



FINANCE & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
Saturday, January 17, 2015 – 11:45a.m.
District Conference Centre – Strawberry Marsh Road

1. Call to Order

The 3rd 2014-2015 regular meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee of the Newfoundland and Labrador English School Board was called to order at 11:45 a.m. on Saturday, January 17, 2015.

Members Present: Nada Borden, Chair
 Eric Snow, Committee Member
 Rick Martin, Committee Member
 Guy Elliott, Committee Member
 John George, Committee Member
 Gary Baikie, Committee Member
 Don Brown, Committee Member

NLESD Staff Present: Darrin Pike, CEO/Director of Education
 Tony Stack, Assistant Director of Education, Operations
 Larry Blanchard, Assistant Director of Education, Finance & Business
 Administration
 Heather Hillier, Senior Administrative Officer (Corporate)
 Cathy Martin, Administrative Assistant (Operations/Recorder)

Absent with Regrets: Milton Peach, Board Chair

2. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Blanchard advised that items 4.3 (Holy Heart Audited Financial Statements – June 30, 2014) and 4.5 (Harriot Curtis Collegiate, St. Anthony) required further information and were most appropriately deferred.

It was moved by Rick Martin, seconded by Don Brown and carried unanimously that the agenda be adopted as amended to defer item 4.3 (Holy Heart Audited Financial Statements – June 30, 2014) and item 4.5 (Harriot Curtis Collegiate, St. Anthony). Carried.

3. Approval of Minutes – November 22, 2014

It was moved by Rick Martin, seconded by John George and carried unanimously that the minutes of November 22, 2014 be adopted as presented. Carried.

4. New Business – for motion

4.1 Request to use Special Incentives – Information Technology

The remaining 2014 – 2015 information technology budget does not allow for completion of three important organizational projects:

Active Directory Design – this step is a necessary foundational step in order to build a single province-wide network for the District. Completion of active directory will make the District network more manageable, enhance network integrity and allow for implementation of stronger systems security and user access controls. Without completion of active directory, it will not be possible to build a single provincial K-12 information network. \$25,000

Disaster Recovery Planning – in order to ensure business continuity in the event of a critical loss of District Office information systems, it is necessary to have data accessible at an alternate site – Gander. \$53,000

Finalization of email consolidation – additional consultation with the application vendor is required to finalize implementation of the provincial instance of the District’s email system (FirstClass). \$16,000

Motion:

Moved by Guy Elliott, seconded by Don Brown and carried unanimously that the Finance and Operations Committee recommend to the Board, approval to utilize up to \$94,000 of special incentives funding to address strategic information systems priorities, further subject to Ministerial approval.

Recommendation #1:

That the Finance and Operations Committee recommend that the Board grant approval to utilize up to \$94,000 of special incentives funding to address strategic information systems priorities, further subject to Ministerial approval.

4.2 Request to use Special Incentives – Properties

O’Donel High School was constructed by the provincial government in 1985, and as part of the construction project, it was agreed to build a chapel onto what was then a Roman Catholic School – and the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation (RCEC) would reimburse government the cost to construct the chapel. In the early 2000’s, the RCEC constructed a new church (St. Peter’s Parish) to replace the chapel at O’Donel High School. With no further use for the chapel, the District entered into a lease agreement with the RCEC, and the school began to use the former chapel for school purposes – which still continues.

In accordance with the 1985 agreement, and subsequent 2005 lease, the RCEC has given the District notice of termination of the lease and further requested that the District purchase the chapel portion of the building for appraised value of \$155,000 (but not less than the construction cost of \$147,131.03).

The former chapel portion has been fully integrated with the school's curriculum delivery and loss of use of this portion of the building would very negatively affect delivery of instruction at the school – in particular physical education and wellness, as well as robotics and sciences.

Motion:

Moved by Guy Elliott, seconded by John George and carried unanimously that the Finance and Operations Committee recommend to the Board, approval to utilize up to \$155,000 of special incentives funding to acquire the former chapel portion of the O'Donel High School building, further subject to Ministerial approval.

Recommendation #2:

That the Finance and Operations Committee recommend that the Board grant approval to utilize up to \$155,000 of special incentives funding to acquire the former chapel portion of the O'Donel High School building, further subject to Ministerial approval.

4.3 Holy Heart Theatre Audited Financial Statements – June 30, 2014

This item deferred to next meeting.

4.4 Disposal of Vacant Land – Pouch Cove

The District owns 2.923 acres of vacant parcel of land in the Town of Pouch Cove that is the site of the former St. Agnes Elementary School operated initially by the Roman Catholic School Board.

The school closed in 2003, following which the building was demolished in accordance with the S.84 Agreement in place with the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation (RCEC) of St. John's. During the demolition process it was determined that the land contained various contaminants – resulting in an environmental restriction prohibiting usage for residential purposes.

Through negotiations with the RCEC, it was determined that the former Eastern School District would acquire the land from the RCEC for \$102,000 and hold the parcel as vacant land, pending a future determination regarding treatment of the environmental restriction. The remediation cost was estimated to be approximately \$400,000 at the time.

The Town of Pouch Cove is seeking land for development of a municipal service building, and has submitted a proposal to the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District to acquire the parcel of land for \$63,000. Disclosure has been made to the Town regarding the environmental restriction in place, and the Town is fully aware that an acquisition would be on an "as-is, where-is" basis and the Town would assume all liability related to the site.

Motion:

Moved by Gary Baikie, seconded by John George and carried unanimously that the Finance and Operations Committee recommend to the Board, approval to sell the

vacant land in Pouch Cove to the Town of Pouch Cove for \$63,000 on an “as-is, where-is” basis, further subject to Ministerial approval.

Recommendation #3:

That the Finance and Operations Committee recommend that the Board grant approval to sell the vacant land in Pouch Cove to the Town of Pouch Cove for \$63,000 on an “as-is, where-is” basis, further subject to Ministerial approval.

4.5 Disposal of Harriot Curtis Collegiate, St. Anthony

This item deferred to next meeting.

4.6 Social Media Policy

The draft policy outlines the terms and conditions under which District staff, students and volunteers may use social media within the K-12 environment, including guidance regarding: social media safety practices; what is considered acceptable social media behavior/conduct; how to respond in various situations; and implications for unsafe or inappropriate practices.

The draft is representative of:

- policies and administrative regulations in place at predecessor Boards,
- best practice in other jurisdictions and other provincial bodies, and
- provincial privacy legislation (ATIPPA) and OCIO standards.

The preparation process included:

- consultation with select district staff and District executive,
- posting for review and feedback by school principals through Member Services
- review and discussion at recent Senior Education Officer meetings,
- review by the appropriate staff within the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, and
- review by District legal counsel.

Key policy points include:

- social media is a tool for collaborating and engaging staff and students in productive learning activities for educational and business purposes
- social media is accepted as being inherently public and users should have no expectation of privacy in anything that they post on social media
- the District does not routinely monitor social media, however, where warranted, social media accounts may be searched by authorized district staff. For example:
 - part of a legal proceeding or investigation
 - reason to believe there has been policy breach or inappropriate use
 - ATIPP request
- users should exercise caution: once posted, information on social media is essentially public

The policy is recommended for adoption of by the Newfoundland and Labrador English School Board.

Motion:

Moved by John George, seconded by Gary Baikie and carried unanimously that the Finance and Operations Committee recommend to the Board, approval of the Social Media Policy as tabled at the January 17, 2015 meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee of the Board.

Recommendation #4:

That the Finance and Operations Committee recommend to the Board, approval of the Social Media Policy as tabled at the January 17, 2015 meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee of the Board.

New Business - discussion purposes

4.7 Properties Update - Disposals

A table providing listings of current closures and status for each of the properties listed was presented by Larry Blanchard, Assistant Director of Education – Finance and Business Administration.

Recommendation:

No recommendation. This item is for information purposes only.

4.8 School Finance Handbook

An operational goal of the Finance Division is the standardization of accounting systems and practices for all schools in the District. A primary strategy to ensure the success of this overall goal is the implementation of a school finance handbook for use by administrators throughout the District.

The finance handbook will provide guidance to school administrators in the management of school-controlled funds to ensure all schools meet their financial responsibilities, and are accountable for these funds. School-controlled funds, in general terms, include all monies raised by the school and fall under the direct control of the Principal.

The School Finance Handbook is scheduled to be released to schools in February 2015.

Recommendation:

No recommendation. This item is for information purposes only.

5. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chair.

6. Adjournment

It was moved by John George, and carried unanimously to adjourn at 1:05 p.m.