

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 16, 2018

School Board Office - 8:30 a.m.

Present: D. Stevenson (in the Chair); P. Dorsman, Trustee; J. Leiterman, Secretary Treasurer; W. Hickey, Director of Facilities; K. Johnson, Assistant Secretary Treasurer; J. Brown, Manager of Finance; N. Mann, Manager of Purchasing; L. Geall, Manager of Payroll and Benefits

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

Absent: C. Kennedy, R. Willock

1. Payroll Management over Christmas Break

The Secretary Treasurer passed the floor to the Assistant Secretary Treasurer who gave an update on the changes to support staff payroll. Effective January 1, 2018, all permanent support staff have been switched to a bi-weekly payroll system. This was a big project which required a lot of planning, which appears to have paid off, as the change went very smoothly overall. During the Christmas break, she and the Manager of Payroll worked to consolidate pension and T4 data before the switch, which was necessary before the changes to the database were made. That data consolidation is normally a two-month process, but they managed to complete it within a week. She thanked the Manager of Payroll for her hard work and assistance, and also thanked Bruce Scott, business manager for the WVMEA, for his support throughout the process. There was a lag in pay of one week as the result of the timing of the change, but employees were offered the chance to receive a one-week advance should they wish. About 15 people reportedly took the offer and those monies will be paid back during the next four pay periods. The Manager of Payroll reported that there were only a few minor issues while preparing the first payroll of the new system and that for the most part, everything went as planned. This is the first step towards online timesheets, which will be gradually introduced starting in April, after Spring Break. The Secretary Treasurer expressed her thanks for their work on this big project, especially given the tight timelines.

2. 2017/18 Playground Grant

The Secretary Treasurer reported that there were no applicants for the playground grant this year. As a result, the \$10,000 grant, comprised of \$5000 in cash and \$5000 in labour, will be rolled over to next year, meaning two grants will be available. Our playgrounds are in good shape across the district right now, though the Director of Facilities said that BICS is exploring the idea of moving to a soft surface for their playground. There is interest, backed by probably parent donations, to remove the wood chips in order to improve accessibility for all students.

Committee members: Dave Stevenson, Pieter Dorsman

3. Mileage Reimbursement amount

The Secretary Treasurer reported that as of January 1, 2018, there has been a change to AP 512 5.1 – mileage allowance. The rate has now been raised to \$.55 per kilometre.

This figure is reviewed approximately every six months and is adjusted based on the average of rates set by the BCSTA and CRA. It was noted that the CRA rate is the most critical, as we do not want our rate to be higher than theirs, or it becomes a taxable benefit for our employees. The rates set by both agencies went up on January 1, so ours was raised as well. The rate is not retroactive and any mileage claims from 2017 will be subject to the old rate of \$.54/km.

4. Amended budget - funding

The Secretary Treasurer said next month she would present the entire amended budget, including special purpose funds. This month, she would concentrate on the operating grant, as it is the area that is most changeable, based on a number of factors.

Further to the presentation at last month's committee meeting, our 2017/18 regular enrollment is 6898 FTE - an increase of 118 FTE over our spring estimates from last May. That figure drove an increase of approximately \$876,000 in additional funding. It was noted that the per-pupil funding has not increased. Other funding was reviewed, including that associated with unique student needs and ELL. Our ELL numbers are down 62 from our preliminary estimates, but up 61 FTE over last year, indicating continued growth, but perhaps at a slower pace than recent years. The Secretary Treasurer called Aboriginal Education numbers very good news, with an increase of 21 self-identifying students this school year. She said this demonstrates that our relationship with the Nation and the supports we have in place are paying off.

The calculations for the Provincial Average Salary Supplement were reviewed and our funding to cover salary differential decreased from the preliminary estimates. West Vancouver teachers are currently paid, on average, \$995 less than the provincial average of \$74,790. This change has been driven in part by demographics. We have hired a number of new teachers this year and that is reflected in the lower salaries. Ultimately, that change means a reduction of \$144,000 in funding.

Monies associated with unique geographical factors, transportation, administrative savings, and career programs were also reviewed, with no significant changes.

Our locally-generated revenue continues to contribute approximately \$12 million to our budget. The international numbers, though slightly lower, continue to be strong and fall within our own parameters. Homestay availability continues to be a factor. Our academies and programs of choice show increased numbers in most areas, but all have associated costs. This new model of education, where students receive instruction in core subjects in the morning and follow their area of passion in the afternoon, continues to be successful in drawing students from both in and outside the district.

The Secretary Treasurer concluded by saying that while there is now an additional \$1.2 million in funding over the preliminary budget, there are increased costs as well, and we will have a structural deficit budget. Nevertheless, we have sufficient reserves to manage this, and overall we remain in good shape moving forward.

Committee members: Dave Stevenson, Pieter Dorsman

Before the meeting adjourned, Mr Millard asked for an update about training for teachers on the new Ricoh photocopiers/printers. The Secretary Treasurer replied that administrative assistants will be the go-to people for training staff, and they are having a session with a Ricoh representative on the January 26 pro-d day. Further on-site training is a possibility and there are online resources as well. She asked that Mr Millard keep in touch regarding this issue. She can arrange for a Ricoh representative to be available to teachers on the pro-d day as well, but hadn't initially made arrangements, as the day already looked busy with other sessions. It was noted that the smaller machine roll-out will happen later in February, after the IT department has concluded work on some other district projects.

5. **Adjourn**

9:01 a.m.

Julia Leiterman, Secretary Treasurer