

WILLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2009  
revised 1.23.2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by chairman Mark Makuch at the Town Office Building.

PRESENT: Mark Makuch, Herb Arico, Teri Gareau, Christina Mailhos, Christine Psathas  
Laurie Semprebon, David Tharp, Superintendent David Harding

COMMUNICATIONS:

Superintendent Harding shared a copy of the letter to all boards from the chairman of the Board of Finance for the town of Willington.

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

None

PRESENTATION:

Superintendent Harding discussed the preliminary budget for next year giving a clarification on what a zero percent increase means along with an overview and explanation of expected percentage decreases and increases in different areas.

Board commented and asked questions. Superintendent Harding stated at this time the projected budget is around a 1.5% increase and he recommends staying at this percentage so as not to impact any more programs if possible and he asks for the people's support on this. He will hold a parent meeting to discuss the budget further on January 21, 2009 at Hall Memorial School Library at 6:30pm.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Harding reported on the reading program update, both schools are holding training this month on the Blue Ribbon assessment program purchased last month, he attended the training at HMS today and it was well received. The curriculum committee met with CREC and were impressed. CREC will come to Willington with their developed curriculum plans and customize them for our needs.

A meeting to discuss/approve the CES water project will be held at 7pm on January 22, 2009 at the Town Hall.

Superintendent Harding noted his concerns that as we head into a difficult budget season to remember that it is important that we are diplomatic, respectful and thoughtful in our interactions with the other boards and the public.

Superintendent Harding reported on the Region #19 regionalization discussion with a state attorney, Ron Harris who presented on the process and what is involved to regionalize. He summarized a few key points to the meeting, i.e. it takes three to four years to accomplish the regionalization process, the three town's properties would have to be deeded to the region, then all the towns must purchase the properties, all schools would have to be made equitable meaning that one school cannot have more programs offered than any of the others. The meeting concluded with the decision to form an ad-hoc committee to look into whether or not a state sanctioned committee to regionalize should be formed.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Herb Arico, seconded by Teri Gareau, to approve the minutes of

December 9, 2008.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

MOTION: by Christina Mailhos, seconded by Dave Tharp, to approve the review of payment of bills.

VOTE: Yes: Herb Arico, Christina Mailhos, Mark Makuch, Christine Psathas, Laurie Semprebon, David Tharp  
Abstain: Teri Gareau

Motion Passes

Board discussed the "review of payment of bills" as an on-going agenda item.

MOTION: by Laurie Semprebon, seconded by Mark Makuch, to no longer approve the review of the payment of bills and leave that to the finance committee to share in their reports.

VOTE: Yes: Laurie Semprebon, David Tharp, Mark Makuch, Teri Gareau, Christina Mailhos, Christine Psathas  
Abstain: Herb Arico

Motion Passes

Superintendent reported on transfers of \$2,000 from Health Insurance to Custodian Supplies, \$2000 from Health Insurance to Capitol Outlay, and \$13,000 from Health Insurance to Transportation to be approved.

MOTION: by Herb Arico, seconded by David Tharp, to approve the three transfers from the health insurance account for the items listed by the Superintendent totaling \$17,000.00.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

Superintendent Harding read letters of retirement from fourth grade teachers Penelope Fox and Ron Ormiston.

MOTION: by Herb Arico, seconded by Laurie Semprebon, to accept the retirements of Penelope Fox and Ron Ormiston.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

Superintendent Harding reviewed the packet from the C.S.D.E. regarding No Child Left Behind District and School Reports. The full report will be available online this month.

Board discussed first reading of Policy 3160 Business and Non-Instructional Operations, Transfer of Funds and requested that members please send any questions or comments before the next meeting.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS:

EastConn Executive committee will meet the last Tuesday of the Month.

Herb Arico, liaison for Charter Advisory Board reported the committee will meet next week.

Finance Committee keeping tabs on budget progress and will meet in near future with Superintendent.

Herb Arico, member of Region 19 BOE, reported facilities has a referendum vote on February 10, 2009 regarding the athletic project for the track and fields for approximately \$2.5 million. Health and Safety Committee will meet on February 4, 2009.

Curriculum committee met with CREC and thinks things are going well, people are interested in doing things and efficient, open minded and pragmatic, will meet again soon.

Mark Makuch met with Board of Finance Chair on the budget and he met with other region Board Chairs along with area Superintendents and a transportation expert from the university to discuss the sharing of high school transportation. The university will be doing a class project to look into benefits of sharing the transportation for Region 19.

Transportation Committee has not met.

Policy Committee will be handing out a packet next week which will be the first second draft to be recommended for adoption. Requests Board read and send any questions to them before the next meeting to speed up the process.

MOTION: by Mark Makuch, seconded by David Tharp, that the Board moves the Board Comments between #8 and #9 on the Agenda for tonight.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

#### PRESENT TO SPEAK:

Tammy Dolce asked for clarification on a board members question regarding para's for the fourth grade in the budget during the Superintendent's presentation. She then commented that in her opinion the new budget should include a full time para to float amongst fourth grade classes, assisting teachers, to prevent time being taken away from the other students in the classes.

Laura Gilbert stated that E.O. Smith Superintendent Bruce Silva will be at the PTA meeting on Thursday to do a presentation on the upcoming referendum vote for the proposed athletic facility renovation at E.O. Smith.

#### BOARD COMMENTS:

Board commented on some worries about the effects of regionalization, attended the HMS Geography Bee and thought it was neat, efficient, and was surprised by the great amount of student spirit and support for participants, attended the HMS concert in December it was nice and happy to see the concert was split to allow the ensembles to play, thanked Superintendent Harding for his efforts of putting together a reasonable budget and encourages the Superintendent to continue to maintain small/reasonable class sizes in the early years especially. Superintendent Harding thanked the administration and staff in helping him to put together the budget. Board commented about Region 19 Boards' responsibility to maintain the facilities and athletic programs for the students and understands that they have been working hard to have a viable program and will continue the process even in these difficult times. The Board reminded members of the public who are concerned about the school budget and the effect of increased high school costs on it that they have the right to vote on all these issues. The high school's budget and requests for additional money for the athletic fields are only requests and concerned members of the public should remember to vote on those requests.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION:

MOTION: by Laurie Semprebon, seconded by Herb Arico, to enter into executive session at 8:28 p.m. to discuss pending litigation and invite Superintendent Harding to join.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

Board moved out of executive session at 9:08 p.m.  
Meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Nichole Page  
Recording Secretary