

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, October 26, 2020

A virtual meeting of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held on Monday, October 26, 2020, via ZOOM Video Conferencing. Chairperson Schofield called the Executive Session part of the meeting to order at approximately 6:33 p.m.

Present: Erin Schofield, Chairperson; Adam Ramos, Vice-Chairperson; Brian Bradshaw, Treasurer; John P. Saviano, Secretary; Carly Reich, John Bento, Marjorie McBride, Sheila Ellsworth, and Victor Cabral; Jonathan T. Brice, Ed.D., Superintendent; Diane Sanna, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent; Tina Fogell, Esq., Chief Operating Officer; Edward Clarke, M.Ed., CAGS, Director of Student Support Services; Mary Ann Carroll, Esq., District Solicitor; and Kathryn Brown, Recording Secretary

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Committee may seek to convene in executive session in accordance with R.I. Gen. Law § 42-46-5(a) for the following:

1. **42-46-5(a)(1)** Job Performance of individuals – Said persons have been notified in advance, in writing, and advised that they may require that the discussion be held in open session.

MOTION: Mr. Saviano made a motion to adjourn executive session at 7:02 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Ramos.

The motion passed unanimously.

OPEN SESSION

Open session was called to order at approximately 7:06 p.m. by Chairperson Schofield.

OPENING BUSINESS

Chairperson Schofield invited all present to join in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Melanie Lane, School Social Worker, Mt. Hope High School, spoke on behalf of all district social workers and read a statement regarding their concerns about challenges and the needs that face our students, teachers, staff and families during this pandemic.

MOTION TO SEAL EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

MOTION: Mr. Saviano made a motion to seal the October 26, 2020, executive session meeting minutes; seconded by Mr. Bradshaw.

The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Chairperson Schofield stated that all items listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by the School Committee and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a committee member requests, in which event the items will be withdrawn from the general order of business and considered in the normal sequence of the agenda.

Hearing none, Chairperson Schofield asked for a motion.

- A. Approval of six (6) homeschool requests for the 2020-2021 school year
- B. Approval of School Committee Virtual Meeting Minutes

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- a. September 3, 2020
 - b. September 9, 2020
 - c. September 30, 2020
 - d. October 8, 2020
- C. Approval of the Career and College Coordinator contract
D. Approval of the Facilities Director contract

MOTION: A motion was made by Mrs. McBride to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Mr. Bradshaw.

The motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent Brice thanked the School Committee for approving the contracts of the Facilities Director, Thomas Wood, and the Career and College Coordinator, Nicole Lyons. Mr. Wood comes to us from Montpelier Public School System in Montpelier, Vermont, where he most recently served as Director of Facilities. Ms. Lyons is currently the Supervisor of Academic and Instruction at the William M. Davies Career and Technical High School in Lincoln, Rhode Island and is coming home as she is a Mt. Hope High School Graduate. We would like to give them a warm welcome to the BWRSD family.

Chairperson Schofield echoed the Superintendent's sentiments and welcomed Thomas Wood and Nicole Lyons on behalf of the School Committee.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

A. FY21 Network Infrastructure Refresh

Chairperson Schofield asked if there was a motion to discuss and approve the FY21 Network Infrastructure Refresh.

MOTION: Mrs. McBride made a motion to approve the FY21 Network Infrastructure Refresh; seconded by Mr. Bradshaw.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Ramos asked Ms. Muller and Superintendent Brice to explain what is being requested.

Dr. Brice explained that the request was for \$41,561 which was currently in the Technology Budget for this year to replace technology hardware. We are focusing on continuously improving network infrastructure. Ms. Muller and her team continuously look at the technology equipment for the district.

Ms. Muller stated that we have a network storage device that currently hosts virtual servers and it is critical to replace it with two new Dell servers. The district also needs to purchase four back-up battery units to support network switches that need to be replaced. Mr. Lass, Network Engineer working with Ms. Muller was introduced and spoke more about this infrastructure request.

Discussion ensued.

The motion passed unanimously.

B. Superintendent's Emergency Powers

Chairperson Schofield stated that this item is to discuss and approve the rescinding of Emergency Powers of the Superintendent that was granted during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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MOTION: Mr. Saviano moved to rescind the emergency powers to Superintendent; seconded by Mrs. Reich.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Ramos asked for Dr. Brice and Attorney Carrol to speak about this topic in regards to what is happening with Superintendent's emergency powers across the state.

Dr. Brice stated that the COVID-19 environment is such that it needs Superintendent's to act swiftly at times in regards to ordering supplies that are time sensitive and necessary, and gave the examples of needing to order air purifiers and PPE.

Attorney Carroll stated that other school committees are questioning the need to continue the emergency powers of the superintendent at this time in that we are well into the pandemic and school committees

Mr. Saviano stated that the emergency powers could be rescinded but looked at on a monthly basis by the school committee.

Attorney Carroll reiterated that the emergency powers had to do with purchasing. The Superintendent does not need emergency powers to close schools as that does not require emergency powers.

Discussion ensued.

The motion passed with a 5 - 3 vote, with Mr. Ramos, Mr. Saviano, and Mrs. Reich opposed.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REMARKS

Dr. Brice stated that the district was fortunate to receive significant funding from the state for COVID-19 related expenditures broken into two areas - Impact Aid (\$581,891.00) and ESSR (\$485,476.00). Last week we learned that we will be receiving \$56,000 additional dollars from the state that is coming from the School Building Authority as they are giving a prorated amount to school districts across the state. Dr. Brice gave a high level explanation of the COVID-19 related expenses made which included salaries, benefits, and purchased services.

Mrs. Ellsworth asked for the documents presented tonight to be shared with the school committee via email.

Dr. Brice stated that he will share the documents via email after the meeting.

Mr. Bradshaw asked Dr. Brice if the district has enough of what they need (ie. PPE supplies) until the next time the school committee would meet?

Dr. Brice stated that the district has enough supplies at this time to get through to the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT – 8:00 p.m.

MOTION: There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Saviano made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Bradshaw.

The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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John P. Saviano, Secretary
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