



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 9, 2017

School Board Office - 8:30 a.m.

Present: D. Stevenson (in the Chair); C. Broady, Board Chair; N. Brown and S. Donahue, Trustees; C. Kennedy, Superintendent of Schools; J. Leiterman, Secretary Treasurer; W. Hickey, Director of Facilities; K. Johnson, Assistant Secretary Treasurer; J. Brown, Manager of Finance

Stakeholder Representation: M. LaBounty (WVAA); R. Millard (WVTA); B. Scott (WVMEA); A. Milavsky (DPAC)

Absent: P. Dorsman, Trustee

1. VFA District Facility Review

The Director of Facilities reported that West Vancouver Schools will finally be the subject of a facility condition assessment review, starting May 23. This process will be conducted by the company VFA, who has a contract with the Ministry of Education to assess our facilities and systems and assign a dollar value. It has been six to eight years since our last review and the Secretary Treasurer said we have been asking for a new one, as guidelines indicate that one should be conducted every three years. This is important, because consideration of our AFG and Capital Plan applications takes into consideration the value of the items included. If the value is not current, it can affect approval. As a result, this review will help with future applications, particularly with beyond-useful-life items. She also noted that this is another example of the increased oversight being demonstrated by the ministry during the last few years.

2. VOIP RFP

The Director of Facilities reported that three proposals were received in response to the RFP and that the VOIP purchasing committee met yesterday to start the selection process. There are further questions that need to be asked of vendors, so the committee hopes to meet again later in the week and come to a decision. The goal is still to have the infrastructure in place by September, with sites brought online later in the fall.

The Secretary Treasurer noted that it is a labour-intensive process for the committee, with a great deal of information to process. Due diligence is of utmost importance, as there is a large up-front cost to the project, which is meant to be in place for 20-30 years. The introduction of a VOIP system at Ecole Cedardale a couple of years ago has given valuable insight into benefits, possible issues, and implementation plans.

3. **2017/18 Annual Budget**

The Secretary Treasurer reviewed the 2017/18 Annual Preliminary Budget, noting that a draft copy was not distributed, as it has yet to be approved by the Board. The budget planning cycle, feedback process, and guiding questions were reviewed, with the changes to the feedback process having been highlighted in last month's meeting. The focus for the district leadership team continues to be around two key priorities: to maintain and grow innovation (including the new curriculum, assessments, and technology); and to provide stability and a sense of certainty for our parents, students, and staff.

As a result, an enhanced status quo budget is recommended. Previously-established classroom staffing and service areas will be enhanced by the new Classroom Enhancement Funding as follows: increased non-enrolling staff ratios; increased principal and vice principal staff; maintained noon-hour supervision, daytime custodians, elementary band, and innovation grants and teachers. It was noted that during the lean years, West Vancouver School District was able to maintain non-enrolling staff ratios at rates most districts in the province could not, as a result of our locally-generated revenue. Our ratios were for the most part already on-target or above when the new funding was announced, so we are able to improve upon what we already have.

Revenue highlights were summarized and it was noted that student enrollment is now estimated to only drop by 31 FTE from 2016/17, an improvement over the February estimate of an 86 FTE decrease. As a result, our net revenue for 2017/18 is up \$1.1 million. Locally generated revenue continues to be crucial, accounting for 17% of total revenue. Expenses were also reviewed and are fairly consistent from year to year, with salaries continuing to be the largest expense. Though services and supplies costs were reduced, our net operating expenses are up \$600,000.

The Secretary Treasurer said that the very good news is that our draw on reserves in order to cover the structural budget deficit is only \$200,000 for 2017/18 – a historic low for West Vancouver. We are very close to having a balanced budget and while not a certainty, as the amended budgets typically show a more favourable result due to increased enrolment, we may realize a balanced budget by the spring.

Reserves at July 1, 2016 were \$2.6 million. After the 2016/17 amended budget structural deficit is covered, we are left with \$2.1 million for 2017/18. Based on preliminary budget figures, once the \$200,000 deficit is covered, we have \$1.9 million in reserves for future years. This equals 2.79% of our operating expenses, which falls well within guidelines.

Board Chair Broady said the preliminary budget was wonderful news and thanked the Secretary Treasurer, staff, the facilities department, and everyone who has worked hard to find savings while keeping what is best for students front of mind. The Secretary Treasurer said that the Director of Facilities and the Purchasing Manager had been able to realize savings in various areas, which contributed significantly.

The Committee Chair thanked the Secretary Treasurer and staff for a job well done.

RECOMMENDATION: That the 2017/18 Preliminary Annual Budget be forwarded to the Board of Education for approval at the regular meeting on May 16, 2017.

Committee members: Dave Stevenson, Pieter Dorsman

4. Adjourn

9:00 a.m.

Julia Leiterman, Secretary Treasurer