



BURLINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED

Tuesday, January 8, 2019
Board of School Commissioners Meeting Minutes
Burlington Electric Department
585 Pine Street, Burlington, VT
6pm

Commissioners Present: Chair Wool, Martine Gulick, Monika Ivancic, Eric Gorman, Jean Waltz, Kathy Olwell, Jeff Wick, Mike Fisher, Stephen Carey, Keith Pillsbury, Mark Barlow, Liz Curry

Student Commissioner: Isaac Jenemann

Superintendent Obeng

Meeting called to order: 6:43pm

Items to be removed from consent agenda.

Commissioner Ivancic: Remove DE&I minutes from 12/18--pull for corrections and approve at a future meeting.

Commissioner Curry: Remove Board meeting minutes of 11/13 - pull for corrections and approve at a future meeting

Motion to amend consent agenda - Commissioner Fisher / gorman

Approval of Agenda:

Student Commissioner Jenemann - Remove #6 - Student Commissioner's report

Chair Wool - Remove chair's report

Commissioner Fisher - Move to add to agenda #11a and b.

Board Deliberations:

- a: Collaborative presentation on consolidated budget proposal
- b. Commissioner questions and statements

Commissioner Fisher: Add #12: Resume Executive Session if there is time - board to deliberate on a personnel matter and on contract negotiation.

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; Negotiations

Motion to approve agenda as amended: Commissioners Fisher/Olwell -- all ayes. Motion carries unanimously.

Public comment:

All SLPs here to advocate for the Speech-Learning Pathology program

Lillian Dean, Tonya Kopeck, Kerry Connor, Amanda Major, Heidi Corriveau, Alex Dezenzo

Board reflections - none

Committee Reports

Policy & Governance - waived submitting a report.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion - lively discussion at our 12/18 mtg -- 1/15 next mtg - possibly moving meetings to Mondays

Finance & Facilities - Next Committee meeting is Thursday, January 10, 2018 at 5 PM at Champlain Elementary School. Minutes are posted.

Community Engagement - no mtg in December - Early Ed Task Force - meeting on 1/10

Personnel & Curriculum - Meeting held 12/10/18 - minutes posted.

Superintendent's Monitoring report - 2.3 Financial Condition & activities: Had discussion on this at the 12/11/18 Board Meeting. This shows the correct report. The auditor will be coming in February for meeting.

Motion to accept Monitoring Report 2.3: Commissioners Curry/Gorman

Commissioner Pillsbury abstains - all other Commissioners aye - motion carries

Policy update - 1st reading

2.4 Planning and Budgeting

Discussion:

#4 - Fail to inform the Board and the public through the Burlington School District's Annual Report the impact of the proposed budget on district programs and staff employment.

Commissioner Pillsbury noticed three things about current vs. past annual reports.

Annual report doesn't have much info on budget -- had 2014 example of annual report, which has significant information - various information on all schools. Describes what the budget is all about -- gives people a full understanding of what the district is all about. Gets the public engaged and participating. We must be fully transparent.

#5 - Fail to provide the public in the District's Annual Report a comparative line item budget of revenues and expenditures over several years. Superintendent Obeng: There has been transitions of what goes into the report -- we follow what the guidelines are and we can put extra things in through monitoring reports. Years ago people said they wanted a separate budget document. We can add student achievement scores. Waiting for delayed information from the AOE.

#6 - Fail to inform the public in the District's Annual Report the achievement of our students on state required academic tests.

Commissioner Curry: Every student succeeds act: Are we getting series of reports? State and feds are collecting data and we're waiting for that. Could we have a document with all the links that are fresh? Superintendent Obeng: Likes that idea -- people like relevant topics and click a link...we could provide a budget link and other links. We are trying to do more electronic -- not paper.

Commissioner Fisher: Supports #6 -- we should be transparent to community and show our data. He looked for it when he moved here and others will too. Likes the link document idea as long as it's consistent year to year.

Commissioner Wick: Within the next few weeks -- Requests Commissioners send thoughts and comments to Jeff -- committee will take it up again and refine if needed. Commissioner Wick: There is a BTVStat for the City of Burlington -- maybe we should have a BSDStat?

Superintendent Obeng: We do have a new Data Coordinator. We have that project going and working with the city on the BSDStat.

Superintendent's Report

Budget update:

Presentation posted on BSD website and Boardocs.

Nate Lavery: Reviewed new information slide, which summarizes the new info to the update,

4% tax impact and we went back after analysis and wanted to honor some requests

Laura Nugent: Spoke on Social/Emotional, learning priorities and the DMG project. Nate Levinson, project leader, and supporting change for the T1 and T2 levels. This project will be covered by medicaid dollars. Superintendent Obeng: Look up Nate Levinson -- likes him and believes what he can do in Vermont and other districts.

Bonding - Nate -- includes funding for capital plan and high school -- small cost initially and significant borrowing will be in a couple years. Feels confident that savings are reasonable, achievable and meaningful. Superintendent Obeng: Remember the community support of our bonds.

Superintendent Obeng: We've listened to your feedback and now we've done - cost savings to keep tax rate down -- reduced \$60,000 and what would you like to do with it?

Questions for clarification only:

Commissioner Barlow: Social worker spending increase? Nate: Bring all elementary level Social Workers up to full time.

Commissioner Barlow - \$1.4M - surplus applied to revenue? Nate: continue and increase the structural gap -- obeng: we have a surplus and we have to make it up next year. find dedicated items that only cost one time.

Commissioner Wick: In our budget line items do we have contingency? Nate Lavery -- yes we have \$300,000.

Commissioner Ivancic - slide #35 1.0 FT EL Teacher -- Superintendent Obeng: This will support all schools. Slide #37 3.0 FT Special Ed teachers-- idea is to look at case load and allocate where the need is. This # is based on Laura's analysis for urgent needs.

Commissioner Ivancic: \$168,000 for security system -- what part would be for BHS? The high school is within the design scope. Would be for the future high school.

Commissioner Olwell: Security Design? Nate Lavery: This is just a design for security system. Chair Wool/Commissioner Pillsbury to follow up with Marty Spaulding for clarification.

Commissioner Carey: Are the new teachers for Flynn and SA included? Nate Lavery: Not part of this budget.

Wick: 2.4 FT at BHS -- does that include computer programming? Superintendent Obeng: Looking into that because there is a need.

Superintendent Obeng: \$60,000 -- what do you want to do with this? Board? Chair Wool -- Board will get back to you.

Deliberations on FY20 Budget

- A. Collaborative presentation on consolidated budget proposal.

Commissioner Fisher: Rules for tonight's deliberations: Each commissioner will have an allotted time to ask questions or make statements. Questions can be to Yaw, district staff or

fellow commissioners. Statements can be in support of or in opposition to any budget-related topic. The allotted time encompasses both the asking of the question and the response. Commissioners may yield their time to another commissioner.

Commissioner Carey: Had an ad hoc committee meeting last Saturday.

Commissioner Barlow: What was added that we didn't discuss as a board? Commissioner Gulick: #16

Commissioner Pillsbury: Noticed in Nate's presentation that SA and Flynn teachers were not in budget so they added them.

Commissioner Gulick: We struggle to fund our schools adequately -- if we're going to be reducing teachers/staff we need to look at Central Office too.

Commissioner Carey: Need for early grades to make sure that we give them services to get up to speed by 3rd grade.

Commissioner Fisher: Will go around by ward (listed on website). Everyone has 5 minutes and then 3 minutes total.

Commissioner Gorman: How does administration react to #1 reduction: Superintendent Obeng: Closing the achievement gap and working with the resources we have. Wouldn't want to stop the coaching model - Gorman has heard lots of positive comments about coaching model. #3 District Lead Principal position? Commissioner Currey: big discrepancy between Hunt and Edmunds -- there was a request to standardize -- solution was to create a position that would work with both and develop -- staff changes, budget issues, training, etc. and doesn't think it's working -- there were a lot of other issues. #4 - Fire Russ? Commissioner Carey: yes

Carey: #10 honors experienced staff in district who are willing and able to share knowledge with new staff. Financial reward. We don't have all the \$ we want but we need to provide services where needed.

Commissioner Curry: The district proposal cut teachers or non-instructional staff - Superintendent Obeng: No. We had made \$1.2M reductions at Central Office previously. Do mentors apply and feedback? Commissioner Carey: If administration is giving the evaluations as they should.

Commissioner Gulick: Do we know who we are in this district? Looked at our strategic plan and the 3 boulders -- doesn't make sense to her. Doesn't always see what we do is what we profess to be. Hope we can make strides. Coaching model -- she's in education so she hears/sees/talks - are we there and able to fund this given our needs. Confused about Central Office -- HR used to be 3 ppl and ran smoothly -- doesn't understand what's going on there. We all need to be creative....

Commissioner Fisher: We've talked a lot about coaching model - research doesn't show coaching over interventionists works. Can't meet their basic needs. In favor of doing some coaching and putting \$ into interventionist model. Concerned about reductions: 3 HR positions -- struggles there -- how did you get 3? Commissioner Pillsbury -- guesstimate -- there were 3 in HR four years ago. Commissioner Fisher -- dig into this more before cutting 3. District principal? Not

convinced it's necessary. Commissioner Obeng: Will inform the Board the details of the position. Concerned overall budget and following years: if we put in items now and then in 2021 we'll have an 8-10% tax increase. Scary..... we had an extra \$1.4 M this year --but caution--it won't last to 2021.

Chair Wool: Elementary schools need full time social workers. Needed also the BHS - 2.4 FTEs. Student activities - 1 FTE -- good idea -- enrollment increase necessary. Coaching model provides professional development -- has benefitted teachers -- also knows the basic needs not being met with coaching model. Elementary schools are in need of attention. Appreciation of Superintendent Obeng - Data analysis -- met with Karyn Vogle-- she owns all the district data and it's required with the state.

Commissioner Ivancic: interventionist model worked very well. coaching model - improves teaching skills -- 3-5 years before we see any results. Not sure coaching model working at magnet schools. Can't take coaches tips if their basic needs are not being met. 3 new behavioral coaches -- who helping? Middle schools - adding 2 counselors -- severe bullying etc. at middle schools -- no emotional/social support at both middle schools. Health ed also important. Lots of questions with the District Lead Principal position.

Commissioner Pillsbury: If he knew cases loads of educators and class size -- then can make a decision of basic needs being met. Better management of SA - attract to improve enrollment there. Make the magnet schools strong or look at changing them.

Commissioner Waltz: There hasn't been a lot of consistency -- hard to plan and to grow. What are the kids learning? Make a strategic plan and work on. Concerned that we might be getting all this data and not analyzed. Counterproductive to fire the Communications person. The more we educate the community through communication, the more we get from them. HR - we would open up to legal issues, etc. if HR is reduced.

Commissioner Olwell: cuts on this list -- if we've had the data maybe those cuts would be different. we don't have the data -- on individual schools, class size, etc. nothing to do with the people or what they do -- we were looking for somewhere to cut that wasn't working with children. A lot of problems at middle schools -- we need more adults to work with these kids-- at least 2 guidance counselors at each middle school.

Commissioner Barlow: Shout out to Russ -- the district needs communication. provide support for K paras. debt service coming up in a few years. Glad we're adding instruction at BHS - the modern high school needs computer programing. Respect and give weight to what the administration does.

Commissioner Wick: Next year start budget earlier. Superintendent/Nate's take under advisement of what the Board has said. Need at least two more meeting. Thank you to Yaw and Nate for all the work you've done. Investment in these items -- bowling and frisbee -- middle school band coach...bring these low dollar items back. Look a little harder at Central Office at reductions. come up with reasons to reconfigure.

Student Commissioner Jenemann: Equity coach role? Superintendent Obeng: It's instruction leader -- have not hired that person when someone left 1 ½ years ago. Human rights order that district must have this role. student activities -- one person in role? Commissioner Gulick: Yes Communications position? What do you see if he gets let go? Commissioner Carey: Relatively new position. Languages are important in the future. \$ and the issues of expenditures in the future: Commissioner Curry: new legislation for special ed. Nate: The state works on reimbursement -- staff needs to do time reports. we can claim portion of their salary for reimbursement. We can spend that \$ on special needs, more resources, less admin. Would like to hear more about expenditures when we do budget.

Commissioner Gulick: Talk of a Statewide teachers contract. Superintendent Obeng: Not as many lawyers used, but not huge savings for us.

Superintendent Obeng: Thank you to all for engagement. Has said we need more crucial conversations. What is your work? How do we get there and your comfort level? This group has not sat down and met about the budget. Hope we can find a way to discuss the budget -- members on the board that are connected to the people. Educating is changing -- not the same as 5 or 10 years ago. Structures and operational is not the same either. State is going to impose more changes. We have to be prepared to change. Overwhelming comments and wants to address but can't. He's an instructional leader. -- we are all thinking the same. The reduction talk is out there -- sad that we've done that and calling out people. Staffing at the high school -- student needs will be asked what they want. HR analysis -- consultant will come in and do analysis of HR and Business Office. Understand that this is in the works. We need to do the analysis and then see what we can do in HR.

3 minute round

Commissioner Wick: BHS bond passed and it's great. Really expensive. Community supported it and hope that we do not fire teachers, etc. to fund.

Commissioner Fisher - Not looking to cut -- what we should be concerned with is adding things that we can't sustain.

Commissioner Barlow: We can't undercut services, etc. to fund the high school. Be mindful and not overspend or put ourselves at risk. Healthcare contract (Gulick's comments) -- any savings? Nate: There will be a negotiation, but we don't know the outcome.

Commissioner Waltz: We all agree restorative practices are important. We need continuity -- teachers with continuity helps all kids and everyone.

Commissioner Ivancic: Thank you Nate and Yaw for presentation. If we're truly a board the board should be leading and presenting at meetings. Sees a bit of a change for the better. Should be working on a 3-5 year budget plan.

Commissioner Wool: Thanks to Nate for putting the info needed on the presentation -- grant funded amounts, etc. empowering us with the info. BHS -- we are in need of additional staff at that school. Needs a strong guidance office at BHS.

Commissioner Fisher: Thank you for putting in reductions. Supervisor Obeng: equity vs. equality -- not the same. Supports k-paras -- the earlier we do it the better in the future. Data is really important to the community and the state. Supports Karen Vogle's position -- we must have the data.

Commissioner Gulick: Will miss Commissioner Barlow. Isaac got into Brown University and Russ does a great job. This district -- we need to build relationships with the city, write more grants, get someone in the city to give us swing space. Groups/clubs/sports is so important - meaningful experiences.

Commissioner Carey: Hasn't sensed we were making any progress with the discussions on the budget. Schools are very different and the new BHS will provide a lot. Keep up with the challenging, changing world in education.

Commissioner Curry: I agree we need a clearer strategic framework to guide our thinking. We seem to have general agreement that we need to invest in the elementary schools and in instructional investments. I also agree we need to a different solution at SA to drops in enrollment than multi-grades with fewer teachers. In terms of the coaching versus interventionist discussion, I would propose control group and keep interventionists at SA and return magnet coaches - give everyone else embedded coaches. The communications director has been instrumental with website management, dispensing extensive amount of information to families, staff and the general public. I also think that our high school resources are generally higher overall than middle and elem schools, but I would like to see the data on the per pupil spending broken out by elementary, middle and high school levels. We need to respect the process.

Commissioner Gorman: Agrees that we should not have an abrupt philosophical transition at this time.

Superintendent Obeng: We do have the best complexity in the state. Every district has the same issues. The board can define the what...so we can bring the how. We need to define this. Early learning is a priority. Central Office struggles -- there has to be a balance of understanding and trust in what we are doing. We are asked for more, but sometimes we don't have the person to do it. A lot of people that do great jobs that you aren't aware of. Process for next steps? Directive from Board? Smaller items were not on the priority lists, but we can put them in if the Board directs. We need to be an extension of the board. we deliver the work you want us to do. We are not there. More than one way to define success -- identify something, work at it and we presented 4% -- we need some direction. Ok or increase? We need feedback -- other items that board wants to do.

Commissioner Fisher: In additions, the Board is also requesting reductions.

Commissioner Carey: Tonight was Board feedback to administration to come up with a new budget proposal.

Commissioner Waltz: Ideally can we do 3 different versions?

Commissioner Curry: Fundamental disagreement about coaching and intervention models between all. We all need to weigh in on some format. Use Jeff's format from last year and send to Nate.

Commissioner Obeng: We need to reconcile the coaching issue. We need direction from board -- unfair to make us go back and do more budgets.

Commissioner Wick: I think administration has a fair amount of direction to come up with another budget proposal. The threshold question is the coaches. Take a straw ballot from everyone.

Superintendent Obeng: The issue is do we get rid of the coaches? Do we add interventionists? Board vote on what we do. We may not get the same funding with changes.

Commissioner Pillsbury: Compromise with the coaches/interventionists.

Commissioner Carey: Proposal is not a coaches in/coaches out.

Commissioner Ivancic: Agrees with compromise has feedback on embedded instructional coaches but none with behavioral coaches.

Commissioner Wick: Superintendent Obeng is qualified to make a decision based on what has been said/heard at this meeting. Next meeting come up with a new starting point.

Chair Wool: Everyone has agreed to Monday, 1/14, for another Budget meeting.

Nate: Will check on when the ballot deadline is and inform.

Commissioner Barlow: Do you need more direction? Superintendent Obeng: Yes on coaching.

Commissioner Fisher: We will do a straw ballot on the coaching model. Keep it, get rid of it or less coaches less than today?

Commissioner Wick: Be careful with the coaching -- it's a lot of leverage.

Commissioner Barlow: To disassemble coaching doesn't seem feasible.

Superintendent Obeng: We need interventionists. Logistical challenges with coaches -- we get funding for operational as well the coaches. We may not get the same funding

Commissioner Carey: Outside funded coaches are not being cut -- only elementary embedded coaches. Opposed to an either or vote. There is a transcript about the coaches that you need to read in order to make a decision.

Commissioner Gulick: As compromise - go forward with coaching this year and then the data must verify this.

Commissioner Curry: Data will show 3-5 years. Have SA be a control group and see why they are succeeding.

Superintendent Obeng: Board wants some validation on the coaches, but it will take some time. How do we provide professional support for the teachers, as well as intervention support for the students? We are working with limitations and with what info we have.

Commissioner Carey--If we have another presentation have it be in a different format than slides.

Commissioner Wick: Percentage up in budget % -- any flexibility?

Close Budget Discussion.

Commissioner Fisher: We will do a Straw Ballot -- Do you support the increase of 4% or slight increase of 4.1/4/2%?

Results: Stay at 4% (Commissioners Fisher, Gulick, Barlow, Curry)

Flexible with a little above 4% (Chair Wool, Commissioners Wick, Gorlick, Ivancic, Waltz, Carey, Olwell)

Abstain: Commissioner Pillsbury

Straw Ballot for: Do you agree to keep the coaching model as is, getting rid of the coaching model or a compromise on the coaching model?

Support the Coaching Model as is (Commissioners Wick, Gorman, Gulick, Waltz, Curry)

Get rid of the Coaching Model: (Commissioner Carey)

Some sort of compromise with the Coaching model: (Commissioners Fisher, Chair Wool, Ivancic, Olwell, Pillsbury, Barlow).

Superintendent Obeng: Board is comfortable with a slight over 4% -- somewhat comfortable with some sort of compromise of the coaching model. Commissioner Fisher -- majority of Board is comfortable with a slight tweak in the coaching model.

Meeting ends 11:03pm

Motion to move to Executive Session - Commissioners Fisher/Wick

Motion passes unanimously

Exit Executive Session - Commissioners Fisher/Wick

Motion passes unanimously

Adjourn - Commissioners Wick/Olwell

Motion passes unanimously