

School District No. 48 (Sea to Sky)

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

May 11, 2016

School Board Office

Squamish, BC

Time: 2:45pm

MINUTES

16-05-11 FC-O

Attendees:

Rick Price, Board Chair

Rachael Lythe, Trustee

Laura Godfrey, Trustee

Patricia Westerholm, Trustee

Rebecca Barley, Trustee

Chris Vernon-Jarvis, Trustee

Ian Kent, Trustee

Lisa McCullough, Superintendent

Jody Langlois, Assistant Superintendent

Shehzad Somji, Secretary-Treasurer

Ralph Hughes, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

Anne MacDougall, Administrative Assistant

Steve Lloyd, SSTA President

Tina Fox, Teacher

Ian Currie, Director of Operations

The meeting was called to order at 2:53pm.

1. AGENDA

Recommendation:

“THAT the agenda be approved.”

MOVED/SECONDED:

CARRIED

2. MINUTES

Recommendation:

“THAT the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on January 13, 2016 be adopted.”

MOVED/SECONDED:

CARRIED

3. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Annual Facility Grant Plan for Ministry of Education – *Ian Currie*

Trustee Jarvis asked about the water line replacement at Mamquam. The piping is beyond life, and needs upgrading. It covers domestic supply as well as fire-fighting flows.

Trustee Kent asked how big is the full list of our facilities plan? There are a large number of things that need doing. Lots of the facilities need roofing/cladding and energy upgrades, but we are operating within the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education. There is a comprehensive list including a roofing report from 2014 that lists when all our roofs will need replacement.

Trust Kent asked if the schools know about the upgrades planned? Mr. Currie replied that many of the upgrades were discussed at the school alignment meetings.

Mr. Currie was also asked what a DDC upgrade is. DDC stands for Directed Digital Control and it is part of optimizing the HVAC systems in our schools, and will allow staff to adjust things remotely.

Recommendation: **“THAT the Finance Committee recommend that the Board approve the Annual Facility Grant Bylaw for submission to the Ministry of Education.”**

MOVED/SECONDED:

CARRIED

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

A. Partner Group Meeting Responses – *Jody Langlois*

Ms. Langlois shared that the format this year changed slightly from the past with good feedback from the Partnership Groups. The meeting was very well attended, with partners being asked to bring five people to the meeting.

What’s working well?

- Variety of programs and voice and choice into what students take
- Changing of facilities ie: Makerspaces
- Gardens
- Initiative with Well Ahead

What are the concerns?

- Need for continued support around mental health
- Use of technology in schools
 - equitable
 - appropriate

B. Draft Budget – *Ralph Hughes*

Mr. Hughes, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, presented the 2016/2017 P3 Operating Budget Summary. Pupil FTE is estimated to be up 41.75 from last year which drives our student based funding. All figures are estimates until the September 30th count is completed. Trustee Kent asked about the \$70,000 difference for Unique Geographic Factors. Mr.

Hughes will bring comparison reporting to the next meeting to look at. The Ministry is now sending out the holdback early (formerly kept until after the September 30th count), and an additional supplementary grant has been added this year. It was noted that the Ministry is using our numbers as of today for Special Education Designations, but in our budget estimate we have reduced our numbers to be conservative. Itinerant service remains about the same, the largest change is in tech support which reflects an anticipated lift increase for the manager.

Utilities and leases are up \$270,000, most of the difference being the new internet (NGN) costs that the government mandated for us last year. This first budget currently sits in a deficit of \$633,065 and will be worked on over the next month. To summarize, between the NGN costs of \$210,000, and the Administrative saving plan in the amount of \$224,000 both being deducted from the district's operating grant, it leaves the district with \$434,000 worth of claw backs. Cuts of \$280,000 have already been made by management without affecting student services. Of particular note is the difference in cost between the NGN (new internet), and PL Net (old internet) which only cost us \$30,000 annually.

Trustee Kent commented that we are lucky to be a growing district otherwise things would be graver. Trustee Godfrey commented that in addition to growth, we also have a strong International Department.

Ms. McCullough stated staff could try and look at carrying forward a surplus from this year but it would be tricky at this point, and it doesn't change the fact that we are currently underfunded,

Trustee Godfrey commented on other Districts writing letters expressing their concerns about funding, and asked if there was an appetite from School District No. 48 Board members to do the same.

Trustee Vernon-Jarvis stated that the government has been taking administrative cuts away at the bottom out of non-instructional costs, and then adding funds back to Instructional.

Trustee Price stated the government is telling the truth that they are putting more money in, but they are actually taking it out faster. He stated that he felt the Board owes it to the public and to School District No. 48 partners to explain what the district is up against.

Trustee Vernon-Jarvis asked other Trustees what they think when reading letters other districts have written. Trustee Price responded by saying his reactions are subject to how well the letter is written, applauding the ones that are well done, but worrying about school district credibility being eroded with the ones that aren't. Trustee Price

also stated he has every confidence that this district could write a letter to the Minister and provide information to our public that would be in the more favourable category.

Trustee Godfrey spoke about a good letter from one district that talked about the fixed costs and the increase of them, such as hydro, gas, bussing, etc. She stated that writing a letter that says, we're still committed to doing what we do, but this is what we're up against, is appropriate.

Trust Westerholm agrees that we could do an appropriate letter, and likes the district letters that show their actual costs/losses.

Trustee Kent agreed that it's time to write a letter, and Trustee Price stated that a letter should be a document we share with the public.

Discussion occurred about what sort of things should or shouldn't be included in the letter, and there was consensus that a letter should be written.

MOTION;

THAT the Finance Committee recommends that the Board write a letter to the Minister of Education, to be made public, expressing our concerns regarding school district funding.

MOVED/SECONDED:

CARRIED

Trustee Price noted the data for the letter would come from staff.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Recommendation:

“THAT the meeting be adjourned.”

The meeting adjourned at 3:53pm.