

**BOYERTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
MAY 29, 2018  
MEETING MINUTES**

The May 29, 2018, Finance Committee meeting was convened at 6:30 PM by Mr. Elsier, Finance Committee Chair, in the Education Center Board Room.

Everyone participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America and a moment of silence.

The following board members were in attendance:

Rodney Boyer, Clay Breece, Jill Dennin, Ruth Dierolf, Steven Elsier, Brandon Foose, David Lewis, Christine Neiman, Donna Usavage

The minutes for the Finance Committee meeting of May 1, 2018, were presented to the Board for approval. Motion moved by Mrs. Usavage, second by Mrs. Dennin. Motion to accept the minutes of May 1, 2018, as presented, carries: Yea: Boyer, Breece, Dennin, Dierolf, Foose, Lewis, Neiman, Elsier, Usavage. Nay: None.

Mr. Elsier stated the board members were going to have a discussion concerning the cultivate/Kristine Parkes contract. Board members had previously received a copy of the contract. The contract renewal was originally to be discussed at the May 1, 2018, Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Elsier asked for questions/comments from the board members.

Question/Comments for Kristine Parkes

**Question:** By adding the grant writing to the contract what successes in grant writing have you had and how would this benefit the school district?

**Answer:** 1) Over 20 years of experience in grant writing, 2) Grant writing for local, state, and national agencies of all sizes and secured millions of dollars, 3) Grant calendar for 2018-2019 would be developed for the school district, 4) Research would be done to find new grant sources for the school district, 5) Would work directly with administration and teachers on grants, and 6) Highly successful and grant awards would be more than the cost of the contract.

**Question:** What more will you be doing since the cost of the contract doubled?

**Answer:** 1) Grant writing responsibilities have been added to the contract, 2) Doing more media/public relations since being asked to be the spokesperson for the school district, 3) Responsible for more aspects of the website, 4) More time spent attending cabinet meetings, committee meetings, and other school district meetings, 5) Responsible for doing student/staff recognitions for board meetings, 6) More photography to record school district happening/events, and 7) More of a strategic public relations role.

**Question:** How many hours are you working under current contract?

**Answer:** All hours are tracked and detailed with work performed on the monthly invoices submitted to the school district. Approximately 20-25 hours per week.

**Question:** How many clients do you have?

**Answer:** Three school districts and a senior center.

**Question:** Are more of your services required due to having an interim superintendent?

**Answer:** More services have been requested by the interim superintendent than by prior administration.

**Comment:** A board member shared that Mr. Krem has stated how invaluable Mrs. Parkes is to the school district and that he strongly felt the need for a public relations person due to the size of the school district.

**Comment:** A board member was at the Colebrookdale Elementary School Revolutionary War event. The press had been invited and Mrs. Parkes was there taking charge of press relations.

**Comment:** A board member expressed concerns about the contract due to the financial status of the school district. The superintendent should be responsible for communicating (public relations) with the parents/staff/media as part of their position. School district staff should be able and qualified to do grant writing.

**Comment:** A board member stated several reasons to have a public relations contract with Mrs. Parkes: 1) Increase in big/controversial issues, 2) Need for a grant writing professional to increase revenue, and 3) invaluable to have a public relations person with excellent communication skills.

**Comment:** A board member stated there is no question to the value of a good communication person to the school district; however, finances need to be taken in account.

**Question:** How is termination in the contract stated?

**Answer:** The contract can be terminated immediately with cause and the contract can be terminated without cause with a two month notice in writing.

**Question:** Is money for the contract included in the 2018-2019 budget?

**Answer:** Mr. Taylor, Assistant Business Manager, stated the contract was included in the 2018-2019 budget. It is unknown if an increase was anticipated; however, there is enough money to cover the increased contract amount.

Mr. Elsier stated the contract will need to be reviewed and approved by Mr. Sultanik, District Solicitor, if this has not occurred already.

A board member wanted to clarify there was an individual in the Human Resources Department that use to do excellent grant writing. That individual has since left the school district.

The board members were queried and a majority of board members were in favor of having the cultivate contract on the June 12, 2018, board meeting agenda. Board members were asked to take time to fully review the contract and to address any concerns/questions with administration/committee chair before the June 12, 2018 board meeting.

Mr. Taylor, Assistant Business Manager, provided an informational session on the "monthly financial dashboard".

Discussion/Questions/Comments by board members: 1) Report will be available via hard copy and online, 2) Format of report, 3) Importance of trend analysis, 4) This type of report is what the Board has been looking for, and 5) Appreciate time and effort on developing this report.

Mr. Elsier reviewed what has been done to date by administration on the security plan. The Board is looking at a three-phase approach to security in the school district.

Phase One (Prevention): 1) Adopting a report system, 2) Security and safety training, 3) Physical plant upgrades, and 4) Surveillance equipment. The goal tonight is to provide administration with a dollar amount to implement Phase One of the security plan and have the security measures in place by the start of school.

Phase Two: 1) Policy Committee to review/change/add security policies, and 2) Reoccurring Annual Costs such as adding security personnel.

Phase Three: Annual review of policies and procedures.

The total cost of Phase One of the security plan is approximately \$355,000.

Discussion/Questions/Comments by board members: 1) Need public input, 2) Board members opinions should be public, 3) Do not play political games, 4) Board members need to vote and make a commitment to the community that we will arm our schools, 5) Reoccurring costs in the budget depending on Board decision, 6) Initial/One-Time Costs will be from the Capital Projects Fund, 7) Approximately \$130,000 of the \$355,000 was already in the Five-year Capital Projects Plan, 8) School district has been, over the past several years, taking security steps in the buildings, 9) Need to think about security on a broader scale such as emotional and behavioral support, 10) Need to reach out to State Legislators to find out what they are going to do to help schools with security, 11) thanked administration and others for their work on the security plan, and 12) Amount of government spending on education.

The board members were queried and a majority of board members were in favor of having the Phase One Security Plan costs of approximately \$355,000 on the June 12, 2018, board meeting agenda.

Mr. Taylor, Assistant Business Manager, provided an update on the student activity fee revenue/expenditures and participation levels from 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 year to date.

Discussion/Questions/Comments by board members: 1) Philosophically opposed to a student activity fee, 2) Boyertown has the highest student activity fee of the surrounding districts, 3) In favor of going back to \$100 fee versus elimination of fee, 4) Change in participation due to culture change and school board is not going to solve participation levels, 5) Financially the school district cannot afford to reduce the fee and cut revenue when the school district is looking for money, 6) Has always been against student activity fee as it sets up a barrier to participation in activities, 7) Parents do not like the student activity fee, 8) Parents want funds to go directly to the specific activity the child participates in, 9) Either eliminate or reduce fee, 10) Need to find ways to increase participation, 11) Keep fee at current rate, 12) the school district has provided ways for hardship students to still be able to participate in an activity, 13) Higher return on student investment (well-rounded students) by not preventing students from participating, 14) Find ways to increase revenue, 15) Public suggested increasing activity fee two years ago, 16) Fee is not affecting participation levels, 17) Table this issue until objective numbers are provided by administration, 18) At this time need to look at student activity fee as purely financial and look at participation levels separately, and 19) Mistake doubling fee from \$100 to \$200 last year.

Mr. Taylor shared there would not a big difference in sports as sports have caps/limits and students are cut. There was a big decrease in music and music does not have a limit to student participation.

The board members were queried and a majority of board members were in favor of having the reduction of the student activity fee to \$100 on the June 12, 2018, board meeting agenda.

Due to time constraint the presentation/discussion on the Summer Projects/Priorities from 5-year Capital Plan scheduled for this evening will be rescheduled to a Finance Committee meeting on June 5, 2018, at 6:30 PM.

No Public Comment.

No Committee Comment.

Adjournment

There being no other business for consideration the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 PM moved by Mr. Breece, second by Mr. Foose.