

WILLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2010
(Unofficial Until Board Approval)

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by chairman Mark Makuch at the Town Office Building.

PRESENT: Mark Makuch, Herb Arico, Laurie Semprebon, Leo Mercado, Erika Wiecenski, Barry Wallett, Mark Jones, Superintendent David Harding

COMMUNICATIONS:

None

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

None

PRESENTATION:

Superintendent Harding presented and overview of the proposed budget for 2010-2011. Questions and answers along with some discussion took place including handout of an article from the Courant.com regarding health insurance increases in Connecticut.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Superintendent Harding passed around a copy of a letter from the Board of Finance to all boards. He spoke about the retreat going well and pleased he was able to spend time talking with the new members.

Superintendent Harding reported that he declined to sign Willington up for the Race to Top Grant due to the small amount of funding available to the town considering the amount of record keeping needed and the clause regarding compliance with future unspecified regulations established by the Department of Education.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee met and reviewed the bills.

Transportation Committee met on December 22, 2009 and reviewed the bids for the bus contracts making a recommendation to the board to approve the bid from M & J Bus Company which had the best prices and references.

Herb Arico, Liaison for EastConn Executive Committee, Building Committee met and approved addition and renovation for administration offices for approximately 3 million dollars.

Herb Arico, Liaison for Charter Communications Advisory Committee will meet next Tuesday at Eastern Connecticut State University.

Herb Arico, Member of Region 19 Board of Education, met today on Race to the Top Grant and declined to participate, working on the budget weekly, and Building Committee still operating on new track plans.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: by Herb Arico, seconded by Laurie Semprebon, to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2009 Board Meeting with corrections as noted.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

Board reviewed and discussed the December 1, 2009 minutes of the joint meeting of Boards of Selectmen, Finance and Education. Members are asked to get any feedback in before Thursday.

Board discussed transfers of related services to outplacement and from health insurance for line items to be pre-purchased for next year.

MOTION: by Laurie Semprebon, seconded by Herb Arico to approve the transfers of \$22,787.00 from Related Services to Outplacements and from Health Insurance for line items totaling \$13,437.00 as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

Board discussed the transportation contract bids.

MOTION: by Mark Makuch, seconded by Laurie Semprebon to award the transportation contract to M&J Bus Company per transportation committee's recommendation.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

Board discussed the Willington Public Schools proposed 2010-2011 Budget scheduling a special meeting for a workshop for next Tuesday, January 19, 2010 at 7pm at Center School with members asked to send advance thoughts to Superintendent Harding.

OLD BUSINESS:

Board discussed District Improvement Plan.

MOTION: by Barry Wallett, seconded by Laurie Semprebon to approve the District Improvement Plan as presented.

VOTE: Unanimous in Favor

PRESENT TO SPEAK:

Eric Britschock, CES parent, asked about the reduced amount of teachers with some that travel from school to school, if they have an accident who incurs the cost?

Christina Mailhos, First Selectman, informed about two new liaison opportunities for the town's Energy Advisory Committee and the Facility and Safety Committee, requesting anyone interested to contact her.

Connie Wilde, CES first grade teacher, was concerned about the art program stating her respect for both teachers but did not see how it can continue and not be hurt by proposed budget cut.

Christine Psathas, former Board Member, congratulated newest Board members for making commitment to board with hopes they enjoy their tenure as she did on a well organized, cohesive, and hardest working board in town.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Board thanked the superintendent, administration, staff and teachers for all their hard work on this difficult budget process appreciating all their efforts making these tough decisions and the transportation committee for work on the new bus contract.

Board members attended the holiday concert at HMS with positive statements about performance and negative statements about some of the student performer's attire.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Nichole Page
Recording Secretary