



MINUTES

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE PALLISER SCHOOL DIVISION
REGULAR MEETING
BT20230110**

**DATE: Tuesday, January 10, 2023
9:00 a.m - Palliser Meeting Room C**

Trustees in Attendance: Trustee Lorelei Bexte, Chair
Trustee Tony Montana, Vice-Chair
Trustee Debbie Laturus
Trustee Mike Oliver
Trustee Sharon Rutledge
Trustee Louise Schmidt

Staff in Attendance: Dave Driscoll, Superintendent
Dexter Durfey, Secretary Treasurer
Audrey Kluin, Associate Superintendent
Tom Hamer, Deputy Superintendent
Wesley Lebeau, Communications Officer

Recording: Michelle Taylor

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Lorelei Bexte, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

Item 7.6 School Field Trip Report was moved to action items.

Resolution # BT20230110 - 01

Moved by: Trustee Mike Oliver

That the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

3. MOVE TO *IN-CAMERA*

Resolution # BT20230110 - 02

Moved by: Trustee Debbie Laturus

That the meeting move *In-Camera*, at 9:01 a.m., pursuant to Section S64(3) of the Education Act, and Division 2 of Part 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter S-3 and amendments thereto, to discuss Privileged Information with regards to identified In-Camera Items.

Chairperson: *Lorelei E Bexte*

Secretary Treasurer: *[Signature]*

CARRIED

MOVE OUT OF *IN-CAMERA*

Resolution # BT20230110 - 03

Moved by: Trustee Tony Montina

That the meeting move out of *in-camera* at 10:10 a.m.

CARRIED

4. MOTIONS ARISING FROM *IN-CAMERA*

There were no motions arising from *in-camera*.

5. ADOPTION OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Resolution # BT20230110 - 04

Moved by: Trustee Mike Oliver

That the Minutes of the December 13, 2022, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Palliser School Division be approved as presented.

CARRIED

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1. Transportation Accountability Report

David Shaw, Transportation Services Supervisor, presented the Transportation Accountability Report. The Board owns a fleet of 81 buses. Three new 53-passenger buses have just been purchased and should be in service in the next two months. This year, Palliser purchased 2 coach-style buses to transport international students. Palliser operates 56 daily routes to division schools. All routes are developed with the help of the Versatrans routing software. The department is looking at switching to a web based provider. This change over process will take six to eight months. Transportation Services also manages 18 Palliser staff vehicles, 2 service vehicles and 12 maintenance vehicles. There are two repair facilities, one in Lethbridge and one in Vulcan, staffed by 4 full time mechanics. The cold weather prior to Christmas put a strain on the maintenance department.

The Transportation Services department budget for the 2021-22 fiscal year ended with a \$250,000.00 surplus. Repair costs, lower than anticipated wages for sub drivers and fuel savings contributed to the surplus. After the first quarter of the 2022-23 school year, revenues and expenses indicate that the department is in line with the budget, as field trip and community work revenue is back to a more normal start.

The fleet meets safety standards set by the province with biannual inspections taking place for each bus. The R factor is below the provincial average. Mechanics inspect buses on a rotational basis.

Chairperson:



Secretary Treasurer:



All regular route drivers “S” endorsement training and current first aid training. Palliser completes endorsement training internally and trains drivers in other divisions. All spare drivers that are hired are “S” endorsement trained before they are able to operate a school bus.

All buses are outfitted with GPS and tablets with software that tracks location of buses and governs electronic log books, daily inspection and fuel tracking. The system monitors engine diagnostics, driving habits, fuel consumption and idling among other things. Palliser owns 71 camera systems. Cameras help the department respond to inquiries or problems.

School field trips and community field trips positively impact operations and offset some operating costs. In 2021-2022, field trip revenue was closer to normal and is trending positively this school year. September was a record breaking month for field trip revenue.

The government fuel escalator for school bus operation was reinstated in March 2020 for members of the Student Transportation Association of Alberta (STAA) and currently, diesel fuel purchases over \$1.25 per litre are rebated. On average that rebate equals about 50 cents per litre for the division at current fuel prices. The escalator ends in June 2023, but the government has indicated that this may be extended.

There is a province-wide shortage of certified and trained Class 2 spare operators but due to word of mouth, Palliser continues to attract spare operators. Advertising is planned for the spring in order to increase the spare list going forward for the 2022-23 school year.

Dave Shaw was thanked for his presentation.

Resolution # BT20230110 - 05

Moved by: Trustee Debbie Laturus

That the Transportation Accountability Report is received as information.

CARRIED

6.2. Occupational Health and Safety Accountability Report

Mark Stolte, Health and Safety Coordinator, presented the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Accountability Report. He explained that the role of the OH&S Coordinator is multi-faceted which includes working with the division’s insurance provider and performing site inspections to ensure compliance with OH&S requirements and codes. The Insurance Provider completes one full

Chairperson:



Secretary Treasurer:



school inspection per year which they use to determine the division's rates. An analysis of the risks and what has been done to minimize them are the main factors for insurance.

A summary of the types of hazards that have been discovered during site inspections was presented. OH&S and Facilities work closely together to ensure that corrective action takes place quickly. As deficiencies are identified, communication with staff and the principal of the school involved takes place. All district employees complete mandatory OH&S training modules annually.

Mark Stolte was thanked for his presentation and for his dedication to safety in the division.

Resolution # BT20230110 - 06

Moved by: Trustee Sharon Rutledge

That the Occupational Health and Safety Accountability Report is received as information.

CARRIED

7. INFORMATION ITEMS

7.1. *SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Attached to the agenda was the Superintendent's monthly activities report.

7.2. *SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

Attached to the agenda was the Secretary-Treasurer's monthly activities report.

7.3. *ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Attached to the agenda was the Associate Superintendent's monthly activities report.

7.4. *DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT, LEARNING SERVICES REPORT

Attached to the agenda was the Deputy Superintendent's monthly activities report.

7.5. *TRUSTEE REPORTS

Attached to the agenda were the Trustees' monthly activities reports.

7.6. *SCHOOL FIELD TRIP REPORT

This was moved to Action/Discussion Items.

Chairperson:

Louise E. Bente

Secretary Treasurer:

[Signature]

8. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.6 *School Field Trip Report

Discussion took place regarding the choice of some schools to travel to BC for ski trips when there are appropriate ski hills in AB. Perhaps it could be that these types of trips have been tradition. Administration will bring forward to the schools that they reevaluate location based on costs and insurance implications and request they seek parent input in determining future trips.

8.1. Fiscal Budget Reports

Secretary-Treasurer Dexter Durfey shared the 2022-2023 financial update with the Board. Currently, the budget is trending towards a \$48,000 surplus, however, the new model of clawback and bridge funding by the government adds elements of uncertainty.

Dexter was thanked for his presentation and was asked to thank Cindy Rogers, Director of Finance, for her work.

Resolution # BT20230110 - 07

Moved by: Trustee Mike Oliver

That the 2022-2023 Financial Update report be received as information

CARRIED

8.2. 2023-2024 School Year Division Calendar Approval

The draft 2023-2024 calendars for the north and south areas of the division have been shared with school administrators, school council chairs, and school society members for feedback. Associate Superintendent, Audrey Kluin, shared the draft calendars with the Board.

Resolution # BT20230110 - 08

Moved by: Trustee Sharon Rutledge

That the 2023-2024 school year division calendars be approved as presented.

CARRIED

8.3. After School Programs in Division Elementary Schools

Trustee Louise Schmidt spoke to this topic. She brought forward thoughts that elementary students throughout the division should have access to after school programs and that students who choose to participate in these types of programs should have the ability to smoothly transition from the school day to the care of the program provider. It was brought forward that there are inherent operational challenges to this transition as schools need to be cleaned ahead of time and someone from the after school program needs to take custody of the children when they are dismissed from their classrooms if they are remaining in the school. It was the decision of the Board that communities can work independently with program providers to create after school opportunities at their specific sites

Chairperson:

Louise E. Bente

Secretary Treasurer:

[Signature]

for students. Program providers should work with Principals at the school site to make appropriate arrangements to utilize the school site.

- 8.4. Update from Zone 6 ASBA December meeting and the Rural Caucus of Alberta Schools Boards Annual General Meeting
Trustee Mike Oliver presented the details from the ASBA meeting regarding discussions that took place on Career Education, emergent positions, and ASBA priorities. Highlights are available on the ASBA website. The spring general meeting will take place in Calgary (moved from Red Deer). The fall general meeting will be taking place at the Westin in downtown Edmonton. The Alberta Rural Education Symposium, focusing on the “Three R’s of Rural Education: Resilience, Reconciliation, and Rejoicing” is scheduled March 5-7, 2023 in Edmonton. Members of the Board and Senior Administration will attend.

There was a lunch break from 12:15 p.m. until 12:50 p.m.

- 8.5. 2021-2022 Palliser School Division Annual Education Results Report

Learning Services prepared the 2021-2022 division Annual Education Results Report (AERR) for Board review and approval. Deputy Superintendent, Tom Hamer shared the report. The reporting method has changed from previous years. A four-year plan was developed in the Spring of 2021 and the plan is evaluated each Fall. In the AERR, the three Palliser goals of wellness, numeracy, and literacy are presented within the five assurance domains of Student Growth and Achievement, Teaching and Leading, Learning Supports, Governance, and Local and Societal Context. The report, once approved, will be shared with Alberta Education and posted to the Division website. Chair Bexte thanked Mr. Hamer and the Learning Services team for their work in preparing the report.

The presentation of this report was halted to welcome MLA Schow (item 8.6) to the meeting. The presentation of this report resumed after the MLA left the meeting.

Resolution # BT20230110 - 09

Moved by: Trustee Sharon Rutledge

That the Board approves the Annual Education Results Report and directs Administration to submit the report to Alberta Education.

CARRIED

- 8.6. Round Table Discussion with MLA
Carston-Siksika MLA Joseph Schow joined the meeting virtually at 1:26 p.m. He thanked the Board for the invitation to the meeting. The Board introduced

Chairperson:

Louise E. Bexte

Secretary Treasurer:

[Signature]

themselves. He provided a brief update and indicated that as the Government House Leader, he is preparing for the legislative session at the end of February. The topic of Coalhurst High School was brought forward and MLA Schow indicated his support for this project. Items that are challenging for the division were brought forward. Plant Operations are contributing to an annual deficit. Grant funding is based on the number of students and square footage utilization which penalizes schools with low utilization rates. It was asked if the government might reconsider formulas for divisions with declining populations and low density in buildings. With large geographic areas, it is difficult to close schools due to the long bus rides to other sites. From a budget perspective, other programs are hurting because there is a transfer within the budget to cover Plant Operations. MLA Schow commented that it is a balancing act between maintaining facilities in Rural Alberta and not putting students on long bus rides. He committed to bringing this forward.

It was asked if there is an update on the government promised funds for Educational Assistants (EAs). One area of concern is that EAs do not make a living wage. Divisions need the latitude to create jobs that are desirable. MLA Schow will discuss this specific item with the Minister.

Mental Health has been pushed to the forefront following the pandemic. All the ministries need to pull together on this topic. MLA Schow will reach out to the Minister of Health and Addictions and the MLA acknowledges the importance of mental health supports in schools.

MLA Schow spoke to his love of basketball and he offered his time to volunteer with school sports. He left the meeting at 1:46 p.m.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Chairperson:

Louise E. Bente

Secretary Treasurer:

[Signature]