

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 78 (FRASER-CASCADE)**

**MINUTES OF THE BUDGET ADVISORY
COMMITTEE MEETING
April 13, 2015**

PRESENT:

Board - Committee Members:

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| Rose Tustian | Chair |
| Heather Stewin | Trustee |

Representatives:

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|--------|
| Darlene Smith | Payroll | CMAWBC |
| Lori Izawa | Parent | DPAC |
| Lynne Marvell | President | FCTA |
| Brad Bourel | Maintenance | CMAWBC |
| Bruce Becker | Principal | FCPVPA |

Staff:

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Karen Nelson | Superintendent |
| Kevin Bird | Assistant Superintendent |
| Natalie Lowe-Zucchet | Secretary-Treasurer |

Recording Secretary:

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| Ashley Limb | Accounting/Data/Human Resources |
|-------------|---------------------------------|

Observers/Guests:

| | | |
|----------------|-----------|--------|
| Ron Johnstone | Trustee | |
| Cindy Ferguson | Trustee | |
| Karl Koslowsky | Principal | FCPVPA |

Regrets:

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----|
| Cathy Speth | Representative | AEC |
| Wayne Bobb | Representative | AEC |
| Tom Hendrickson | Trustee | |

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. in the District Education Office in Hope, B.C.

2. Approval of Agenda

STEWIN/BOUREL

THAT the Agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

3. Approval of Minutes – January 19, 2015

SMITH/BECKER

THAT the Minutes of the Budget Advisory Committee meeting held on January 19, 2015 be approved.

Carried

4. Preliminary Budget 2015/2016 Presentation

The Secretary-Treasurer presented a slideshow on the preliminary budget for 2015/2016. Important dates were reviewed. In February, the Minister of Finance announces provincial funding and by the middle of February, enrolment projects from Districts are due to the Ministry. In the middle of March, the Minister announces operating grants, and that is used in working toward developing a draft budget. Fraser-Cascade is in funding protection so the budget is known to us making planning and forecasting easier. Layoffs to staff must be done by the end of April, and the latest date for board approval of the preliminary budget is the end of June.

For the current year, there was not a need to lay off any teaching staff. There has been one teaching retirement and some personal leaves. There are a few layoffs in Special Education Assistants. A breakdown of the staff impacted will be provided at the next meeting.

Ministry funding accounts for the majority of the budget revenue, as well as there is some funding through district revenue, such as rentals, investments, international students, grants, sales of equipment. Staffing expenditures are the largest expense at approximately 88% of the budget and the balance is in other expenses such as resources and equipment.

The Secretary-Treasurer presented a pie chart break down of how money is spent in the district:

- 79% - Instruction
- 12% - Operations and Maintenance
- 5% - Administration
- 3.4% - Transportation
- 0.6% - Local Capital

Spending occurs in the following:

- 72% - Salaries
- 16% - Benefits (this cost continues to grow)
- 12% - Supplies and Services

Discussion surrounded a slide that indicated the enrolment in the last 5 years for public schools and how it has changed. There is a decline and the province continues to experience a slight decline of around 2000 students. Enrolment is starting to level out and is anticipated to increase in the near future. Independent schools are increasing in enrolment over time.

The Secretary-Treasurer presented a breakdown of current enrolment per school, as well as enrolment as a district over the past 5 years. It continues to decline, but is starting to level off.

The Board Chair asked if these could be broken down in charts per individual school for a future meeting.

The Secretary-Treasurer presented a slide regarding the percentage of the School District that is made up of aboriginal education. The numbers of aboriginal students in Fraser-Cascade have been maintained around 35% for the past 5 years, whereas the average for the province is around 11%. Fraser-Cascade does a lot of work surrounding aboriginal education and providing services and support necessary.

The Secretary-Treasurer discussed overall grant funding for the province and where the increases and decreases have been. There is a slight increase in the education budget, however, there is a funding cut to be applied to administration and related services. Fraser-Cascade's share of administrative cuts for 2015/2016 is \$113,350.00.

The Ministry of Education has made shared services mandatory and expects that these initiatives will help districts find savings and efficiencies in administration, maintenance, and transportation.

Pressure is still on Districts to keep administrative costs down. Fraser-Cascade continues to maintain a limited administrative staff, and along with the closure of C.E. Barry Intermediate School, the School District should be able to meet this target.

There is no new funding to manage the implementation of the Next Generation Network (NGN), as well as implement the new MyEducation BC software which has replaced BCeSIS. The share of the cost for 2015/2016 has yet to be determined as the Ministry is working on ways to manage costs to try to minimize impacts on School Districts. The expectation is that the bandwidth will improve and that we will be hooked up to the Telus fibre optic line.

The education plan supplement is still in place to address areas where the government wants to focus on. The portion for 2015/2016 is \$31,458 and is to be used for math, skills training and technology. The Superintendent is working to raise the profile around trades in particular. A secondary school administrator has been assisting in that area and Fraser-Cascade is hoping to

move forward a the trades program in welding which will be provided on site at Hope Secondary School but accessible by students throughout the School District.

Strongstart funding at all three sites is expected to be maintained and the Annual Facilities Grant funding is being maintained with the same stipulations that part of the funds be received through a Certificate of Approval process. Other revenue being maintained at similar levels to prior years is Pay Equity and Community LINK.

The Learning Improvement Fund has increased and Fraser-Cascade's share for 2015/2016 is \$390,861 which has increased \$16,224 from the current year. The majority of these funds are now required to be directed toward teaching staff after provincial negotiations. Prior to that much of this money had been used for Special Education Assistant's in the District. Currently, we have had more Special Education Assistants working in the schools than previous as there is a high level of special education students requiring assistance in the schools.

Fraser-Cascade has and will continue to work to implement all shared service initiatives. The government recently provided a \$25,000 grant to support an initiative on attendance support and wellness to try and assist in maintaining a healthy workforce. This should prove beneficial for staff and the District. Currently, CMAWBC and the BCTF both have their wellness programs and meetings to provide this support for staff to ensure people are getting the support they require. The Secretary-Treasurer encourages staff to schedule doctor and dental appointments outside of work time as it would aid in lowering the cost for replacement staff.

The Fraser-Cascade Teacher Association's President spoke to the fact that the job of teaching has become more stressful over the last ten years through the province due to larger class sizes and more special education assistants, which is causing greater illness.

The Secretary-Treasurer indicated that the School District does as much as possible to try to alleviate issues in classrooms. Class composition is always challenging and high schools have fewer students but need to maintain student programs and choices, both of which are cost pressures for the Board. It is also challenging to maintain district programming like band where costs for the program are borne by the District to make it affordable. The District has agreed to put a sum of money in the 2015/2016 budget toward repairing band equipment as it is in need of improvements.

Added cost pressures include hydro increases from last year, as well as another increase this year. Teacher pension plan increases, MSP increases, support salary increase and inflation continue to be on-going costs to the District.

Discussion surrounded the importance of teacher collaboration time and the benefits that come from it so the District has set aside \$30,000 for innovative practices for 2015/2016. The swim program will be maintained, as well the outdoor education program. Some funding will be set aside to support the welding trades initiative in preparation for having the students to run the program, as well as the Assistant Superintendent having a budget of \$5,000 for a curriculum implementation.

To balance the budget, the replacement staff cost budget will be reduced by \$100,000, and there will be no election expense this year. Administration expenses will be reduced due to a retirement.

Discussion surrounded the cost of replacement staff and that work was done with the FCTA to bring in new teachers for our on-call list as it is a good opportunity to see new teachers with the added benefit of being more cost effective.

The Secretary-Treasurer explained that the District Education Office works in consultation with the principals to look at revenue, staffing, class configuration and resources. There will be some layoffs to low seniority Special Education Assistants and the majority of that is due to the Learning Improvement Funds not being accessed at this time. Fraser-Cascade is grateful to staff who have put in retirement notices which in turn has minimized layoffs. Leave request have also been approved which allows the District more flexibility in layoffs.

The Superintendent followed up by thanking the Secretary-Treasurer for the presentation and for being diligent and conservative with the budget so it allows us to be able to explore different areas such as the trades program. Collaboration time will be continued next year and the Superintendent will be letting principals know that if they would like more collaboration time that there will be a proposal process.

5. Service Delivery Project

The Secretary-Treasurer indicated that Fraser-Cascade received \$25,000 for Shared Services for the Attendance Support and Wellness to start looking at opportunities to provide ways and means to support staff to keep them working and healthy. The plan on how this money is to be spent is yet to be determined and the board will be kept apprised on how that will look going forward.

6. Administrative Savings

The administration savings for Fraser-Cascade is \$113,350 for the upcoming year and \$211,065 for the following year in 2016/2017. The majority of this will be covered off by the reduction in administration staffing due to a retirement, and some of it is covered by a report done by School District No.23 in terms of the WorkSafe savings over the past year. The Secretary-Treasurer will present an outline of how the District will manage the reduction at the next meeting.

7. Harper Announcement

Stephen Harper's announcement regarding the intent to expand access to Canadian student grants program was included in the agenda package.

The Assistant Superintendent indicated that the government is expanding eligibility for students for low to middle income families enrolled in short duration education programs, as well as making post-secondary education more accessible to students in low and middle income families and helping Canadians acquire or upgrade their skills.

8. Trades Program

The Vice-Principal from Hope Secondary brought information regarding the welding program being brought to Hope Secondary School for the upcoming school year. This will be a 24 week welding program offered to twelve students within the District. Applications will be distributed to those interested and they will have to take a test to ensure they have the capacity to be successful in the program.

Discussion surrounded cost to the district and credits for the students toward graduation and for post-secondary. Selection of the students for the course was also discussed.

The Board Chair asked that the cost breakdown is distributed to the committee for further clarification. The Vice-Principal indicated that he will meet with the Superintendent and one will be provided.

9. C.E. Barry School

The Secretary-Treasurer indicated that the construction at Coquihalla Elementary School is moving forward. The demolition of C.E. Barry Intermediate School is scheduled for this summer. Maintenance is currently salvaging light fixtures and other useful items from the school. The Hope Curling Club is taking the metal cladding to reface their facility, the boiler is going to Yale Elementary School for the ratepayers association and the maintenance staff is potentially going to use some of the structural portions to build an equipment storage shed at the maintenance facility.

Discussion surrounded the field at C.E. Barry and issues such as maintenance, grass cutting priority and proper signage for the use of the field.

The Secretary-Treasurer spoke to the District of Hope Bylaw Officer and he indicated that the field doesn't have to be watered but it cannot be left to become overgrown or an eye sore as residents will complain.

The Secretary-Treasurer indicated that the Vice-Principal of TREC is interested in using the field or parts of it by her students.

All utility services at C.E. Barry will be shut off soon. Maintenance has been boarding up windows as they have been vandalized. The Secretary-Treasurer indicated that the School District should see an annual savings of at least \$14,000 from utility costs, water and garbage.

Discussion moved to signage regarding access to the fields for C.E. Barry Intermediate, as well as for other schools in the district. The Chair had a sample of a sign that the District will produce for all the schools to use.

10. Questions

Discussion surrounded pushing back the May 4, 2015 Budget Advisory meeting by one week. The group will be notified via email of this change.

**Notice of Next Meeting: May11, 2015
 4:30 p.m.
 District Education Office**

Adjournment

IZAWA/

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.