



BRANDON SCHOOL DIVISION

Finance and Facilities Committee Minutes

Monday, February 13, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.
Boardroom, Administration Office

Present: C. Cramer C. Ekenna
K. Fallis B. Foley
J. Gobeil J. Murray
D. Ross L. Ross
B. Sieklicki

Also Present: D. Labossiere
M. Gustafson
S. Gilleshammer
J. Zilkey

1. COMMITTEE ITEMS

A. BDO Canada LLP – Engagement Letters

Mr. Denis Labossiere, Secretary-Treasurer, provided the Auditor Engagement Letters regarding the Audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023 between the Brandon School Division and BDO Canada, noting the recommendation encompassed the Enrolment and Public Compensation Disclosure audits.

Mr. Labossiere advised that new auditing standards that have come into effect, which means there is a conversion process and additional work required. It is a significant adaptation process, with the biggest effect being on the implementation of the new standards. BDO has identified that they will require some additional communication with the Division and additional hours. The cost to implement the new standards will be approximately \$3,500 to \$4,325.

He added that the Province now requires that divisions obtain an audit opinion on the Asset Retirement Obligation (ARO) for the period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023. The cost estimate from BDO for this new requirement, with the new audit standards, is approximately \$3,000 to \$6,250.

Overall, the Division is looking at additional audit fees of approximately \$6,500 to \$10,625 for 2022-2023 due to the new auditing standards and provincial requirements.

Trustees asked questions for clarification and agreed to the recommendation as presented.

Recommendation:

That the Auditor's Engagement Letters regarding the Audits for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2023, the 2022 Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Report, and the Asset Retirement Obligations (ARO) for the period ending March 31, 2023, between the Brandon School Division and BDO Canada LLP, Chartered Accounts, be approved and that the Secretary-Treasurer be authorized to affix his signature thereto.

B. Elections Canada – Use of Division Schools for Federal Election

The Secretary-Treasurer spoke to this item and referred to a memo from Josh Watt, Executive Director, Manitoba School Boards Association (MSBA), regarding the 2020-2021 advisement to Elections Canada that schools could not be used for elections, due to COVID-19 operating protocols involving visitors to school facilities. Mr. Labossiere provided the names of the schools used for polling stations in previous elections and confirmed that security is hired by Elections Canada for election day.

With Public Health Orders lifted and planning now underway for hosting of polls, Mr. Watt asked that divisions indicate to MSBA if they want to host federal election polling stations in school facilities. Trustees supported hosting polling stations in Division schools and the Division Administration Office. The Office of the Secretary-Treasurer will relay this information to MSBA.

C. Maryland Park School Traffic Issues – MacLeod Drive, Buses

Trustee Linda Ross spoke to this item, noting she had received an email from a concerned citizen, which she had forwarded to all Trustees and Senior Administration. The email was regarding traffic issues and student safety around Maryland Park School, and around school buses travelling down MacLeod Drive.

The Secretary-Treasurer added that he had been in communication with the Supervisor of Transportation, who confirmed that no Brandon School Division school bus routes currently use MacLeod Drive.

Trustee Linda Ross will ask the citizen to advise if they see Brandon School Division on the side of the school bus, as it may be a bus for another school division.

Trustee Linda Ross asked that this item be added to the agenda for the upcoming Joint Meeting between the Brandon School Division and City of Brandon.

Mr. Mathew Gustafson, Superintendent/CEO, also spoke to this item, noting that the Brandon Police Service, the City of Brandon and the Brandon School Division are in preliminary discussions regarding a joint traffic safety campaign, focusing on the current issues in Brandon school zones.

Mr. Labossiere provided information on the traffic impact assessment that was completed prior to Maryland Park School being built, adding that both the Province and the City of Brandon are currently reviewing the assessment.

Trustees asked questions for clarification.

D. 2023-2024 Budget

Funding Announcement

The Secretary-Treasurer spoke on the Provincial Funding Announcement received on Thursday, February 2, 2023.

The Province is providing the Division with \$65,849,832 (\$59,383,200 – 2022-2023) through the Funding of Schools Program for 2023-2024, including additional operating support, special needs and the TIG (Tax Incentive Grant). This is an increase in funding of \$6,466,632 (10.9%) compared to last year's funding announcement. The change in funding is broken down as follows:

- An increase of \$761,839 (2.9%) for base support
- A decrease of \$280,459 (-3.7%) for categorical grants
- An increase of \$3,369,709 (16.4%) for equalization
- An increase of \$1,320 (0.6%) for school building support
- An increase of \$581,220 (230.4%) for special needs

- And an increase of \$2,033,000 or 56.7% for additional support which consists of \$959,000 for Student Presence and Engagement and \$1,074,000 for rising inflation costs and wages.

The Province will be providing a Property Tax Offset Grant (PTOG) equivalent to a 2% increase (\$1,023,441) on the Special Requirement. The PTOG for 2023-2024 is \$2,418,624 (net of DSFM), an increase of \$957,746 from previous years.

Mr. Labossiere reviewed the Operating Fund Schedule of Revenue and Expenditures, noting that the Revenue will be increasing \$7.9 million (6.9%). He also indicated that the Division is projecting interest revenue at \$399,270, an increase of \$276,670 or 225.7% due to the increase in interest rates.

Mr. Labossiere advised that after factoring the increase in expenses of \$7.2 million (6.3%), there is an Operating Surplus of \$518,600 for 2023-2024, prior to any budget requests or deliberations.

Special Levy

The Secretary-Treasurer indicated that with the freeze on (0% change) the special levy and a 4.53% increase in school assessment, there is a \$27.22 (1.56%) decrease in annual school taxes for an average single family residential home assessed at \$277,830.

Trustees asked questions for clarification.

Summary of Budget Enhancements & Reductions over 10 years

The Secretary-Treasurer provided for information the Summary of Budget enhancements and reductions over 10 years document, as a reference for Trustees of Budget decisions over the years.

Budget Requests

A summary of the Senior Administration Budget Requests was provided for information. Trustees asked questions for clarification.

The Board gave direction to Senior Administration to identify the reverse chronological order of the last two (2) years of reductions for Board consideration during Budget Deliberations.

E. Request for Proposal (RFP) - Firewalls

Mr. Denis Labossiere, Secretary-Treasurer, spoke to this item and reviewed the memo provided to the Committee. Firewalls are a critical component of the Division's network and security infrastructure. Firewalls monitor and filter all incoming and outgoing traffic for the BSD and applies security rules according to BSD policies. They also control web filtering for all staff and students and are the first and most important line of defense against the growing number of online threats. The current firewalls are coming to the end of life and support at the end of 2023. Due to the critical nature of these appliances, it is recommended that they be replaced with new equivalents. The current firewalls have been in place for at least 10 years.

Trustees asked questions for clarification. The Committee agreed to the recommendation as presented.

Recommendation:

That the proposal from Powerland in the amount of \$101,505.52 (including taxes) to supply and replace two (2) network Firewalls and three years of support funded through the 2022-2023 Operating Budget, be accepted.

F. Confirm Payments of Account (January)

The payments of account for the month of January were provided for information.

The reports were accepted as circulated

2. OPERATIONS INFORMATION

A. Additional Information:

- i. Donation request letter from the Western Manitoba Science Fair

Respectfully submitted,

K. Fallis