

OAK BLUFFS SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

8:00AM, Tuesday, January 17, 2023

At the Oak Bluffs School

Committee Members Present:	Kathryn Shertzer (Chair), Rizwan Malik, Kris O'Brien
OB School Staff Present:	Dr. Megan Farrell (Principal), Denitsa Alton
Superintendent's Office:	Richie Smith, Mark Friedman*, Hope MacLeod, John Stevens
Weston & Sampson:	Steven LaRosa, Marie Rudiman
Public:	Ryan Ruley, Maura McGroarty, Juliet Mulinare

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:14am by Chair Kathryn Shertzer.

Approval of Minutes

The draft minutes under consideration for approval are: December 20, 2022.

MS. O'BRIEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE 12/20/22 DRAFT MINUTES; MR. MALIK SECONDS.

NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, ROLL CALL VOTE:

O'BRIEN – AYE, MALIK – AYE, SHERTZER – AYE. Motion passes unanimously (3-0).

Public Comment

None.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Smith reported that it is now halfway through the School year and provided an update on various initiatives and projects. The Tisbury School project is underway; the Regional Agreement has been amended and the towns will vote to accept it at the spring Annual Town meetings; they are working on moving the High School building project forward in other ways as well, including weekly meetings with the MSBA; they are supporting the upgrade of the Athletic facilities at the High School; the Health and Safety Committee is meeting regularly to stay on top of RSV and Covid variants; the Union contracts were successfully renegotiated and they are working hard to address staffing shortages, especially in transportation.

*Mr. Friedman joined the meeting.

- Weston & Sampson: Steven LaRosa, Engineer, and Marie Rudiman, Risk Assessor
The Committee welcomed the Weston & Sampson representatives who were present to speak on the report about the soil samples from the School that were determined to contain PFAS. Mr. LaRosa stated that although there were identifiable levels of PFAS found in the soil samples from the School's athletic field, the concentrations detected were deemed not to pose any significant risk to human health; the concentrations were consistent with many other sample areas, both on island and off. Ms. Rudiman explained that the threshold for PFAS concentrations to raise concern, in MA, is at 300ppm; these samples contained .9ppm. Mr. LaRosa further stated that even at 300ppm, someone would have to be regularly and consistently exposed over many years for the health risks to be significant. The Committee thanked Mr. LaRosa and Ms. Rudiman for their explanation of the findings in the report.

Special Education Director's Report

Ms. MacLeod distributed a handout that outlines the various Shared Services Programs, where they're located and who they serve. The handout also provided commonly used acronyms and definitions, as well as describing the administrative needs and personnel for the programs. Ms. MacLeod said the

ultimate goal in providing these services is to offer maximum support for the child while also promoting the child's independence.

Financial/Principal's Report

Dr. Farrell reported that the budget remains healthy.

The boiler design is moving forward, the Committee working on the project has selected an applicant based on the RFP process; they are currently working out the fee structure. Mr. Ruley suggested that the boiler project might qualify for ARPA funding and encouraged Dr. Farrell to ask the Selectboard about this.

The playground design has been completed and the project is ready to go out to bid. This is a grant-funded project in the amount of \$300k.

Dr. Farrell also received a \$64k grant to replace the back-up server, redo the Wi-Fi system, and create a redundant firewall.

The Committee took a moment to thank Dr. Farrell for her excellent continued work in securing grant funding to offset the cost of capital improvements for the school. The Committee wanted to make sure Dr. Farrell's efforts were highlighted.

Dr. Farrell also publicly thanked the Town's Wastewater Department for their immediate response to a pump issue a couple months prior. The Committee briefly discussed the School's status as the Emergency Regional shelter and whether there was any funding possibly available from Emergency Management that could help with the costs associated with providing a shelter.

- **FY24 Budget Vote Update**

The FY24 budget request has been updated so the new figures need to be voted on by the Committee. Last time, the increase was 3.87%. Newer, more accurate figures were received that increased the increase to 5.19%. School officials were able to reduce the increase down to 4.95%, but that's the lowest it can go before the students are affected. Mr. Friedman stated that Schools around the State are looking at 8-10% budget increases and 80% of this budget is for personnel with no room to negotiate.

MOTION PLACED ON THE FLOOR BY MS. O'BRIEN TO APPROVE THE REVISED FY24 BUDGET. MR. MALIK SECONDS THE MOTION, FURTHER DISCUSSION:

Ms. McGroarty commended Dr. Farrell and the other school officials for producing a budget increase of only 4.95%, when the contractual salary increases were 5.5%; this demonstrates the effort that was put into limiting the increase. The Committee then discussed the effect the Southern Tier project might have on the School and whether the School is prepared to absorb an increase in students after that project is completed.

NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, ROLL CALL VOTE:

O'BRIEN – AYE, MALIK – AYE, SHERTZER – AYE. Motion passes unanimously (3-0).

Old/New Business

None.

Correspondence

None.

Adjournment

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 8:00am. It will be a hybrid meeting, held at the OB School with a zoom option.

AT 9:47AM, MR. MALIK MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING; MS. O'BRIEN SECONDS, NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, ROLL CALL VOTE:

MALIK – AYE, O'BRIEN – AYE, SHERTZER – AYE. Motion passes unanimously (3-0).

Documents on File:

- Fund Balances & Expenditures Report
- FY2023 Shared Programs Handout

Minutes submitted by: Juliet Mulinare