Scheduling support for middle schools - we do need a teacher for sex ed/health. Social Workers and middle school counselors needed at schools -- more context needed. PPI position -- didn't work before -- how different now? Nate: more specific accountability. Multi grade classroom issue. Superintendent Obeng: Goes with classroom size conversation. There are nuances to this. Central Office -- cuts are operational, not humans -- trend will be the same in future. We utilize \$1.4M surplus -- we can't forget that in terms of the impact. Something to think about next year and we don't know what the state is going to do - state looking at new funding.

Commissioner Carey: Budget today does not go far enough for early ed, special ed, meeting the educational needs at SA/Flynn.

Commissioner Barlow: New presentation meets most of the needs brought up. Do you include the contingency in the surplus? Nate: Any unspent \$ at end of year is included in the fund balance, including unspent contingency funds -- so we had a \$1.1M surplus and that included the unspent contingency funds from FY18. Concerned about cuts at Central Office and how we'll manage without that person. #3 and #4: #3 - Stephanie can support and do some of that position #2 - the need is there - got rid of that figure and going per diem route.

2 min round - Speak or ask questions - response must be mindful of time

Commissioner Wick - this is your rebuttal remark time.

Commissioner Barlow: Desire is to finish tonight.

Commissioner Carey: SA mixed math class is a disaster -- data driven decisions are important
Superintendent Obeng: Need to have the multi grade, mixed grade, class size, etc. We'll come up with policies. Invite Board to have meeting and we'll bring the data.

Commissioner Curry: Need for more outcomes approach - mentors and District Lead Principal -- identify data. Coaches - presentation at DEI meeting. Overall good budget presented.

Commissioner Fisher: District Lead Principal - how do other districts provide that service to their principals. Believes we should hear teachers, but gather data with as large of a group as possible. Superintendent Obeng: No district has the District Lead Principal position and they wish they could provide that service. A presentation is important for us to do to the Board. We have a complexity in Burlington...a model you'll see in other states. In Vermont, post district consolidation you'll see the need for sure.

Commissioner Gulick: Would like more info from schools and their needs. Middle school used to have a lot more staffing. Worries that coaching is not happening for kids.

Commissioner Ivancic: Must have adequate staffing -- need to ask all teachers about the coaching model. Is it worth the money. Wants more support on the elementary level in this budget. There is a high level of IEPs at elementary level. Can't support budget as is. Look at magnet schools deeper.

Commissioner Olwell: Put \$ in the early years up to 3rd grade and not expensive coaching.

Commissioner Pillsbury: Concerned about multi grade classes and teachers to support. Are magnet schools being supported? Budget is not quite there yet. Superintendent Obeng: Has said we need to review the magnet model.

Commissioner Fisher: Slightly tweak coaching? Superintendent Obeng: #1 on reductions. Has said many, many times we need crucial conversations -- we need to make a commitment and have these meetings. Need a forum to do this.

Commissioner Waltz: Committees should be doing some of these things and not micro manage after. Wants SA coach.

Commissioner Wick: Concerned about growth of middle management - where did the teachers go?

Chair Wool: 21.4 FTEs added this year, but concerned about the \$ next year to keep them. We have time to work on committees, meet with superintendent and leaders.

Superintendent Obeng: Hopefully this crystalizes the Board to their future work. we should be thinking 5 years out. Don't get stuck on the day to day. Good news that we have balance.

Commissioner Gulick: How will community react? We're good because it's 4.06%.

Commissioner Barlow: It's more about the % rate that people care about not the content. 20% of community have kids and the rest are income based. Commissioner Olwell: If we have a 4% now and last year was 5% -- why can't we add more? The bond passed and the respect for the community who passed it. Sustaining a budget that won't upset the community.

Commissioner Pillsbury: What is the increase in the budget? what is going on the ballot?

Superintendent Obeng: We know the city is going to put a municipal tax on the ballot this year.

Commissioner Curry: This budget moves us forward...need those conversations to build on this.

Chair Wool - We have put a lot of money and time in the coaching model to not see it through and it isn't right Let's work with the district as a team.

Commissioner Carey: Motion to Superintendent to cut further from the administration - coaching. Commissioner Wick: Must be more specific: Commissioner Carey: Cut embedded instructional coaches in elementary - hire additional personnel for those schools - interventionists and paras and/or teachers. Cost? Nate: 4 embedded instructional coaches our cost: \$230,000 - additions - elementary direct instruction \$ amount (teacher, interventionist/paras)

Commissioner Fisher: Recommends this language - Eliminate 6 instructional coaches and add 4 FTE for direct instructional teachers.

Superintendent Obeng: Note: Eliminating the coaches, there will be a ripple effect -- we will lose \$ if we eliminate this model.

Commissioner Carey: motion: Move to direct Superintendent to add \$250,000 in order to fund teachers, paras, special educators at the elementary schools - strategic way to decrease % if we cut coaches. Nate: Estimated tax impact would rise to 4.43%. Reminder that the tax estimates are based on equalized pupil assumptions that are expected to change in the near future when data from AOE is finalized. Commissioner Olwell 2nd

Vote on amendment: Call the question: Roll call.

No: Commissioners Pillsbury, Fisher, Wick, Curry, Barlow, Gulick, Waltz, Wool

Yes: Commissioners Carey, Olwell and Ivancic

Commissioner Gulick: Won't support this amendment - we need to be good stewards of the tax dollars and be supportive of each other.

Commissioner Fisher: Not in favor of amendment. Concerned about what is being added not being sustaining.

Commissioner Wick: Likes amendment, but tax impact too high

Commissioner Barlow - Can't live with 4.4% tax impact.

Commissioner Curry - Can't support additional staff

Commissioner Ivancic: Has back up info for the SA teacher that were approved in November for SA and Flynn - we need those two positions. Superintendent Obeng: They will get what they need. #18 spreads out to those needing.

Commissioner Pillsbury: Motion to add \$180,000 for elementary teachers for district.
Commissioner Ivancic 2nd. Superintendent Obeng: Board approved two teachers for the rest of the year only at SA and Flynn. This motion would have tax impact of 4.35%. Nate: Reminder that all tax estimates are based on what we know today and are subject to change.

Commissioner Carey: There is a lack of specificity in the motion -- include specific schools?

Superintendent Obeng: Schools really need special educators -- trying to get dual-certified teachers.

Commissioner Curry: Adds 4 FTE elementary teachers already - this approach allows for a total amount of teachers and allocates based on need.

Commissioner Fisher: Clarification of motion. Call the question: $\frac{2}{3}$ vote yes

Roll call:

No: Commissioners Fisher, Wool, Wick, Curry, Barlow, Gulick, Waltz

Yes: Commissioners Pillsbury, Olwell, Carey, Ivancic

Motion does not pass.

Commissioner Carey: Motion: Cut 3 embedded coaches at elementary schools and use those funds to hire special educators at those schools. no 2nd - motion dies

Approval of budget: Call the question: Majority Yes

Move to approve 1/14/19 budget as presented by Superintendent Obeng and as posted on the agenda - Commissioners Wick/Barlow

Roll call:

Yes: Commissioners Fisher, Wool, Wick, Curry, Barlow, Gulick, Waltz, Pillsbury, Olwell.

No: Commissioners Carey and Ivancic

Budget accepted.

Edmunds Phase II Project:

List of pre-qualified construction companies sent to all Board members. Public needs to see this.

Commissioner Barlow: Warn separately as a committee meeting.

Commissioner Fisher: Motion to move to Executive Session. Commissioner Pillsbury 2nd

Motion to consider Executive Session under 1 V.S.A. 313 (a) (1) (A), (B), (C), (E) and (F) because pre-mature general public knowledge would put the District at a substantial disadvantage to discuss the following: one or more personnel matters

All in favor: yes. Motion passes unanimously.

Executive Session

Motion to exit executive session. Commissioners Fisher/Curry.

Motion passes unanimously.

Motion to adjourn. Commissioners Fisher/Wick

Motion passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned 9:25pm