



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, April 9, 2019

School Board Office - 8:30 a.m.

Present: D. Stevenson (in the Chair); L. Block, N. Brown, S. Donahue, Trustees; J. Leiterman, Secretary Treasurer; C. Kennedy, Superintendent; S. Nosek, Associate Superintendent; K. Johnson, Assistant Secretary Treasurer; J. Ross, Acting General Manager of Facilities; J. Brown, Manager of Finance; J. Carpino, Manager of Purchasing and Transportation

Stakeholder Representation: C. Ratz, S. Rauh (WVAA); R. Willock (WVTA); B. Scott (WVMEA); Danielle Katerberg (DPAC)

1. Spring Break Facilities Work

The Secretary Treasurer gave a brief summary of the work done by our facilities department during spring break, including: repair of the retaining wall on the Pauline Johnson grounds; new millwork at Gleneagles, Cypress Park, and in one of the portables at Sentinel; painting at BICS and Eagle Harbour; repair and replacement of the walls in the custodian room at WVSS; and pressure washing at the entrance and in the tennis courts at Sentinel. She said these were relatively small jobs, all completed by members of our staff, but make a big difference to the appearance and functionality of our sites.

2. 2018/19 Snow removal debrief

The Secretary Treasurer reminded the committee that last year, the facilities department was experimenting with the hiring of contractors to handle snow removal at our school district sites. Last fall, facilities staff approached her with a plan, designed by themselves with input from stakeholders, which would allow them to take back control and ownership of snow removal. The plan included site maps, prioritization of areas, and communications protocols. With the investment in a second plough, the plan was successfully launched during our cold snap this winter. The Secretary Treasurer said she was very pleased with the results, particularly with the interaction and cooperation between trades and custodial staff. Outside contractors were engaged on a standby basis, and ultimately were used to deal with some minor additional ploughing and for roof and gutter work.

The Manager of Purchasing created cost estimates for five years and has calculated that by keeping snow removal in-house, we will save almost half the previous costs, spending \$22,000 per year, rather than \$55,000 using outside contractors.

Committee members: Dave Stevenson, Lynne Block

3. Childcare BC New Spaces Fund

The Secretary Treasurer updated the committee on the progress of the application for the new funding stream from Childcare BC New Spaces Fund. It is hoped that the application will be filed within the next month, with Director of Student Support Services Sandra-Lynn Shortall writing the rationale and implementation details, and obtaining letters of support from the West Vancouver Teachers' Association (WVTA) and the District of West Vancouver (DWV). The Secretary Treasurer thanked WVTA President Renee Willock and her members for their support, noting that this facility would be great for teachers and staff, and complements the HR retention strategy for our district.

The school district-run facility would provide childcare for infants and toddlers, and it is hoped that a facility run by DWV will serve toddlers and preschool-aged children, providing a seamless transition from infancy to school within the community.

Once submitted, turnaround on the application is expected to be short. If approved, the project will move ahead and timing can happen independently of the school year. The project will also facilitate a necessary upgrade to the electrical service to Inglewood Secondary.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board endorse in principle and approve the filing of the Ministry of Children and Family Development's "Childcare BC New Spaces" funding application, and subject to receiving the requested amount, agree to provide overall management and implementation of the grant, including designing and constructing the appropriate building, and ongoing management of the early childhood education program that will be offered there.

4. Irwin Park update

The Secretary Treasurer reported that this big project is now virtually complete, with the roof drains being connected during spring break. When all costs were calculated, the project landed slightly over budget, and that amount will be applied to the 2019/20 Annual Facilities Grant (AFG).

Regarding the larger drainage issue on the school site and surrounding property, there has been a positive development. Initially, the large-scale drainage upgrade was put on hold due to costs concerns, and sandbags and extensive monitoring put in place to reduce any flooding. That delay has proven to be a benefit, as another dye test was recently run by Modern Drainage and results were successful, indicating the surface drainage is working to some degree. This means that we now can take some time to assess the true source of the drainage problem and remedy the situation in a more efficient and purposeful manner. For the near future, continued sandbagging and monitoring by our facilities staff, along with annual maintenance on the school property drains, and DWV work with surface drains in the playground, should be enough to mitigate the problem in the short term. The monies saved will allow other projects to be completed in the meantime.

5. **2019/20 Five Year Capital Plan Funding**

The Secretary Treasurer reminded that Capital Plans are filed in June for the following year and the funding announcements are made the following March, then funds received. There are a number of projects that require funding, but with not much funding to work with, the Secretary Treasurer prioritized the mechanical and boiler upgrades required at Ridgeview. The current mechanical system there dates from the 1940s and is more cost-effective to deal with in a phased approach, rather than an emergency fix if the boiler breaks down suddenly. West Vancouver Schools has received \$786,896 for that project, which covers approximately 50% of the cost. Phase one of the work will include a new boiler and four air handling units. Facilities staff have met with Principal Val Brady to review the project and to identify any other school needs and find efficiencies. Funding for phase two of the project will be applied for in this year's Capital Plan.

The Annual Facilities Grant received was unchanged at just over \$1.3 million.

We did not receive permission for a project definition report for Sentinel Secondary, nor was any reason given why. Our capital planner also indicated surprise at the decision and had no further information, but the Secretary Treasurer suspects that seismic upgrade pressures across the province are a factor. We will re-apply next year.

RECOMMENDATION: That the bylaw for the 2019/20 Five Year Capital Plan be forwarded to the Board for approval and submission to the ministry.

6. **Sentinel Gym update**

The Secretary Treasurer reminded the committee that she had called a halt to the Sentinel gym project in November, pending weather concerns and further investigation into cost. A meeting in February with an architect, project manager, geotechnical consultants, structural and mechanical engineers revealed an entirely different concept and scope to the project than what the Secretary Treasurer had been led to believe. The original proposal was too simplistic and estimated cost of \$800,000 unrealistic. The scope, invasiveness, and new budget for the project of \$2 million has made the project fiscally irresponsible. The Secretary Treasurer announced that she has made the difficult decision to cancel the project completely.

The Secretary Treasurer acknowledged that this process has been extremely disruptive to Sentinel staff and scheduling, and thanked the school administration and staff, as well as the WVTA, for their work to find solutions for PE classes and programming for the 2018/19 school year. The premature conversion of the Sentinel Field House gym space to a fencing-specific facility will be reversed, and while it will revert to primarily a school gym, the Sentinel teachers have come up with a plan to adjust their PE class scheduling for 2019/20. This will allow the fencing academy continued access to the gym in the afternoons. The Secretary Treasurer thanked Sentinel staff for coming up with a plan that works for everyone and for their patience and flexibility.

She said that this is an extremely unfortunate situation, but that costs proved prohibitive. Even if we could find the money to fund the project adequately, it would drain all our resources and put the district in a precarious situation financially. It was noted that this reinforces the plan moving forward to discontinue the funding of capital

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projects with AFG funds. The focus for our facilities department and AFG money is maintenance. We are known for innovation in this district, but not at the cost of financial stability. It is not sustainable to try to fund expansion projects or new facilities with operating funds.

7. 2019/20 Preliminary Operating Grant

The Secretary Treasurer reviewed the 2019/20 preliminary operating grant, based on February enrolment estimates. Student FTE is the main driver of funding and preliminary estimates show a drop of 100.5 FTE, resulting in a \$440,000 reduction in operating grant funds. It was noted that this number will be re-examined and can be adjusted before the preliminary budget is presented to the board in May. Estimates are always conservative, but the reduction is mitigated slightly by an increase in the per-student funding figure to \$7468 from \$7423. Based on the current FTE estimate, we will also receive approximately \$117,000 in funding as a result of the decline in enrolment. That funding will disappear if our FTE increases and will be made up by the corresponding per student funds. Most of our other ministry funding is status quo, apart from a change to the year by year Education Plan. Renamed Curriculum and Learning Support, this one-time fund will provide \$138,330 to support the new graduation program, particularly around extra career education needed by grade 11 students to meet requirements. There is good news around the Employer Health Tax in the form of \$566, 130 in funding, as recognition of the burden borne by districts during the changes to MSP. Ultimately, our total ministry revenue has increased by \$662,570 for a total 2019/20 preliminary operating grant of \$62,701,146.

Locally-generated revenues, which continue to contribute \$12.6 million in revenue to our budget, were reviewed. The International Program, despite a lower FTE due to a softening market in China, brings in \$10 million. Other local revenues remain mostly unchanged, with a slight increase in academy programs. All have associated costs. Total estimated revenue for the 2019/20 Preliminary Budget is \$75,335,565, which totals \$777,930 over the prior year. Revenue will be reviewed and adjusted as needed prior to presenting the complete budget in May.

The Secretary Treasurer concluded by saying that we are in good shape to continue with a status quo budget for 2019/20, and that funding is strong and positive. She noted that while budget pressures continue, particularly around tech, the good news is that funding has not been affected this year by the funding formula review.

8. Adjourn

9:25 a.m.

Julia Leiterman, Secretary Treasurer