

WILLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2015
(Unofficial Until Board Approval)

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairman Erika Wiecenski at the Town Office Building.

PRESENT: Erika Wiecenski, Ann Grosjean, Mark Jones, Barry Wallett, Herb Arico
Superintendent David Harding

ABSENT: Mark Makuch, Michelle Cunningham

COMMUNICATIONS:

Superintendent Harding passed out an article titled "Moving Students to the Why" which is co-authored by two of Hall School's math teachers, Michael Cioe and Deborah Ostien, along with three other authors.

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

None

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Mark Jones, to move agenda item 4- Executive Session in between item 7-New Business and item 8-Old Business.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS:

Superintendent stated all of the items are on the agenda.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee met and reviewed the bills.

Technology Committee met and discussed the current equipment, what is used where and got a picture of what the schools have and where want to go with it including where technology is linked to curriculum and policy.

Herb Arico, Liaison for EastConn stated they met on March 24, 2015 with Pete Smith, a lobbyist for EastConn, reviewed legislation which is in process and will report back at a future time with results. Mr. Smith discussed charter schools, the budget being out of balance, and head start government notes and representation of each group. The next meeting will be on April 28, 2015.

Board member inquired if EastConn was a government funded entity and if people do legislation to government for more government. Herb Arico responded that there is a law firm that acts as a lobbyist for EastConn. The firm tracks progress of any related legislation to EastConn and notifies them and the lobbyist, similar to what CABA does for Boards of Education.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Herb Arico, seconded by Erika Wiecenski, to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2015 Board meeting.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Superintendent Harding explained the \$10,000 transfer from health insurance to purchased services to cover legal expenses for the Board of Education attorney for last month's bills.

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Ann Grosjean to transfer \$10,000 from health insurance to purchased services to cover legal fees as presented.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Superintendent Harding reviewed facilities and transfers. The report from EMCOR was not in full form but he received enough information on the costs. CIP put \$10,000 for each school for potential projects and additional funding is through the Head Custodian salary of about \$70,000. He listed the priority replacement items from EMCOR for each school. CES needs boiler room feed valves, lines, ac drains, special education office needs thermostat and zone valves, classroom needs steam zone valve, bathroom exhaust fan, roof top unit totaling \$20,916.00. HMS needs boiler room investigation on repairs, hot water valve, recirculation pump, and two boiler motors, offices need new thermostats, zone valves, classroom exhaust fan, media room leak in refrigerant and condenser totaling \$16,128.00.

Both schools would cost \$37,044 combined for all the priority repairs. There is approximately \$32,000 left in the salary line item at this time. Also in CIP is a roof unit on the gym for HMS in the amount of \$38,000. There is about \$54,000 in other salary line items due to teacher retirement mid-year and the switch of the science teacher positions. There is about \$37,000 in benefits left over as well.

There were further recommendations from EMCOR for other items such as the cab unit heater in the band room and the kiln exhaust fan but these items were not priority. They could be on a schedule with the \$10,000 per year to get these other projects all completed within three to four years.

Superintendent Harding would like recommendations to do some of the priority projects in facilities first.

Board discussed the Willington Education Support Staff Contract from 2015-2018.

Superintendent Harding reviewed the major changes including the sick day retirement language changed to vested, additional ½ New Year's Eve holiday for 12 month employees, HSA insurance for all, clean-up of the wage rate groups, a custodial stipend, a 3% salary increase, and an MOA regarding retiree insurance access.

Superintendent explained the savings and the expenses of this contract. The Board saves about \$11,000 with the HSA, the salary increases of about \$80,000 but the cost of the Head Custodian salary removes about \$70,000. There is a net a savings of about \$4,800 over the three years.

MOTION: by Herb Arico, seconded by Ann Grosjean, to approve the contract and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Willington Board of Education and the Willington Education Support Staff from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018 as presented.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Barry Wallett, to enter executive session at

7:56 p.m. to discuss pending litigation and invite the Superintendent and Al Ference of the Board of Finance to join.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Board exited executive session at 8:25 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

Superintendent provided update on the Board goal and handed out a sheet on a potential piece of land. He stated the property behind HMS was looked into for viability by Sue Yorgenson and Christina Mailhos. Another site of open land near the landfill is for 37 acres but is not a good access road and is close to the truck stop.

Board discussed the options if you build a new school then need a new lot and where does it exist. The process is a little more complex than originally thought, Board wants to explore options, track the properties looked at and list the pros and cons in terms of the acquisition of property.

Board would like Superintendent to determine the figure of savings in terms of consolidation to see what the number is and find out the bonding percentages on new construction and additions to see if can afford to build or bond. Would like the financials first then do the hard work of finding property if feasible.

Board would like to meet outside of this meeting to further discuss, set date of May 6, 2015 at 6pm in the HMS library.

Board discussed the budget update stating the Board of Finance met with the town and decided to move \$51,000 from the BOE to the Town budget to take care of the IT contract as a matter of meeting MBR. The discussion was good, Boards were supportive of the BOE and the discussion was around preserving items and not destroying them. The BOE has been under zero for two years now and meets the obligation. Board discussed what needed to be done within the BOE budget now, deciding to simply reduce the purchased service line item.

Erika Wiecenski noted that she did not agree with the reduction in the budget. She thinks it is a game with the money and does not agree with it. Barry Wallett replied it is a legitimate shared expense and makes perfect sense to have the town pay for it. Erika Wiecenski stated last year the BOE did the same thing and got burned on it to meet the MBR and she does not agree with the reduction. Herb Arico agreed with Erika Wiecenski.

MOTION: by Barry Wallett, seconded by Ann Grosjean, to reduce the IT purchased service line item Technology 1107323 by \$51,000.00.

VOTE: Yes: B. Wallett, M. Jones, A. Grosjean
No: H. Arico, E. Wiecenski

Motion Passed

Superintendent reported on facilities stating EMCOR did not yet provide the detailed report with pictures. He would like a comprehensive log of what has been serviced and what needs to be serviced and a schedule for those items. He reviewed from earlier how to move forward with the prices with money earmarked for maintenance.

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

None

BOARD COMMENTS:

Member Herb Arico stated he attended the CAFE day on the hill at the Bushnell and the State House. He reviewed the day stating it was interesting, good turnout with the Board members and students. CAFE went over the bills being tracked. Heard Nancy Wyman and lots of legislators speak to issues going on at statehouse such as Special Education costs and declining enrollment. After the meeting walked to Capitol and outside the legislators spoke. CAFE monitors legislation in Connecticut, the bills in process at the time, money available but flat now, a lot of legislation not getting through if there is money associated with it. Important that Boards get to know legislators so if have problems you have someone who will listen to go to.

Barry Wallet thanked Mike Cioe and Deborah Ostien for their article, stating it makes us proud to have the town reflected in this great example. The other members agreed.

Members stated pleased with the WESS contract and that the town and Boards work together.

MOTION: by Erika Wicewski, seconded by Mark Jones, to enter executive session at 8:56 p.m. to discuss Superintendent Evaluation and invite the Superintendent to join.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Board exited executive session at 9:25 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

Nichole Page
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