

BITTERROOT VALLEY EDUCATION COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Friday, April 24, 2020 9:00 a.m. – GoToMeeting.com

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order at 9 AM by Scott Stiegler. Board members in attendance: Stiegler, Johnston, Moore, Pearson and Scully. Co-op staff in attendance: Miller, Hughes, Zieglofsky and Reynolds. Other attendees: Bea Kaleva, Co-op attorney, Employees: Moresi, Gideon, Welch, Brushia, Bauer and O'Connell.
2. **Introduce Staff Representative** – Rachella Moresi, Mental Health Therapist at Victor Elementary.
3. **Consent Agenda** – Scully motion to approve, second by Pearson. Discussion: Miller said the next meeting would probably be in May unless something came up to necessitate the meeting next week. Also, the meeting in May would need to be earlier than the 4th Tuesday to accommodate distribution of contracts for 2020-21 school year. Motion to approve carries 5-0.
 - A. Minutes – Feb 25, 2020 (missed approving) and March 30, 2020 Special Board Meeting
Copies of minutes posted on <http://www.bvec-mt.org/> (Board/Meeting Schedule)
 - B. Next Meeting – (regular meeting date 4th Tuesday: April 28, 2020)
4. **Public Comment** - None
5. **Board Action**
 - A. **Director Search and Interview Process** – Bea Kaleva explained that we advertised the position at about the same time the “shelter in place” order was issued for Montana. Some candidates that applied rescinded their application due to COVID 19 and not wanting to move their families at this time. We do have two viable candidates. Options at this point are to move forward with interviewing these two candidates or advertise the position nationally for three weeks which would put us into May before we would have additional candidates to consider.

Johnston asked Bea’s opinion on next steps based on her experience. Bea explained that one of our issues is that there are not that many Special Education directors available in the state. Our salary and benefits are within acceptable range and not an issue. She does not know that we could get better candidates by advertising nationally and would

recommend interviewing the two candidates we have now. Moore, Pearson and Stiegler agreed with her recommendation.

There was group discussion regarding the process for interviewing because of shelter in place and social distancing and if the interviews should be in person, electronic using Zoom or something similar, or a combination of the two. Location and timing were also discussed. The final decision was to meet in Victor, Thursday, April 30th. Victor has the space to accommodate the BVEC staff that would attend for a meet and greet session with candidates, interview would be held after this, followed by a Board meeting to decide on choice for the role. Bea will coordinate the meeting and follow up with the Board and staff.

6. Information and Discussion A. Restarting and Funding CSCT Programs

With loss of revenues from school closures, current deficit spending with telehealth services, and anticipated reduction in essential summer program billing, we will be unable to restart and sustain CSCT programs throughout the 2020-21 school year. Miller proposed each district pledge \$11,306 per CSCT team (\$5,653/OP Therapist) from their respective School Emergency Relief Fund. This would allow us to replenish the Mental Health Program Reserve Fund to an adequate level to manage cash flow. He stated that he was not asking for a decision at this meeting.

Miller reviewed the financial files showing the impact school closures mid- March had on the Mental Health services revenue for the month of March and the forecasted impact to the 2019-20 fiscal year, as well as the forecast impact for 2020-21 school year. Reynolds and Hughes discussed the process used in forecast and the impact of not having a “normal” summer program will have on the program.

Johnston had questions regarding the current reserve amount versus the recommended, the need to get to recommended reserve amount in one step versus over time and bringing on teams immediately if districts provide funding. Miller, Hughes and Reynolds explained the impact of not having a normal summer program and how the entire program is reliant on the summer billing to cover the shortfall we see during the school year.

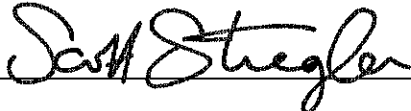
Moore asked if it would be possible to start ramp up now for the summer programs, Miller explained that was a very hard to answer because of the unknowns at this time around COVID 19, social distancing, etc. Moore also asked if the forecast of any Medicaid funds the Co-op might have to repay in relation to the Cashell billing issues. Miller explained it did not and that we might not have an answer to that for several months because we are going to arbitration. We do have concerns that the investigation that will be done by our attorney could lead to further billing issues.

Further discussion was had regarding being able to make a decision right away, but if using school emergency funds there is time because deadline for that spending is end of fiscal year 2021; financial files reviewed will be emailed to Superintendents for further review; at this time there is no additional funding identified in any of the COVID 19 emergency funds for state/local governments or mental health services.

Johnston and Moore both spoke to the need for these services and the monetary impact to Districts if the request is not approved.

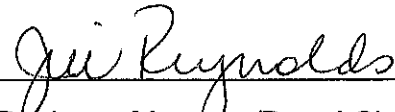
No decision today, financial files will be distributed to Superintendents with the draft meeting minutes.

6. Adjourn – Stiegler adjourned the meeting at 10:23.



5/26/2020

Board Chair Signature and Date



5/26/2020

Business Manager/Board Clerk Signature and date