

School District No. 62 (Sooke)

Ad hoc FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of March 26th, 2009 (6:05 p.m.)

Attendance: Board of School Trustees: Rob Gordy, Wendy Hobbs (from 6:15 p.m.), Denise Riley, Dianna Seaton. Board Office Staff: Brian Fox, Superintendent; Dave Lockyer, Secretary-Treasurer; Cindy Rodgers, Director of Finance; Jackie Mitchell, Transportation Supervisor. CUPE: Jan Peever, Tim Hamblin. STA: Patrick Henry. SPEAC: Georgina Tran; SPVPA: Daphne Churchill, Stephen McHugh.

Trustee Gordy chaired the meeting.

Minutes - March 5th, 2009 - received

Provincial Funding

Cindy updated the committee on the provincial funding received to date. She noted that the level of funding presented few surprises, with the exception the District might be short \$100,000-150,000 in covering the true labour costs.

The Secretary-Treasurer noted that the funding for the School District for the last three years, and the upcoming year is short \$1 million per year. It is a result of rolling the School District budget forward, which captures inflation, and proves that the Ministry is not funding the cost of inflation and, therefore, we have a loss of purchasing power.

Potential Shortfall

Cindy noted that rolling the costs of this year's budget forward into next year, matching to the available revenue, shows a shortfall of \$800,000

International Program Forecast

Cindy reported on the total amount of International revenue throughout the province. She pointed out that Sooke compares with Saanich and Victoria with the following profit ratios: 33%, 40% and 35% respectively, as reflected on the 07/08 financial statements. She noted that in 08/09 we anticipate a "guaranteed" amount of 18.28% with the possibility of more at year end. Concern was expressed about the profit margin shrinking to a point that might put the District at risk.

Westshore Pro Forma

Cindy presented a pro forma financial statement for next year, 09/10 based on 08/09 forecast.

Transportation Department Review

Dave L. presented a memo requesting consideration to increase annual fees to \$180.00 per student and reduce route costs to balance the overall budget. The matter will be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

Trustee Riley requested a full breakdown of the total costs of Transportation, which will be prepared.

The Superintendent noted that a raise in fees to \$180.00 could be too dramatic for the District and suggested \$120.00 for the first two students. He also suggested that all programs of choice, including

French Immersion, be treated the same; in other words, attempts will be made to program the student from those programs into existing routes, but no special routes will be created for programs of choice.

Last Year's Lessons

Cindy reviewed the cuts and balances in the operating year 08/09, pointing out that many of the cuts from the previous year have been reinstated in the initial draft of the 09/10 budget. There was a suggestion that all of the items added back into this year's budget be shown as structural increases to next year. Cindy agreed to do this.

This Year's Issues/Shortfall/Discussion Points

Cindy reminded the committee of the \$800,000 shortfall and showed some of the discussion points that senior management is recommending. Some department managers are asked to consider amounts to produce in reduced services/budget.

She also provided an updated forecast which showed a \$500,000+ surplus. The Superintendent noted that it would be easy to use the projected surplus to balance off the necessary cuts; however, the Board would find itself in the same position again if it did not structurally adjust the base budget.

It was noted that the District has put into place great practices that have paid dividends.

Needs Budget

Patrick asked for the last three years of reductions, including the shortfall. Trustee Riley also asked what a restorative budget would look like.

Dave L. agreed to compile this information for Patrick.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Next Meeting -

Thursday, April 2nd, at 6:00 p.m., in the Board Room

Proposed Topics:

1. **Public meetings**
2. **Shortfall/answers**