

WILLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2014
(Unofficial Until Board Approval)

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Erika Wiecenski at the Town Office Building.

PRESENT: Erika Wiecenski, Michelle Cunningham, Ann Grosjean, Mark Jones,
Barry Wallett, Herb Arico, Superintendent David Harding,
Leo Mercado (arrived at 7:04)

ABSENT: None

COMMUNICATIONS:
None

PRESENT TO SPEAK:
None

SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS:

Superintendent Harding reviewed the breakfast program stating it is running smoothly with the first days at Hall having only a few meals served and with Center School having about 25-30 meals served per day. The total meals served after 7 days at Hall were 95 and at Center were 202. The amount of free and reduced meals served was between one and nine daily at Hall with a total of 33 free, 6 reduced and 56 paid meals. Superintendent stated after a couple months he will bring more data to the Board to show the progress and if reaching the targeted numbers.

Superintendent Harding reported on an issue around the buses. He reviewed that he had been requesting to get a bus cut and did receive 1/2 a bus cut for this school year. They cut a bus at Hall and kept it at Center. There is a savings of \$25,000 on the run that was reduced. Last year he requested the bus company to have an outside person look at the routes to redo them to be more efficient. He asked in June then again in July.

Superintendent has observed for this school year, one full bus and all the others are 1/2 or 1/3 seated with the rest of the bus empty. This has been consistent. He looked at the routes and they are the same as last year with the exception of the cut bus students were moved to other buses. The buses arrive 8-10 minutes early except the one full bus which arrives on time. He sent a letter to the bus company to complain that the route review was not done. The bus company apologized and stated they will work on the issue. Superintendent hopes to have new routes in another week or so.

Board member asked what year of the bus contract the schools were in with Superintendent replying it is year two with an optional two year extension.

Superintendent reviewed the MBR sheet explaining how it is tied to E.O. Smith budget numbers. Approximately \$59,000 is the maximum to be cut to meet the MBR amount if E.O. Smith is at zero. If E.O. Smith goes up then our number goes down in terms of MBR format. Superintendent stated he will be meeting with E.O. Smith to get a better idea of what the numbers will be.

PRESENTATION:

Superintendent Harding handed out binders containing information on the implementation of the Board of Education Goals. He explained the binders are to help structure the board's workshops around implementing their goal. The binder contains previous ideas, possible presentations to the community, data, report info, projected class sizes and enrollments, maps, cost per student, net term expenditures per pupil by town, extra-curricular activities and costs. It is a potential framework to hang ideas on.

Board members thanked Superintendent Harding.

Superintendent stated he has looked at information around the country and 80-90% of districts faced with low enrollment are consolidating schools. Most of these districts have multiple schools not just two. Other districts are building a new school. All options require a cost-benefits analysis.

Members inquired about how to develop the binders into their goal, would it be worked on in sections or as a whole. Erika Wicewski replied at the first workshop that is part of what the Board needs to decide.

Superintendent asked the Board members to send him requests for information that they would like for the workshop. Members stated they would like more information on a new school option. Superintendent stated they should have about four or five options and be able to present fully on all options to the community. Other members commented this is good information to start the conversation and it is necessary to have the information ahead of time. Superintendent commented that he is having outside people come in to give information. CREC is coming in November to provide options they offer such as shared services and he will also have Edgenuity come to present this fall.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee met and reviewed the bills.

Facilities Committee reported that CREC was hired for 6 weeks to have OR&L come in and give a report on the needs and make recommendations with regards to facilities and maintenance which will be brought to the committee. The committee will then bring the information to the Board.

Policy Committee met about the in-school lunch detention policies and will meet again. Possible dates need to be given to Superintendent Harding for the next meeting.

Herb Arico, Liaison for EastConn stated they met on August 26, 2014 showing a PowerPoint presentation on program and services with new programs developed in technology and leadership. Stated the budget is about 76 million dollars with a large portion of that being an insurance program. Funds received are about 61% local and 39% from grants. Stated brochures are available and EastConn has 160 programs and services, 550 employees, 20 locations, and 100+ transport vehicles with special handicap accessories. Discussed the head start program. Handed out brochures to the Board members.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Herb Arico, seconded by Erika Wiecenski, to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2014 Board meeting with edits on page 5, paragraph 4 to remove the word etc. and to add the total lunch prices in the second motion listed on page 2.

VOTE: Yes: H. Arico, E. Wiecenski, B. Walleth, L. Mercado,
M. Cunningham, A. Grosjean

Abstain: M. Jones

Motion Passed

Superintendent Harding reviewed that the grade 7/8 science position was filled by Peg Curtis and the grade 6 science position was filled by Michelle Lanouette who was a former intern at Hall School that graduated from UConn and was originally going to be hired as a long term substitute.

Board scheduled the first workshop to be on October 22, 2014 at 7 p.m. The location will be either at the Hall School library or the town office building.

OLD BUSINESS:

Superintendent Harding stated there is not any new information on the enrollment and the numbers will be presented on October first for State reports.

Superintendent informed that the CES roof project has been completed, there is an inspection scheduled for tomorrow morning. The project went later than anticipated with the contractors still in the building the Monday before school started. The price came in at about \$90,000 which was under the original \$110,000 budgeted. Superintendent Harding stated he was up there last week and the roof looks great.

Superintendent attended the Board of Finance meeting to review the funding and how it was allocated for the reimbursement. The process details were cleaned up to get the project completed.

The next project is the CES lighting needed. The quote from the electrician is about \$7,500.00 and should be able to be expedited once planning and zoning approve the project.

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

None

BOARD COMMENTS:

Board thanked the teachers, administration, and Superintendent Harding for their continued hard work and the smooth opening for the start of the school year. Thanked Superintendent Harding and Brenda Weber for the binders, and the Superintendent for being proactive and organized.

Members stated that the roof looks good. It is complicated to get all the facilities and issues in order before the school year starts and was expecting facilities to be an agenda item today. Superintendent Harding replied he is contracting with someone to give analysis and recommendation on facilities but not to run the facility. He expects in the next month or two the Board will be discussing future needs and what to do.

Members discussed the budget schedule and reviewed the process and timeline. Starting early allows for time to make any changes that may be needed or requested by the Board of Finance. The numbers from E.O. Smith cause adjustments to be made and those numbers do not come in until last even though the Board is the first to present to the BOF.

Members inquired about the teacher's pension liability with Superintendent responding that is currently being looked at with the possibility for information to be available in October.

Members stated the school sports teams are holding tryouts this week and look forward to the games this season and informed that E.O. Smith is holding their first football game under the lights this Friday night.

Meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Nichole Page
Recording Secretary