



**HALIFAX REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
November 18, 2015
6:00 p.m.**

An Audit Committee meeting was held this date in
Meeting Room 202 (2nd Floor)
33 Spectacle Lake Dr., Dartmouth, NS

PRESENT:

Nancy Jakeman, Chair
Dave Wright, Vice Chair
Christie Linders
Bruce Densmore

BOARD MEMBERS:

Gin Yee
Denise Bell, Regional Education Officer

REGRETS:

Cathie O'Toole
Bridget Ann Boutilier
Elwin LeRoux, Superintendent
Alison King, Director, Program

STAFF:

Lance Bullock, Senior Staff Advisor
Natascha Joncas, Acting Corporate Secretary
Tracy O'Kroneg, Director, Human Resources
Ron Heiman, Director, Operations Services
Susan Tomie, Director, School Administration
Heather Syms, Coordinator, Programs
Terri Thompson, Director, Financial Services
Kate Wall, Coordinator, Financial Services
Kathryn Burlton, Manager, Accounting & Purchasing
Karen Tucker, Administrative Assistant, Financial Services

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved and seconded (Wright/Jakeman) that the agenda be approved.

(CARRIED)

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES / BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

June 17, 2015

It was moved and seconded (Linders/Wright) that the minutes of June 17, 2015 Audit Committee be approved.

(CARRIED)

4. REPORT 2015-11-46 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2015 – QUARTERLY BUSINESS PLAN AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

Terri Thompson, Director, Financial Services

Ms. Thompson opened the floor for any questions on the priorities and their progress.

In reply to Mr. Wright's question regarding Joint Use Agreements, Mr. Heiman confirmed that the HRSB/HRM Joint Use Agreements for schools with community enhancements to define parameters for after-hours use of schools are being implemented and updated to reflect current practice.

Mr. Wright asked for clarification on the priority regarding professional development that was offered for grades 7-9 teachers and junior high resource teachers for the new math curriculum that was implemented in September 2015. Ms. Syms confirmed that all of the teachers implementing this curriculum last year participated in the professional development offered in June 2015 and any teachers new to that math assignment this year participated in the professional development that was offered in September 2015.

Ms. Jakeman asked for clarification about expectations for the new provincial homework guidelines. Ms. Syms indicated our schools are implementing the guidelines but that clarity of the homework guidelines is being sought from the province and that the majority of questions are coming from grades primary to three.

One of the priority updates stated that support was provided to 40 HRSB schools to promote community food gardens. Ms. Linders noted that she thought that number of gardens was low. While there may be more than 40 gardens throughout HRSB, Ms. Syms confirmed that in spring of 2014 there were 40 HRSB school food gardens that were supported financially from HRSB through our Food and Nutrition Policy support money.

Ms. Linders inquired about the progress regarding the communication with Halifax Transit where the board is seeking an improved agreement for student bus passes. Mr. Heiman confirmed that the talks regarding changes to the student bus passes are ongoing.

Mr. Heiman, in response to Mr. Wright's question concerning the energy upgrade work timeframe, confirmed that 71 of 90 schools will have completed their energy upgrade work by the end of fiscal year 2015-2016. We are now in the third year of the four year project; however, the time frame may be extended. There is \$8.0 million available this year for energy upgrade projects.

Mr. Densmore congratulated the Board and staff for the many good things that are happening within our board, including the Breakfast Programs, initiatives being taken with the Workers' Compensation Board, and the energy upgrade work.

Ms. Thompson reviewed the Financial Update to September 30, 2015. The report indicates that results are generally in line with expected results for the second quarter of 2015-2016 and that there are presently no significant areas of concern.

The floor was open to comments and questions during the review of the Financial Update. As in other years, it is anticipated that budget cost pressures will be substitute teacher costs, heating fuel, electricity, and snow removal. It is difficult to project exact amounts for these cost pressures at this point in time.

Ms. Linders was concerned over discussions in the media regarding outstanding invoices for C. A. Beckett School. Mr. Heiman and Ms. Thompson assured Ms. Linders and the Audit Committee that accruals for such invoices had been established many years ago. The anticipated costs of the work have fluctuated but remain within the parameters staff estimated.

The Audit Committee will forward Report 2015-11-46 – September 30, 2015 – Quarterly Business Plan and Financial Update to the Board for information.

5. REPORT 2015-11-47 - PURCHASING ANNUAL REPORT - 2014-2015
Kathryn Burlton, Manager, Accounting and Purchasing

Ms. Burlton gave a brief overview of the Purchasing Annual Report 2014-2015 and then opened the meeting for questions.

The Audit Committee will forward Report 2015-11-47 – Purchasing Annual Report – 2014-2015 to the Board for information.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, February 17, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

8. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded (Wright/Jakeman) that the meeting be adjourned.

(CARRIED)

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.



Nancy Jakeman
Chair, Audit Committee



Karen Tucker
Administrative Assistant, Financial Services

APPROVED