



BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, THE BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION, HELD IN THE J. L. MILNE BOARDROOM, ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, 1031 - 6TH STREET, BRANDON, MANITOBA, AT 9:00 A.M., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2014.

PRESENT:

Mr. M. Sefton, Chairperson, Mr. J. Murray, Vice-Chairperson, Mrs. P. Bowslaugh, Mr. Bartlette, Mr. D. Karnes, Mr. G. Kruck, Dr. L. Ross, Mr. M. Snelling, Mr. K. Sumner

Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. D. Labossiere and Recording Secretary: Ms. S. Bailey, Live Streaming Video Operator, Ms. K. Boklaschuk.

Senior Administration: Dr. D. M. Michaels, Superintendent, Mr. G. Malazdrewicz, Associate Superintendent, Ms. Eunice Jamora, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, Ms. B. Switzer, Director of Human Resources.

CALL:

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and referred to the Call.

The meeting had been called for the purpose of considering the following:

a) Budget Estimates for 2014-2015

Chairperson, Mark Sefton, provided opening remarks. He noted the budget deliberations would be very different from previous years as the Board had requested no enhancements. He was unsure as to how long the day would last as the Board worked together to achieve a consensus. He thanked the Secretary-Treasurer for all his work in preparing the different handouts required for the Board and in preparation of the budget.

The Superintendent, Dr. D. Michaels, spoke to the Professional Education Leadership Program (PELP) Coherence Framework outlined in the Budget Binder for Trustees. She noted the importance of the Board's actions with respect to budget decisions being in coherence with the work of the school division. She concluded her remarks by wishing the Board the best in their deliberations.

Mr. Labossiere, Secretary-Treasurer, outlined the procedure he would be following for the day's proceedings. He spoke to the Board's task with respect to their deliberations and noted upcoming deadlines with respect to presentations by the public, voting on the budget, forwarding the budget information to Municipalities and the Government.

Mr. Labossiere outlined the 2014/2015 Financial Budget document to be considered and highlighted the following:

- 1) Enrolment
- 2) Staffing Budget
- 3) Accumulated Surplus and Reserves
- 4) Preliminary Budget Summary 2014/2015

- 5) Possible Reduction Considerations
- 6) Special Levy Requirements
- 7) Kindergarten to Grade 3 Smaller Classes Initiative

Trustee Ross exited the meeting at 9:55 a.m. and returned to the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Ms. Kelli Boklaschuk, Communications and Technology Specialist, was invited to the Board Table to speak to the results of the Public Budget Forum Feedback survey results. A copy of the results was circulated to Trustees. Ms. Boklaschuk provided the Board with a brief review of the results obtained from the survey conducted following the Public Budget Forum held February 12, 2014. She noted that 486 surveys had been completed, 98 in person at the forum and the rest on-line. Ms. Boklaschuk and Ms. Marnie Wilson, Research and Evaluation Specialist, answered Trustee questions for clarification. Superintendent, Dr. Michaels, provided her opinion on what the survey results said and who may have participated in the survey.

BREAK: 10:10 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Mrs. Bowslaugh – Mr. Snelling

That the Board do now resolve into Committee of the Whole In Camera. (10:30 a.m.)

Carried.

IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE IN CAMERA

Senior Administration presented confidential information regarding the budget. Senior Administration responded to Trustee inquiries.

Mr. Snelling – Mr. Kruck

That the Committee of the Whole In Camera do now resolve into Board. (10:50 a.m.)

Carried.

- 1) Kindergarten to Grade 3 Smaller Classes Initiative - **\$120,000 – AGREED – Apply to current staffing.**

Upon returning to open board, the Chairperson asked the Board for direction with respect to the funds received for the Kindergarten to Grade 3 smaller classes initiative. He noted the Board currently has 12 FTE assigned to this initiative of which 5 FTE were currently funded by the Province. With the \$120,000 provided by the Government for this item for the 2014-2015 budget, he asked the Board for direction as to the designation of the funds. The Board unanimously agreed to transfer the \$120,000 towards the remaining 7 FTE the Division had assigned to the Kindergarten to Grade 3 smaller classes initiative, thereby having 7 FTE funded by the Province and 5 FTE funded by the Brandon School Division.

The Chairperson then asked the Board for direction as to how they wished to proceed. The Board agreed to look at all possible reductions before looking at the various tax scenarios. The possible reduction considerations were presented as follows:

Enrollment Efficiencies:

(including minimum enrollment and maximum number of credits)

Establish minimum class size at 15 students, grades 9-12	6 FTE	\$ 480,000
Pupil Teacher Ratio Changes	10-30 FTE	\$ 800,000 – \$2,400,000
Establish Limit @ 34-38 courses Gr 9-12 (4 year implementation)		--

Program Efficiencies:

(In consideration, no expansion of existing programs and no implementation of new programs)

School Community Transitions/Student Support Programs:

Eliminate at CPRSS, VMHSS

7 FTE \$ 560,000

Divisional Learning Support Services

7.5 FTE \$ 600,000

Eliminate all out of province professional development travel

\$ 100,000

1) Establish minimum class size at 15 students, grades 9 – 12 – **REJECTED (7-2) - \$480,000**

Referencing the trades and other such programs with multi-age and multi-level possibilities, Trustees noted the number of students enrolled in a class “on paper” versus the number of students in a classroom is very different. The Superintendent reminded the Board of their obligations to allow a student to complete programming once they have enrolled in Grade 9. Discussions were held regarding the presentations made by students and parents at the public forum on this item. Further discussions were held regarding equity and the need to provide programming for a wide and diverse range of learners.

2) Pupil Teacher Ratio Changes – **Postponed discussions until later in the day.**

Trustees spoke for and against this reduction. Trustees spoke to the amount of money and time spent by this Board and past Boards to maintain the pupil teacher ratio at a workable level. Trustees unanimously agreed they did not wish to increase the pupil teacher ratio at the Kindergarten to Grade 3 level, especially given the Minister’s directions with respect to class size. Some trustees were reluctant to move forward on this reduction given previous discussions regarding the rejection of a minimum class size, as well as concerns regarding future enrollment growth.

Following lengthy discussions, Trustees agreed to break for lunch and then revisit the day’s procedure before moving forward with further budget discussions.

A lunch break was taken from 11:58 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Following lunch the Board agreed to look at the various tax scenarios to determine a reduction amount, before reviewing the possible reductions.

Possible Tax Scenarios

Scenario 1: Preliminary Budget results in a 4% increase in school taxes
(No reductions required)

Scenario 2: 3% increase in school taxes
(\$900,000 in reductions required)

Scenario 3: 2% increase in school taxes
(\$1,800,000 in reductions required)

Scenario 4: 1% increase in school taxes
(\$2,700,000 in reductions required)

Scenario 5: 0% increase in school taxes
(\$3,600,000 in reductions required)

Trustees reviewed the various tax scenarios. Opinions and comments ranged from support for Scenario 1 with no reductions and a tax increase of 4% to support for Scenario 3 with possible reductions in the amount of \$1,800,000 in order to achieve a 2% tax increase. Trustee Sumner stated he disagreed with the current process and therefore chose to abstain from any decision with respect to which scenario he would support.

Trustees then agreed to refine the discussions even further by choosing a dollar figure in reductions before looking at what reductions would be made. Discussions ranged from support for \$400,000 in reductions to support for \$1,300,000 in reductions. Before proceeding further, the Board agreed to hear any enhancements or reductions which individual trustees would like to bring forth for discussion.

3) Trustee Kruck – Enhancement Request – Additional Anti-bullying Measures – **REJECTED (7-2) \$50,000.**

Trustee Kruck, referencing the data provided by the Tell Them From Me Surveys noted the number of students who spoke about being bullied. He spoke about the Division's need to provide students with a feeling of trust, safety and respect in schools. He agreed that several initiatives to address this matter was currently in place, however, he felt more could be done. Therefore, he was requesting an additional \$50,000 be added to the budget to develop additional strategies to address this matter.

Several trustees spoke against this request noting the Board's motion not to add any enhancements to the budget for 2014-2015. Trustees spoke about the benefits of the Youth Revolution and their work in this area. Trustees noted the many resources currently found in the schools to address this matter. Reference was also made to the Divisional Futures and Community Relations Committee meetings with students and how those students specifically stated they felt their schools were safe. This enhancement request of Trustee Kruck was rejected.

4) Trustee Sumner - Capital Maintenance Budgets – Parking Lots at Crocus Plains, Earl Oxford, King George – **REJECTED (7-2) - \$44,500**

Discussions were held regarding the Capital and Maintenance Budget and the budget process. Before proceeding further, the Board agreed to move In-Camera to hold confidential discussions.

Mr. Murray – Dr. Ross

That the Board do now resolve into Committee of the Whole In Camera. (2:10 p.m.)

Carried.

IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE IN CAMERA

Further discussions were held regarding Trustee Sumner's request for reductions as noted in the confidential information provided to Trustees.

Mr. Snelling – Mr. Bartlette

That the Committee of the Whole In Camera do now resolve into Board. (2:50 p.m.)

Carried.

Upon returning to open Board, Trustee Sumner removed his reduction request with respect to the confidential material presented to the Board of Trustees in-camera.

The Secretary-Treasurer spoke to the Capital Maintenance Budget noting it had been prepared as per directions provided in Motion 120/2013. He also spoke to the possible impact on grant funding by reducing items from the Capital Maintenance Budget at this time. The Board rejected the reduction request of Trustee Sumner.

The Board then agreed to return to reviewing the possible reduction considerations on an item by item discussion.

- 5) School Community Transitions/Student Support Programs: Eliminate at CPRSS, VMHSS – **AGREED (8-1) Reduce by 1 FTE - \$80,000**

Trustees requested clarification regarding the school community transition programming and the Off-Campus, Upper Deck and At-Risk Youth Programming. Superintendent, Dr. Michaels, reminded the Board of their obligations under Bill 18. She spoke about the students the Division receives from other Divisions for the At-Risk Youth Programming who do not come with funding as they arrive after the cut-off dates. The Superintendent spoke to staffing for school community transition programming and confirmed a new support system would need to be developed at the local school levels. Trustees agreed to reduce by 1 FTE in this area.

- 6) Divisional Learning Support Services – **AGREED (5-4) Reduce by 1 FTE - \$80,000**

Trustee support for reductions in this area range from 0 to 1.5 FTE. Following discussions this item was reduced by 1 FTE.

- 7) Out of Province Professional Development Travel – **AGREED (8-1) – Reduce by \$40,000**

Trustees requested clarification as to whether or not any staff required out-of-province travel for certification purposes and delivery of programming. Discussions were held regarding the benefits of professional development; the cost of travelling in Canada which is often higher than travelling to the United States; staff other than teaching staff who require professional development which required out-of-province travel; and the optics of Trustees travelling out-of-province for professional development while restricting staff travel. The Board agreed to reduce this item by \$40,000 recognizing that some out-of-province travel was required in order to obtain quality professional development.

- 8) Establish Limit @ 34-38 courses Gr 9-12 (4 year implementation) – **REJECTED.**

Trustees unanimously agreed to remove this item from the table.

- 9) Pupil Teacher Ratio Changes – **AGREED (6-3) – Reduce by 9 FTE - \$720,000.**

Trustees returned to discussions regarding pupil teacher ratio. Trustee opinions as to the reductions required ranged from 4 FTE positions to 10 FTE positions. As a consensus could not be reached, the Board agreed to take a break and then continue discussions on this item.

BREAK: 4:55 p.m. to 5:05 p.m.

Following the break Trustees continued to discuss reductions in pupil teacher ratio. It was noted that three trustees requested a reduction of 8 FTE in this area while three trustees requested a reduction of 10 FTE in this area. Discussions were held regarding a compromise of a reduction of 9 FTE in this area. By reducing 9 FTE in pupil teacher ratio, together with the other reductions already agreed to, the Board would be bringing forth a tax increase of 2.9%. Trustees agreed to a reduction of 9 FTE. It was noted that the reduction of a

number of these positions would be achieved through retirements and attrition. Trustees also confirmed the reduction was not to take place in Kindergarten to Grade 3 pupil teacher ratios.

The Secretary-Treasurer was asked to provide the Board with a summary of the budget decisions and the impact on taxes. Mr. Denis Labossiere, Secretary-Treasurer, noted that the budget as it now stands provided for a decrease in the mill rate of -6.5% and an increase in taxes of 2.9% for an average property. On a \$220,000 home, this resulted in an increase of \$42.88 a year or \$3.57 a month. On a \$550,000 commercial building, this resulted in an increase of \$539.00 per year. He noted that the budget day decisions would result in a -1.1% carryover into next year. He further confirmed the Board had agreed to reductions of \$920,000, and that the \$120,000 funding from the Government for the Kindergarten to Grade 3 Class size initiative would be added to Revenue. The Board had agreed to reduce staffing by 11 FTE positions.

The Chairperson thanked the Board of Trustees for their work on what was a very difficult budget. He noted the public had the opportunity to speak to the decisions made today at a Special Board Meeting to be held on March 3, 2014. However, he noted anyone interested in speaking at the meeting needed to register with the Office of The Secretary-Treasurer.

The Secretary-Treasurer also thanked the Board of Trustees for their work with respect to the budget deliberations.

Mr. Kruck – Dr. Ross

That the meeting do now adjourn (5:15 p.m.).

Chairperson

Secretary-Treasurer