

Finance Committee Meeting

Minutes – September 18, 2023

[Recording](#)

Attending:

Ben Ford, Lara Bowers, Jim Fenn, Shayna Kalnitsky, Julie Dupont

1. Meeting called to order at 6:40 p.m.
2. Lara Bowers made a motion to add an executive session as item #4 on the agenda. Motion carried.
3. No public comment during first opportunity.
4. Entered executive session at 6:44 p.m. to discuss a legal matter. Exited executive session at 6:58 p.m. with no action taken.
5. Killington Land Use Agreement
 - a. Killington select board reached out to MVSU to update the status of a parcel of land that was given to the Sherburne School District (and its successors) back in 1852. The parcel is near the town offices. The land was used by the Killington Volunteer Fire Department from 1852-2022 when the department was disbanded in favor of full-time staff. The land has now reverted back to the school district.
 - b. It is a very small parcel consisting of a 2-car garage in which the FD stored fire vehicles and an ambulance, as well as a small parking lot. KFD requests to continue using it for storage.
 - c. Jim Fenn proposed to sign a 3-4 year lease with KFD wherein they would be allowed to use the building and grounds in exchange for their assumption of the upkeep and utility bills.
 - i. The location and size of this parcel as well as the building on it do not fit our needs at this time.
 - ii. Perhaps down the road, MVSU could trade this parcel to the town for another that is more suitable.
 - d. Committee agreed to bring this proposal to the full board for action.
6. Committee reviewed a presentation put together by the district's part-time grant writer, Rhiannon. This presentation highlighted the lack of cohesiveness of various grant-writing efforts undertaken by employees and groups within MVSU. Committee discussed the real and potential conflicts this discordance presents. The presentation suggested the creation of a Development Department which would oversee and coordinate all grant-writing efforts as well as pursue all available fundraising opportunities.
7. Presentation of FY25-28 budget projections:
 - a. Year-over-year projected budget increases will accumulate to 65.5% by FY28 relative to FY23 since FY28 is the first year of new build debt repayment
 - b. Contract negotiations with teachers are coming up and teachers will likely ask for a substantial raise to catch up to current market.
 - c. At a teacher in-service workshop, teachers wondered if the district is using staff effectively. There is an ongoing study at the elementary level to address this question.

- d. In the spring, Superintendent Sousa asked each of the elementary school principals what they needed. What should we do with this list? How to we choose what to fund and how to we find the funds for it?
 - e. We will need to budget an additional \$830k this year to cover: last year's budget shortfall, the new assistant principal position at WES, and shifting certain positions from being grant-funded to budget-funded. However, the way the state weights students is changing in our favor and can potentially generate an \$800k windfall for us.
 - f. Ben recommends not only a full-time Development Director that Rhiannon suggests, but also a part-time recruiter to try to increase our number of tuition students from nearby choice towns. Changing bus routes to include stops in nearby towns may help recruit students.
8. The Finance Committee will need to make a budget presentation to the full board – probably in November. Jim created a detailed timeline for budget development to reach this goal.
 9. Public comment – Julie Dupont reminded the committee that we have open positions in food services and bus drivers.
 10. Adjourn 8:15

Links:

[FY25 Budget Planning Information](#)

[FY25 Draft Budget Timeline](#)

[Budgeting Presentation](#)

[Killington Land Deed](#)

[Fundraising at MVSU for FY23](#)