

WILLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2015  
(Unofficial Until Board Approval)

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairman Erika Wiecenski at the Town Office Building.

PRESENT: Erika Wiecenski, Ann Grosjean, Mark Jones, Barry Wallett, Michelle Cunningham, Herb Arico, Mark Makuch (arrived at 7:06), Superintendent David Harding

ABSENT: None

COMMUNICATIONS:

None

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

None

PRESENTATION:

HMS teacher, Pat Pinney, introduced some of the students that participated in the District and State History Day Contests.

Ana Peczuh showed her individual documentary titled *Shay's Rebellion: The Farmers' Revolt*. At the State competition, Ana placed 3rd in the run offs for the individual documentary category.

Alex Park and Richie Mailhos showed their group documentary titled *Hall Heritage: Stitching Together a Fabric of a Town*. At the State Competition they received a special award for "Outstanding Entry for use of materials and/or collections held in a Connecticut Archive Museum or Historical Society tied to a Connecticut Historic Site".

Griffin Ryan shared his group website titled *Carnegie and Frick: Forging a Legacy Set in Steel* created in partnership with Atticus Makuch.

Members asked questions and thanked Mrs. Pinney and the students for their presentations.

Amy Park thanked Mrs. Pinney for her dedication and countless hours staying with the students to work on these projects.

Pat Pinney replied there is no better learning than doing this kind of project. The students start in December or January and continue until March or April working on the projects.

Elaine C. stated she is working with the Millworks and will be holding a 3 day design group meeting in June and would like to show the documentary on Hall Heritage as an intro.

Liz Peczuh thanked Pat Pinney as well stating it is a wonderful opportunity for the students to stretch and grow as a person and academically.

Pat Pinney stated she has been involved with History Day for 20 years and when she first read about it she just knew she had to do it. The children learn so many different skills and are challenged by participating.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS:

Superintendent gave members a copy of the letter regarding the MBR and stated he will attend the May 21 Board of Finance meeting to formally request the required funds to bring us in compliance with the MBR requirement.



Superintendent presented a side letter agreement with the WESS bargaining unit to create a stipend position for a custodian at each school to act as the point person with regards to purchasing, maintenance, budgeting, dealing with vendors and other items. A job description of the stipend was also attached. This stipend would be retroactive for the 2014-15 school year. It is only in the absence of a district head custodian.

He explained this stipend was already added into the new WESS bargaining contract for future years but that the two custodians have been fulfilling these responsibilities for the past year in the absence of the district head custodian.

MOTION: by Ericka Wiecenski, seconded by Ann Grosjean, to approve the custodial stipend job description.

VOTE: All in Favor  
Motion Passed

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Herb Arico, to approve the side letter agreement between the Board of Education and the WESS Union for the custodial stipend for the 2014-15 school year.

VOTE: All in Favor  
Motion Passed

Superintendent Harding explained the five transfers. The first is for the custodial stipend side letter as discussed. The second transfer is for Custom Computers to correct the network issues at HMS and will allow the replacement of switches and the firewall. The third transfer is for teacher laptops to be leased because the current ones are causing issues with instruction. The laptops are past when they should have been replaced. Would like to try a lease agreement to ensure we do not fall behind with the equipment. It is a 3 year lease with warranty and the funds are coming out of the superintendent contractual items. The fourth transfer is for mulch needed at both schools to be in compliance with regards to the playgrounds. The fifth transfer is for special education funds to be transferred from outplacement tuition to transportation due to a change of nexus for a student.

MOTION: by Erika Wiecenski, seconded by Mark Makuch to accept all five transfers as presented.

VOTE: All in Favor  
Motion Passed

Superintendent Harding discussed the proposal for a non-lapsing account which would enable the Board to carry over up to 1% of the year's BOE budget in an account that will require BOF approval to access. He explained the benefit to this account is that in a situation like the BOE is in this year where we might need to request supplemental funds for a Special Education out placement from the town, it would allow the BOE to make an appropriation from this fund as opposed to the general fund. The difference is the money coming from the general fund would be an adjustment to the budget appropriation (which changes the MBR) while the appropriation from the non-lapsing fund would not impact the bottom line and therefore, not affect the MBR.

Board members read and discussed the policy and the statute regulating the policy including the parameters set for what the funds could be used for, how they can be used and who can authorize the use. Board reviewed the parameters, the accounts use as a tool, the future of accumulating

funds, and the request to the Board of Finance needed. Board decided that Superintendent Harding should attend the next Board of Finance meeting to request the non-lapsing fund and to add 1% into it. Board will review and revise the proposed policy once the Board of Finance has approved it.

Board reviewed the annual Healthy Food Certification Renewal.

MOTION: by Michelle Cunningham, seconded by Erika Wiecenski, to approve the Healthy Food Certification renewal as presented.

VOTE: All in Favor  
Motion Passed

Superintendent Harding explained the recommendation of the town treasurer, Tish Ignatowitz, to change the student activity account bank from First Niagra to United Bank to obtain a better quality of service. The current bank is not conducive to taking care of the accounts at HMS.

MOTION: By Mark Makuch, seconded by Herb Arico, to approve the transfer of the HMS student activity account from First Niagra Bank to United Bank.

VOTE: All in Favor  
Motion Passed

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Superintendent provided update on the Board goal stating he is meeting with the building inspector tomorrow to get a list to present to the Board regarding the property at HMS and to answer Board questions. He is looking at the narratives to eliminate items and will meet with Planning and Zoning as well and Barry Wallet is reviewing the numbers to look at.

Superintendent gave the budget update stating the budget passed.

Superintendent reported on facilities stating the EMCOR surveys are complete and he is pleased with the quality of work and now has information to guide the Board with regards to CIP and projects for the next several years. He reviewed a book from EMCOR for the proposal of a maintenance contract and recommended the Board enter into a service contract with them to manage the boilers, HVAC and temperature control system (pneumatics).

#### PRESENT TO SPEAK:

Erika Wiecenski stated that a Board member requested a meeting workshop for special education matters. She asked Mark Makuch if there were any specific items that needed to be discussed. Mark replied that the basic concern is that the Board only knows enough to not be happy with how the last litigation went but it brings questions to mind regarding strategy, advice, representation, and precedence being set. Board decided an executive session should be added to the next meeting agenda to discuss litigation.

#### BOARD COMMENTS:

Members thanked Pat Pinney and the students for the great job on the presentations and for their accomplishments at the History Day Competitions and appreciated the opportunity to see the projects. Members commented on the project based learning and how they would like more of that type of beneficial learning to be available to all students. Members commended Superintendent Harding for the transfers of funds from the superintendent

contractual accounts for the leasing of the teacher laptops. Members noted that the grade 8 graduation ceremony will be held on June 18, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 9: 00 p.m.

Nichole Page  
Recording Secretary