



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 21, 2023.

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

L. Ross, Chairperson	
J. Murray, Vice-Chairperson	
C. Cramer	C. Ekenna
K. Fallis	B. Foley
J. Murray	D. Ross

ALSO PRESENT:

- D. Labossiere, Secretary-Treasurer
- M. Gustafson, Superintendent / CEO
- S. Gilleshammer, Assistant Superintendent
- J. Zilkey, Assistant Superintendent
- E. Jamora, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer
- B. Sangster, Recording Secretary
- T. Curtis, Video Streaming Operator

REGRETS: B. Sieklicki

The Board met In-Camera from 9:00 a.m. to 9:51 a.m.

CALL:

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and referred to the Call.

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

- A. 2023-2024 Preliminary Budget Presentation
- B. Budget Deliberations for 2023-2024

Dr. Linda Ross, Chairperson, welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided opening remarks. She noted that this is one of the most important things that the Board of Trustees does in the course of a year. The Board spends a lot of time on Budget and a lot of time in preparation, so we are ready to get down to the work. She spoke on the increase in funding the Division received from the Province this year and while it's very welcome, she reminded everyone that although it is an increase in funding, over the last couple of years the Board has made substantial cuts to the budget and so what this increase will do is perhaps help us in recovering some of that loss but it doesn't put us overall in a positive position over where we were a couple of years ago.

Mr. Mathew Gustafson, Superintendent/CEO, also provided remarks. He noted that in preparation for the 2023-2024 Budget Deliberations, he reflected on the Division over the last decade and a half. Over the last 15 years, Brandon School Division has increased from 7,218 students to 9,366. That equates to 2,148 more students or a 29.8% increase in enrolment. During that time, the Division experienced increasing demands and expectations in meeting the academic and social emotional needs of the

students in our care. Brandon School Division has been able to meet these challenges through the Board of Trustees' focus on the student.

The information you are about to receive from Mr. Denis Labossiere, Secretary-Treasurer, and Ms. Eunice Jamora, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, will show that we are in a much different preliminary budget situation in comparison to last year. However, it should be noted that the factors impacting our Division are greater than ever.

BSD has experienced a single year enrolment growth of 328 students. This represents a larger number of students than 11 of our schools' current enrolment.

Demand for supports for students and families have increased not only from enrolment growth but also due to increasing frequency of student needs as well as the impact of the pandemic on our students.

The delivery of educational services for students is facing increasing demands to our infrastructure such as the integration of required technology, upgrades for accessibility and WSH requirements, as well as the maintenance of buildings whose age difference spans 114 years.

All of this occurs with the backdrop of the highest inflationary costs in many years.

Senior Administration understands that not all areas of need can be addressed. We acknowledge the difficult decisions ahead of you today. These deliberations are directly connected to the stability of the division and ability of the division to respond to the needs of our students and families.

On behalf of the Division, he wished Trustees well in their deliberations and thanked them for their efforts.

A) 2023-2024 Preliminary Budget Presentation

Mr. Denis Labossiere, Secretary-Treasurer, indicated that the purpose of his presentation and corresponding document was to provide information for the Brandon School Division Board of Trustees regarding the 2022-2023 Operating Budget. The Preliminary Financial Budget 2023-2024 document was circulated to Trustees.

The Secretary-Treasurer indicated the outline he would be following:

- Budget Development Process
- Preliminary 2023-2024 Operating Budget
- Budget Requests
- Special Requirement / Levy
- Next Steps

Mr. Labossiere noted that the objective of Budget Deliberations is to give tentative approval to the final budget. The local municipalities must be advised of the Division's Special Levy for 2023 on or before March 15, 2023. He added that the 2023-2024 Preliminary Operating Budget had been prepared in accordance with Board direction, along with funding received from the Provincial Government as communicated by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning on February 2, 2023. The budget requests totalling \$146,000 are not included in the budget totals and would therefore be add-ons. Mr. Labossiere advised that the Preliminary Budget reflects total operating expenditures of \$121.6 million for 2023-2024. Current budget estimates reflect a surplus of \$518,639 after applying a 2% increase for the special requirement. The document has been prepared to reflect the operations of the

Division, and the policies and directions and decisions made by the Board of Trustees to date, are subject to any further direction the Board of Trustees may give.

The Secretary-Treasurer highlighted the factors impacting the budget considerations and also provided details regarding the budget development process and the directions provided by the Board to Senior Administration. Mr. Labossiere reviewed how the Division compared to the Manitoba Provincial Average and similar divisions such as St. James and Seven Oaks using the 2021-2022 Provincial FRAME Budget Report. He spoke to enrollment and the development of the staffing budget. Mr. Labossiere provided detailed information regarding the current status of the accumulated surplus and the capital reserve accounts.

He reviewed the changes in the revenue sources and expenditures and also reviewed inflationary increases built into budget.

Mr. Labossiere reviewed the Special Requirement, the effect of the School Year Budget on the Special Levy, and the Budget Requests. He indicated that with the freeze on the Special Levy and a 4.53% increase in school assessment, there is a \$27.22 (1.56%) decrease in annual school taxes for a home assessed at \$277,800.

The Secretary-Treasurer concluded that the 2023-2024 Operating Budget was now the Board's Budget to deliberate and give tentative approval to the Operating Budget.

B) Budget Deliberations for 2023-2024

The Budget Requests recommended for consideration were presented as follows:

Budget Requests:

Trustee/Board Committee	\$ 0
Senior Administration Requests	\$146,000

Total Senior Administration Budget Requests for 2022-2023: \$146,000

The Budget Requests recommended by Senior Administration for consideration were discussed, with Trustees speaking for or against each recommended enhancement item with the following results:

a) Supervisor of Facilities – (1.0 FTE) – \$111,800 - **AGREED**

The Superintendent/CEO reviewed this budget request and the rationale for the request. Trustees asked questions for clarification and agreed unanimously to support this request, and to have it added to the budget.

b) HVAC Technician - \$34,200 – **AGREED**

Mr. Gustafson reviewed this Senior Administration Budget request and the rationale for the request. Trustees asked questions for clarification. Trustees agreed unanimously to support this request, and to have it added to the budget.

c) Replacement of School Paging Systems - \$100,000 – **AGREED (6-2)**

The Superintendent/CEO reviewed this budget request and the approximate costs and paging system priority listing by school, for a total of \$3.2 million. He indicated that Senior Administration left it up to the Board's discretion to allocate funds for this request, adding that these systems are used daily but are also critically important to the Division's risk response planning for evacuations, lockdowns, shelter in place and secure/hold.

Trustee Murray spoke to this item, supporting adding \$100,000 to the budget this year, and including a budget line for future years. Discussion took place regarding setting up a capital reserve, setting aside funds in budget, and using designated surplus to assist with funding the replacement of these systems. Trustees agreed to add \$100,000 to the budget in support of this request.

The Secretary-Treasurer indicated that the remaining surplus was at \$272,639 after approval of Senior Administration's budget requests. The Board asked Senior Administration to provide a listing of the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 Budget Reductions for the Board's consideration.

The Board Chairperson reviewed the listing of potential areas where they could reinstate past budget reductions. Trustees reviewed the individual items, asked questions, provided feedback, and spoke for or against each item as follows:

2022-2023 Reductions (for potential reinstatement)

- a) Removal of Attendance Officer Position **(\$25,800) – not reinstated**
- b) Reconfiguration of High School Lunch Supervision **(\$2,700) – not reinstated**
- c) Reduce Professional Development for Support Staff by 2 days – **REVISED to 1 day (\$57,900) – not reinstated**
- d) 5% Reduction to School Learning Resources **(\$12,100) – not reinstated**

(Trustee Gobeil exited at 11:36 a.m. and returned at 11:38 a.m.)

BREAK: 11:41 a.m. to 12:53 p.m.

- e) Modular Classrooms **(\$56,400) – n/a**
- f) Fleet Vehicle – Truck **(\$50,000) – n/a**
- g) Elimination of Comprehensive Health Care Aide Program **(\$45,500) – not reinstated**
- h) 5% Reduction to Professional Development **(\$57,000) – not reinstated**
- i) Trustee Election Costs from Surplus **(\$47,900) – n/a**
- j) Replacing Director of Human Resources with a Supervisor of Human Resources **(\$49,300) – not reinstated**

BREAK: 1:22 p.m. to 1:46 p.m. (due to technical difficulties)

- k) Removal of MIST Administrative Assistant position **(\$47,400) – not reinstated**
- l) Shift Welcome Centre registration process to catchment area schools **(\$97,400) – not reinstated**
- m) Eliminate two (2) Specialist Positions and create one (1) continuous Improvement Administrator position - **Research and Evaluation Position (\$97,400): reinstated (1.0 FTE) – \$105,300**

(Trustee Gobeil exited at 1:53 p.m. and returned at 1:54 p.m.)

- n) Reduce one (1) Speech Language Pathologist position and one (1) Psychologist position (\$197,700) - **one (1) Psychologist Position: reinstated (1.0 FTE) - \$98,850**

The Board had initially approved reinstatement of both these specialist positions, however, after a review of approved items, Trustees removed the reinstatement of the Speech Language Pathologist position due a budget shortfall.

- o) Reduce Division Itinerant Reading Recovery positions **(\$73,000) – not reinstated**
- p) Removal of Augmentative Communication Education Assistant position **(\$30,600) – not reinstated**
- q) Removal of Human Resources Assistant position: **reinstated – (1.0 FTE) – \$61,400**
- r) Removal of Brandon Community Drug and Alcohol Education Coalition and Youth Revolution Program Coordinator position **(\$105,300) – not reinstated**

2021-2022 Reductions (for potential reinstatement)

- s) Budget Reductions:
3 FTE Teachers (0.5 EAL Specialist, 0.5 French Specialist, 1.0 Literacy Specialist, 1.0 Career Education Coordinator), and \$445,100 budget line reductions **(\$720,500) – not reinstated**

BREAK: 2:41 p.m. to 2:57 p.m.

The Secretary-Treasurer advised the Board that the total of the approved budget requests and reinstated positions created a budget shortfall of \$100,400.

Trustee Murray noted that removing the \$100,000 for the Replacement of School Paging Systems would be the easiest way to balance the budget, but felt it needs to be addressed, and removing the funds does not solve the problem with the aging and failing paging systems. Trustee Fallis asked if Accumulated Surplus would be an option to cover the overage. Mr. Labossiere responded that Accumulated Surplus can be used, but the first item the Board needs to consider with Accumulated Surplus is setting aside funds in the School Bus reserve for the purchase of school buses.

After the Board revisited two items from earlier: the Speech Language Pathologist and Psychologist positions, Trustees agreed to reinstate only the Psychologist position, which results in a balanced budget.

Trustee Linda Ross noted that the Board had spent the better part of the day discussing \$500,000. The Brandon School Division has a budget of over \$100 million and received \$7 million more from the

Province over last year's funding. She wanted to point out that the majority of the additional money went to new positions, most of which are due to increasing enrolment. The net staffing increase for both teachers and support staff, before any of the items funded by the \$500,000, was 51.03 FTE positions. The Preliminary Operating Budget will provide for a total increase of 27.34 FTE teaching positions and that's due to an increase of 25.84 FTE positions due to enrolment. There is an increase of 1.5 FTE non-ratio positions due to grants and other funding. For support positions, the Preliminary Operating Budget provides for 23.69 FTE support staff positions based on staffing guidelines, enrolment growth along with grants and other funding. This results in an increase of 23.07 educational assistants and 0.62 custodial assistant. This equates to 51 positions overall, 27 of them are teaching positions, 23 are educational assistants, and 0.62 is custodial assistant. In addition to that, the Board reinstated positions that had to be removed in the past due to the fact that funding increases that we had received did not meet regular inflation, so the Division was in a deficit position. She felt the Board had wisely assigned the increase in funding the Division received from the province.

Trustee Fallis thanked Mr. Labossiere and his team for all the hard work they put in to give the Board a budget that they can work within. She asked that Mr. Labossiere pass thanks along to his staff.

Mr. Murray – Ms. Fallis

That the meeting do now adjourn 3:16 p.m.)

Carried.

Chairperson

Secretary-Treasurer