



**The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)**

**Special Board Meeting**

**MINUTES**

**June 10, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**

Trustees Present: Jordan Watters, Board Chair, Elaine Leonard, Vice-Chair, Nicole Duncan, Tom Ferris, Angie Hentze, Diane McNally, Rob Paynter, Ann Whiteaker

Trustees Regrets: Ryan Painter

Administration: Shelley Green, Superintendent of Schools, Kim Morris, Secretary-Treasurer, Deb Whitten, Deputy Superintendent, Colin Roberts, Associate Superintendent, Harold Caldwell, Associate Superintendent, Katrina Stride, Associate Secretary-Treasurer, Julie Lutner, Director of Finance, Budgets and Financial Reporting, Financial Services, Chuck Morris, Director, Facilities Services, Andy Canty, Director, Information Technology for Learning, Kelly Gorman, Recorder

Stakeholders Present: Karin Kwan, VCPAC, Carolyn Howe, GVTA, Jane Massy, President, CUPE 947, Connor McCoy, GVPVPA

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**A. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**B. Acknowledgement of Traditional Territories**

Chair Watters recognized and acknowledged the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories, we live, we learn, and we do our work.

**C. Approval of the Agenda**

**Moved By** Trustee Leonard

**Seconded By** Trustee Whiteaker

That the June 10, 2021 agenda be approved.

For (7): Trustee Watters, Trustee Leonard, Trustee Duncan, Trustee Ferris, Trustee Hentze, Trustee McNally, and Trustee Whiteaker

Against (1): Trustee Paynter

**Carried (7 to 1)**

**E. BOARD SPECIAL BUDGET**

**E.1 Trustee Paynter - District Hiring Freeze**

Trustee Paynter provided rationale for the motion. Trustees and staff debated the motion.

**Moved By** Trustee Paynter

**Seconded By** Trustee McNally

That the Board of Education of School District 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to freeze all district level hiring at current levels until a plan to address the projected budget shortfall for School Year 2022/2023 has been finalized.

For (2): Trustee McNally, and Trustee Paynter

Against (6): Trustee Watters, Trustee Leonard, Trustee Duncan, Trustee Ferris, Trustee Hentze, and Trustee Whiteaker

**Defeated (2 to 6)**

**E.2 Trustee Paynter - Expense Payments**

Trustee Paynter provided rationale for the motion.

**Moved By** Trustee Paynter

**Seconded By** Trustee McNally

That the motion "*That the Board of Education of School District 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to suspend exempt and excluded expense payments until after a report detailing exempt and excluded expenses for the School Year 2020/2021 and the Board has*

*determined whether spending caps need to be enacted generally or by expense categories (ex. Travel, mileage, etc.)" be postponed to the October 2021 Operations Policy and Planning Committee meeting.*

For (6): Trustee Watters, Trustee Leonard, Trustee Duncan, Trustee Hentze, Trustee McNally, and Trustee Paynter

Against (2): Trustee Ferris, and Trustee Whiteaker

**Carried (6 to 2)**

### **E.3 Trustee Paynter - Enrolment Growth Allocation**

Trustee Paynter provided rationale for the motion. Trustees, staff and stakeholders debated the motion.

**Moved By** Trustee Paynter

**Seconded By** Trustee McNally

That the Board of Education of School District 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to apply any funds resulting from higher than expected student population numbers in School Year 2022/2023 be applied as priorities to the following programs:

- **Gifted Teacher Staffing**
- **Clerical and/or School Assistants**
- ~~Strong Start Learning Centre Supplements~~
- ~~Early Learning Framework Implementation~~
- ~~Enhanced Transition Wrap Around Supports~~

For (1): Trustee Paynter

Abstain (1): Trustee McNally

Against (6): Trustee Watters, Trustee Leonard, Trustee Duncan, Trustee Ferris, Trustee Hentze, and Trustee Whiteaker

**Defeated (1 to 6)**

### **E.4 Trustee Leonard - Budget Working Group: Music**

Trustee Leonard provided rationale for the motion. Trustees, staff and stakeholders debated the motion.

**Moved By** Trustee Leonard  
**Seconded By** Trustee Hentze

That the motion "*That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) form a Budget working group to discuss music education and how this program might be offered in a more cost- effective manner. This working group will complete its work by January 2022.*" be postponed to the September 2021 Operations Policy and Planning Committee meeting.

For (6): Trustee Watters, Trustee Leonard, Trustee Ferris, Trustee Hentze, Trustee McNally, and Trustee Whiteaker

Against (2): Trustee Duncan, and Trustee Paynter

**Carried (6 to 2)**

**F. QUESTION PERIOD**

Q1 -

What actions will the board of trustees be taking to put pressure on the government for increased funding to ensure no more cuts to programs?

A1: Trustee Watters we have not recalled our advocacy committee at this time. We are in the midst of planning.

Q2 -

Is the organizational structure available to the public? Where can we find it?

A2: Superintendent Green, this is on the district website. Under: Our District, Departments.

Q3 -

Will this working group include music teachers at the Elementary, Middle, and Secondary levels who will speak about the lived & true experience of the SD61 music classrooms? Trustees and Staff who are not in the music classroom on a daily basis should not be speaking about music education in SD61.

Why is music the ONLY subject needing to have a working group?

A3: Trustee Watters stated that they do not know who will be included in the group at this time.

Q4 -

Minister Whiteside wrote to me today and informed me that the district is paying for three consultants to advise the Superintendent - namely Mike McKay, Theresa Rezansoff and Joan Axford.

Are these the only consultants currently hired to assist the Superintendent?

How much are we paying as a district to consultants to the Superintendent?

A4: Full report coming June 21st.

Q5 -

When Trustee Leonard says she wants to get music off the budget line, does she mean that she wants to stop offering strings, band, choir, ukulele etc., or that she wants to include them in the provincial curriculum and stop treating music as an "extra"? How do other trustees feel about this issue?

A5: Trustee Duncan will provide her with the boards contact information.

Q6 -

When (if ever) did the board last approve an executive compensation freeze for the positions of Superintendent and Deputy Superintendents of Schools?

A6: Trustee Watters stated that those positions are contracted and that they are negotiated per individual for all exempt staff.

Q7 -

In looking at the budget, the community has asked our trustees to gain insight into other ways to reduce spending, especially those that do not directly impact our students. Here are some of my questions when looking at the budget these particular line items stand out:

- The budget in 2020/21 for pro-d/travel was \$1,840,391. Can we separate the spending out, and put some caps on the non-contractual obligations?
- Why we have a cell phone budget of almost \$850,000 for 2020/21? Do the tax payers really need to fund the exempt staff to have the newest iPhone/unlimited data plan? If this is a part of the contractual benefits package, does it need to be the most expensive? Can this be reduced in future? If it isn't actually cell phones, please separate it out in the budget.

- Vehicle leases, local/travel mileage - what are we leasing, and why? The budget for 2020/21 was \$111,354 for vehicles, \$2,393 for travel mileage, and \$69,954 for local mileage.
- What part of the budget covers catering for dinners/lunches at the district, and can that be reduced? The people benefitting are most certainly able to afford lunches, but this money could be used to help fund a school lunch program.
- Can we reduce banking service charges? The banking service charges have a budget of \$107,100. Though this is a small fraction of the total budget, you should still be looking at any way to reduce that does not affect student programming.

Thanks so much for taking the time to read through.

A7: Trustee Watters we will be addressing these questions in the next budget cycle.

**G. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

**Moved By** Trustee Whiteaker

**Seconded By** Trustee Leonard

That the meeting adjourn.

**Carried Unanimously**

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Chair

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Secretary-Treasurer