# Finance Committee Minutes

Monday, April 4, 2011 – 5:30 p.m.
Conference Room, Administration Office

Present: L. Ross, Chairperson, M. Sefton, M. Snelling, D. Karnes, Dr. D. Michaels (entered at 6:20 p.m.), G. Barnes.

Regrets: K. Zabowski

## 1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Finance Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by the Chairperson, Dr. Ross.

## 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Barnes, requested the addition of information regarding the Province's recent announcement to reduce education property taxes be added to the agenda. The Finance Committee Agenda was approved as amended.

## 3. Review of Committee Minutes

The March 10, 2011 Committee Minutes were reviewed.

## 4. COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE GOAL ITEMS

### A) Budget 2011-2012 – Post Budget Review

The Committee discussed and reviewed the budget process which had taken place. Discussions were held regarding the role of the Divisional Futures and Community Relations Committee in the budget process, noting there had been some duplication of meetings with stakeholders. It was agreed the Divisional Futures and Community Relations Committee needed to clarify the purpose of their meetings as it relates to budget and possibly work with the Finance Committee if they wish to continue to participate in the budget process for 2012-2013. The Finance Committee felt the stakeholder meetings had been worthwhile and agreed to continue the process again for next year. The Committee discussed the lack of participation by the local taxpayer at the stakeholder meeting held at Crocus Plains High School. It was agreed the Committee would hold this stakeholder meeting for one more year before deciding whether or not to continue in future years. Senior Administration noted they would be more specific in providing information to the Board regarding how the proposed enhancements would benefit students. They would also list the enhancements in order of priority. Discussions were held regarding the use of Social Networking and the Division website to more effectively promote the budget process and upcoming stakeholder meetings. It was agreed a list of proposed dates for all stakeholder meetings would be provided to the Finance Committee in September.

## 5. OTHER COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE GOAL ITEMS

### A) Purchase of Defibrillators

This matter had been referred to the Finance Committee from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees held March 28, 2011. It was noted that seven schools currently had defibrillators. The Committee discussed the possibility of purchasing defibrillators for all Division Facilities. The Committee agreed this would show leadership in the Community. Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Barnes, advised that the money could be taken from surplus to purchase the machines. It was agreed a recommendation would be brought forward to purchase defibrillators for all Division Facilities, including the Administration Office and the Maintenance/Transportation Office. As it is not a Division owned-property, the Secretary-Treasurer was directed to consult with Spring Valley Colony as to whether or not they would like the Division to purchase a defibrillator for their school.

**Recommendation:**
That the purchase of defibrillators for all Division facilities, in the approximate amount of $50,000, be approved as an over-expenditure in the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

B) **Accumulated Surplus**

Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Barnes, spoke to the matter. Discussions were held regarding allocating $150,000 to the Computer Reserve Fund for internal re-cabling at Crocus Plains, noting the project would be done during the summer months and therefore would not be spent before the end of the fiscal year. Discussions were also held regarding allocating $100,000 into the School Bus Replacement Reserve. The Secretary-Treasurer answered questions for clarification. It was agreed to recommend placing $250,000 of the surplus into reserve funds.

**Recommendation:**
That the amount of $150,000 from the 2010/2011 projected surplus be allocated to the Computer Reserve Fund for internal re-cabling at Crocus Plains Regional Secondary School, subject to approval by Manitoba Education, Schools Finance Branch.

That an additional amount of $100,000 from the 2010/2011 projected surplus be allocated to the School Bus Replacement Reserve.

C) **Tender**

The Committee reviewed the tender proposals received for the supply and installation of a communications cabling system at Vincent Massey High School. Discussions were held regarding the large discrepancy in the tenders. The Secretary-Treasurer was directed to review the discrepancy in the GST/PST of the lowest tender.

**Recommendation:**
That the low proposal from Hard Line Construction in the amount of $68,645 including taxes for the supply and installation of a communications cabling system at Vincent Massey High School be accepted.

D) **Trustee Inquiry – Inequity in Staffing Ratios**

Trustee Sefton provided his reasoning for the inquiry. He expressed concern that the inequity in staffing ratios between early years and high school was contrary to the Board's Governance Goal to increase graduation rates. Trustee Ross and Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Barnes, spoke to the previous Board's focus on early years education and budget decisions which reflected this focus. It was agreed to refer this matter to the 2012-2013 budget discussions to take place in the fall.

Trustee Snelling also inquired about the future of EAL resources once the need for such resources begins to lessen over time. It was agreed Senior Administration needed to think strategically about the deployment of future resources in this area.

## 5. OPERATIONS INFORMATION

A) **Increase in Homeowner Rebates**

Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Barnes, circulated the March 31, 2011 Press Release from the Manitoba Government advising of the increase in homeowner education tax rebate from $650 to $700. Discussions were held regarding the timing of the announcement; the negative impact the rebate might have on Division's who accepted the TIG; and the impact the rebate will have on the local homeowner in Brandon with respect to the Division's budget. Discussions were also held regarding the PSFB media release pertaining to school gyms. It was noted this matter would be discussed at the Facilities and Transportation Committee upon receipt of same from the Provincial Government.

**6. NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, May 12, 2011, 2:00 p.m, Board Room.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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| L. Ross (Chairperson) | M. Sefton |
| M. Snelling | P. Bartlette (Alternate) |