

WILLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2015
(Unofficial Until Board Approval)

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Vice Chairman Michelle Cunningham at the Town Office Building.

PRESENT: Herb Arico, Mark Jones, Michelle Cunningham, Ann Grosjean, Barry Wallett, Shawn Kowalyszyn, Superintendent David Harding

ABSENT: Erika Wiecenski

COMMUNICATIONS:

Superintendent Harding thanked Board members Barry Wallett, Mark Makuch, and Mark Jones for all their years, commitment, and the fun. He hopes they will not disappear completely and will come to some future meetings and continue to support the Board. Superintendent welcomed Shawn Kowalyszyn to the Board.

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

None

SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS:

Superintendent Harding stated that all items are on the agenda.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee met and reviewed the bills.

Herb Arico, Liaison for EastConn stated they met on October 27 and discussed the preschool grants, and reviewed the SBAC. The budget is in line and doing well financially. Member asked how many employees EastConn has with Herb replying about 500 spread over 16 different towns with about 7 or 8 locations. Other members commented that CREC is even larger.

TRANSFERS:

Superintendent presented a transfer for work done by EMCOR at Center School for making the heat in certain rooms work properly. EMCOR had to isolate steam, shut power, pipe in new valves and thermostats, check for leaks. The funds will be transferred from head custodial salary to CES maintenance for \$3,752.00. The salary line still has about \$30,000 and will continue to look at projects that come up.

MOTION: by Herb Arico, seconded by Ann Grosjean, to approve the transfer for \$3,752.00 from head custodial salary to CES maintenance as presented.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

Superintendent reviewed the non-lapsing fund policy details reminding the 1% of the budget not expended can be transferred to Board for use for capital or special education needs that come up such as out of district placements. Board can move to recommend to the BOF for up to a \$20,000 and if exceeds that amount it needs to go to town meeting. Superintendent explained the

need for \$79,000 which would require a town meeting. Last year there were two out of district placements budgeted and there are currently four and one is going to a 45 day diagnostic which could turn into another placement. There is a \$130,887 shortage in the out of district placement budget; the \$79,000 will cover a large portion. The rest the Superintendent will try to cover through other means as the year progresses. The non-lapsing fund helps with the MBR, as it is not a new appropriation and it does not change the bottom line. It will offset the out of district placement costs which the town has always said they would pay for if needed.

Board discussed due process, evaluations, PPT's, the change in number of out placements, the MBR and the State's changes to the calculations, the non-lapsing fund and the BOF going to a town meeting.

MOTION: by Barry Wallett, seconded by Herb Arico, to as per BOE Policy 3171, the Board of Education is forwarding a request to the Board of Finance for approval of the transfer of \$79,000 from the non-lapsing fund. According to the policy this transfer will require a town meeting.

VOTE: All in Favor
Motion Passed

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Herb Arico seconded by Mark Jones to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2015 Board Meeting.

VOTE: Yes: M. Cunningham, H. Arico, M. Jones, A. Grosjean,
Abstain: B. Wallett, S. Kowalyshyn
Motion Passed

Superintendent stated the State is now generating the school calendar which is delegated on a regional basis. There is little wiggle room on things able to be changed. All schools are now closed on Election Day even if the school is not used as a polling place in order to establish common professional development days. The October PD day will now fall on Election Day In November. State dictates when the school year starts and the vacation days. It is a compliance issue because it is now state law. The Board must still have 188 days with 182 student days and 6 teacher PD days.

Board discussed frustration with the State mandates, effect on professional development, training required and not enough time to complete all mandated training within the calendar year. Members asked for some items to be clarified on the calendar such as a key for the circled minimum days and correction of SD day labeling.

MOTION: by Michelle Cunningham, seconded by Shawn Kowalyshyn, to accept the school calendar for 2016-17 as presented.

VOTE: Yes: H. Arico, Michelle Cunningham
No: Barry Wallett, Shawn Kowalyshyn, Ann Grosjean
Abstain: M. Jones
Motion Failed

Subject will be revisited at future meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Superintendent stated he heard back from the State regarding the breakfast, lunch and milk pricing and they granted the waiver for this school year but to be mindful about becoming compliant by next year.

Superintendent provided update on the facilities stating he had received a quote and approved it for the concrete work on the steps at HMS to be completed. They need to be repaired and re-pointed. With the winter coming he does not want them to get worse. Unfortunately the vendor has not yet completed the work and he may have to find a different vendor.

Stated he met with Rovic, our cleaning product suppliers and they talked about a system of cleaning that puts all information in a database to coordinate workflow, training, OSHA requirements, and supplies needed. They discussed branching out with the town and library to join in on this program. They are investigating what it would cost and who could do that. The schools are going ahead with the program because it is not a cost to the schools.

Superintendent stated he would like to discuss the Board goals once the new members have been seated to see where they would like to go with it.

Superintendent presented the enrollment numbers in the format requested by the Board. The numbers have stabilized and he has sent out today for another 10 year projection.

Member stated Superintendent Harding and Selectman Mailhos were quoted in an article. The Board discussed statements regarding Board of Finance not being interested at this time in expending further funds to move forward with a building study.

Board discussed enrollment. Discussed class sizes, how to gain space for CES, and the budget. Superintendent instructed admin to look at each program and evaluate so a cost/benefit analysis for each program can be obtained and looked at. There will be presentations going forward to prioritize during budget season.

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

Christina Mailhos, First Selectman, thanked the members who are leaving and the Board for all they do stating they are a good cooperative board.

She stated there has been a lot of talk lately about the gun range and the property for sale. The townspeople have asked why the town is not buying the property. She said it is not something the Board of Selectman drive. Typically it goes to the town conservation committee first and they have grants and ideas to purchase property. Will consider and talk about it. Part of the land is developable through an abutter with access that the Town of Willington already owns. It would be more expensive for anyone else to develop and most likely one reason it has not already been sold and developed. The abutter can get at the property from the top which is a possible place to put a school or fire department since it is in the center of town. Fire departments both want additions and this is in center of town. Not sure what the steps are but BOE is not looking to build, but if were; she would direct you there. The lots go back many acres. The abutter property was purchased in early 90's with intent to build future school there but the area was not suited due to being gravel. It is able to have a road that can go to the other parcel of land though.

Members asked if grant monies still available. Selectman stated the DEP gives the funds to the towns to purchase conservation land and she is not sure if they would give the monies or not. The land would be subdivided for partial conservation but she does not know the specifics of it. The money spent already on attorneys is about \$40,000, surveys are already completed. The

town knows more about this parcel than any other land purchased. The State was supposed to have a report ready in May then in October be ready to comment but they have not even started yet. She does not see it happening in the foreseeable future. This could potentially leave the town hanging for years.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Members thanked Barry Wallett, Mark Jones and Mark Makuch for their service on the Board, appreciate their efforts and cooperativeness, and that they will be missed. Members thanked Nichole Page for her service as recording secretary and wished her well. Members welcomed Shawn Kowalyshyn to the Board.

Leaving members thanked Selectman Christina Mailhos for their beginnings on the Board and the Town of Willington, they were honored to be a part of it and it was great working with all the Board members.

Members stated so many people volunteer their time and things wouldn't function without all of them. They also stated that even though members are from different political parties the members could disagree and still walk out together and always kept in perspective that the what we do is for the children and we're here for them to make it the best education it can be.

Members reminded the Shakespeare play is coming up on November 20 and 21st and encourage people to attend stating they always do an excellent job and there will be a lot of alumni coming back as well.

Meeting adjourned at 8: 10 p.m.

Nichole Page
Recording Secretary