



FINANCE & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
June 8, 2021 – 12:00pm
Newfoundland and Labrador English School District
(Via Zoom)

1. Call to Order

A meeting of the Finance and Operations Committee of the Newfoundland and Labrador English School Board was called to order at 12:00pm on Tuesday, June 8, 2021.

Members Present: Steve Tessier, Chair
Wayne Lee, Committee Member
Winston Carter, Committee Member
John George, Committee Member
Guy Elliott, Committee Member
Raymond Bennett, Committee Member

NLESD Staff Present: Terry Hall, CFO/ADE – Corporate Services
Tony Stack, CEO/Director of Education
Jim Sinnott, Director of Facilities and Custodial Management
Susan Clarke, Administrative Assistant (Corporate Services)

Regrets: Goronwy Price, Board Chair

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to amend the Agenda to add item 4.3: Gov-104 School Review Policy.

It was moved by John George, seconded by Wayne Lee, that the agenda be adopted as amended. *Carried.*

3. Approval of Minutes – April 15, 2021

It was moved by Winston Carter, seconded by Guy Elliott that the minutes of April 15, 2021 be adopted as presented. *Carried.*

4. New Business (Motion)

4.1 Lind Avenue Property – Grand Falls-Windsor

Tabled by Jim Sinnott, Director of Facilities and Custodial Management.

The subject property housed a District-owned, denominational-era Board Office building on land owned by the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation (RCEC). It is noteworthy that the land was transferred to RCEC by the AND Company in the early 1960s vs being a Crown Grant. It is also noteworthy that this is part of a broader parcel, which involves the former Millcrest Academy that we are in the process of working through disposal of with the RCEC.

Motion #1:

Moved by John George, seconded by Winston Carter that the Finance and Operations Committee recommend to the Board, approval of a Quit Claim on the former Board Office property on Lind Avenue, Grand Falls-Windsor, subject to Ministerial approval. *Carried.*

4.2 Vehicle Financing

Tabled by Jim Sinnott, Director of Facilities and Custodial Management.

In support of District operations, a fleet of service vehicles is utilized by tradespersons attending to maintenance of schools. In total there are approximately 60 vehicles – the oldest is a 1999, the newest a 2019, and the average age of the fleet is just over eight years. The District's repairs and maintenance budget is focused on direct school infrastructure, but we are at a point where fleet renewal is required due to frequent breakdowns and increasing service costs that are not economical in the long term, i.e. we are into engine and transmission replacements for vehicles with 300+ kilometers.

The District participated in the Public Procurement Agency standing offer agreement for fleet vehicles, which offers the most competitive pricing available. To that end, we can obtain 18 full-sized cargo vans and/or pickups for approximately \$530,000 (average ~\$29,000 each) pre- HST, approximately \$575,000 with rebate applied, which we propose financing over 5 years.

Motion#2:

Moved by Winston Carter, seconded by Wayne Lee, that the Finance and Operations Committee recommend to the Board, approval of borrowing \$575,000 to finance service vehicles, subject to Ministerial approval. *Carried.*

4.3 Gov-104 School Review Policy

Tabled by Terry Hall, CFO/ADE – Corporate Services.

Under the Schools Act, 1997 the definition of school is:

2.(p) "school" means the body of school students that is organized as a unit for the purpose of education and includes teachers and other staff members associated with the unit and the lands and premises used in connection with the unit;

In regards to school reviews and closures, the Act states:

76(2) states "...a board may close a school only after the parents of students affected have been given an opportunity to make representations to the board."

There have been numerous court actions related to school closures over the years, giving rise to jurisprudence concerning what is required by the Board by process to meet the requirements of 76(2). The Board lays out the detail of this process in policy Gov-104 School Review. However, one omission in this policy is the definition of what comprises a school. In the absence of a definition, the Board has potentially imposed a restriction upon itself to follow a process even where a school is already effectively closed by virtue of not having students. To rectify this, it is suggested that the Board explicitly acknowledge under policy Gov-104 School Review that the definition of a school is per the Schools Act, 1997.

Motion#3:

Moved by Guy Elliott, seconded by John George, that the Finance and Operations Committee recommend to the Board, approval of the addition of the following definition to policy Gov-104 School Review. "SCHOOL per the Schools Act, 1997". Carried.

For Discussion:

4.4 Revisit discussion on virtual meetings as opposed to in-person meetings

At the last Board meeting, a request was made to reconsider the option of all Board meetings reverting to virtual as opposed to in-person. As such, it was requested that the Finance and Operations Committee discuss for consideration of a motion.

A discussion was held regarding perspectives on what was felt to be the best way forward for future Board meetings. The decision was reached that given the current circumstances the best way forward is to remain status quo with in-person Board meetings with the provision that if a Trustee cannot attend in person, virtual attendance will be accommodated if possible.

For discussion purposes only.

5.0 Date of Next Meeting

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

6.0 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Wayne Lee at 12:20pm. *Carried.*