

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 23 – BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: Finance and Legal Committee DATE: Nov. 15/06

CHAIRPERSON: Trustee A. Hunt-Binkley STAFF CONTACT: L. Paul
E. Sadlowski

Attendees:

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|---|---|
| Trustee A. Hunt-Binkley (Chairperson) | Staff: |
| Trustee G. Scanlan (Acting Committee member) | M. Roberts, Superintendent |
| Trustee C. Wiebe (Committee member) | E. Sadlowski, Director of Finance |
| Trustee W. Horning | M. Essler, Executive Assistant (Recorder) |
| Absent: Trustee R. Cacchioni (Committee Member) | Absent: L. Paul, Secretary-Treasurer |

Partner Group Representation:

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|--------|--------------------------------|------|------------------------------------|
| COPAC | Robin Gabert, Executive Member | COTA | Tom Potts, President |
| COPVPA | No Representative | CUPE | Robbie Borden, Secretary-Treasurer |
| DSC | No Representative | | Bill Zeman, President |

Minutes

Note: Detailed Minutes of the Committee meetings are available upon request. To obtain copies of Minutes of the Finance and Legal Services Committee Meetings, please phone the office of the Secretary-Treasurer at 470-3216.

The Committee adopted the Minutes of the October 18, 2006 meeting.

Public Question/Comment Period

Trustee Hunt-Binkley

- Should the Committee consider a recommendation to the Board that the Board forward a letter to the Ministry of Education outlining our concerns regarding the process used and the impact the delay in the release of the funds had on our District.
The Superintendent confirmed that the delay in the release of the funds created a substantial amount of work for Managers who had to perform a review of all maintenance projects and determine which projects to continue. It also created considerable angst amongst staff as it may have contributed to the lay-off of employees. This funding is provided for the maintenance of District buildings, including heating and lighting replacements and HVAC systems.

Outcome:

THAT: The Board write a letter to the Ministry of Education outlining the impact on School Districts, including project delays and staff workload, caused by the delay in the release of the Annual Facilities Grant and lack of information.

Discussion/Action Items:

2007/2008 Budget Timeline Approval

Eileen Sadlowski, Director of Finance, reviewed the amendments made to the 2007/2008 Budget Timeline Approval as discussed at the Finance and Legal Committee Meeting on October 18, 2006.

The Committee discussed the location for the January 17, 2006 Public Finance Committee Meeting at which time the overall budget review presentation is made to the public, partner groups and School Planning Councils. By consensus, the Committee agreed that the meeting would be held at Hollywood Road Education Services at 6:00 p.m. on January 17, 2006.

Outcome:

THAT: The 2007-2008 Budget Timeline be forwarded to the Board for approval.

Summary Information on School Fees

Eileen Sadlowski, Director of Finance, reviewed the School Fees Survey Summary. The Director of Finance confirmed that a survey was previously provided to the Principals for completion and the results of the survey were reviewed with Principals at the Superintendent's Meeting of November 15, 2006. The figures presented represent an estimated amount. The Director of Finance confirmed that the majority of the cost is attributed to band/musical instruments. Under the Court ruling the District would have to provide instruments to students who choose to take Band in the middle and secondary schools. The Schools will be required to have the appropriate number of instruments at the school in order to offer the program to students. The Superintendent confirmed that the offering of a course without charge to the student/parent not only includes no course fees but also includes the ability to take the course without any other costs associated (example – rental of band instrument or requirement of Graphing Calculators for Math 12). If the student wishes to access equipment or instruments which are not classified as standard equipment for the course the additional cost would be the responsibility of the student/parent. The Director of Finance confirmed that based on the number of instruments required, the estimated cost per unit for both band instruments and calculators, the estimate for equipment replacement alone for 2006/2007 is \$1,100,000.00. The Superintendent confirmed that there are no discussions by the Ministry of Education to appeal the Court decision, and the information received to date indicates that no additional funds would be provided by the Ministry of Education to cover additional costs to the District.

The Committee discussed the effect of the new ruling on the hockey and other sports programs offered by the District. The Superintendent confirmed that for the sports academies to continue in the current format, the School District would have to pay for the programs. Currently students are provided course credits for their participation in the academies. An alternative would be to separate the District from the academies and have the parents pay for the ice time and coaching directly, and students would be provided with an equivalency rather than direct course credit.

The Superintendent recommended that the School Board should not get involved in the funding of courses, and instead provide the money to schools and allow the schools through School Planning Councils to review and determine course availability at the school level.

The Superintendent and Director of Finance confirmed that further information on School Fees would be provided by approximately the middle of December.

Budget Consultation Document (DRAFT)

The Director of Finance confirmed that at the previous Finance and Legal Committee meeting there was a general discussion on the format and level of information to be provided. The Director of Finance provided a pamphlet in draft form to the Committee Members entitled "What Choices Would You Make?". The Committee reviewed the pamphlet. The Director of Finance confirmed that upon completion the pamphlet would be available on the website.

Suggestions for amendments include:

Page 4 – Q.2

Add "*Computers/iLearn*" after Technology

Change Community access and support to read "*Community Access to Schools*"

Add additional box entitled "*Other*"

Page 4 – Tell Us Your Choice

Give length of time of public presentation – ("*Up to 5 minutes in length*")

General – more information and less pictures

The Director of Finance confirmed that the pamphlet would be sent out with the Superintendent's letter sometime the first week of December. The Director of Finance will make suggested amendments and send draft to Committee Members for input and final approval prior to end of November.

Purchasing Policy

Trustee Hunt-Binkley confirmed that at the last Finance and Legal Committee the Committee was provided with a package entitled Purchasing Procedures Review with attachments of various purchasing policies at similar School Districts in British Columbia. The Committee discussed the need for a Board Policy on Purchasing. Richard Aitkenhead, Purchasing Manager, confirmed the need for a Purchasing Policy.

Outcome:

THAT: The Finance and Legal Committee requests staff to prepare a draft Purchasing Policy and provide the draft to the Committee for review at a future Finance and Legal Committee meeting.

The Committee discussed the timeline for the draft Policy to come back to the Committee for review. The Director of Finance requested that with the retirement of Richard Aitkenhead, Purchasing Manager, at the end of December, she would solicit input from the incoming Purchasing Manager as well as the retiring Purchasing Manager.

By consensus, the Committee agreed that the draft Purchasing Policy would be provided to the Finance and Legal Committee in February 2007 for review.

Information Items

Need for December Meeting?

After discussions, the Committee agreed that there is no need for a meeting in December.

Recommendations/Referrals to the Board/Coordinating Committee/Other Committees

Board – Letter to Ministry of Education re impact on delay of AFG

Board – Budget Timeline

Items for Future Agenda

Purchasing Policy Draft – February 2007

Next Committee Meeting Date: Jan. 17/07 – 6:00 p.m. Location: Hollywood Road Education Services

Questions: Please Contact: Trustee Anna Hunt-Binkley Phone: (250) 766-5690