

**Willington Board of Education**  
**December 11, 2018 7:00 p.m.**  
**Town Office Building, Lower Level Meeting Room**

Audio Recording: no

Notes Taken: yes

**Members Present:**

Herb Arico

Tracey Anderson

Chiara Bambara

Michelle Doucette Cunningham

Ann Grosjean

Elena Testa

Stephanie Summers

Also present: Superintendent of Schools Phil Stevens

1. **Call to Order:** M. Doucette Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. She noted that due to technical difficulties there will be no audio recording of the meeting.
2. **Present to Speak:** None
3. **Communications:** Superintendent Stevens shared that he received an email from a former student who is currently a Freshman at Kent. The email was thanking teachers for a great experience in the Willington Public Schools.
4. **Board of Education Chairman's Report:** Nothing to report.
5. **Superintendent Reports**
  - A. **Superintendent's Awards Dinner:** Connor McCaughey and Alivia Tolley were recognized for their leadership and academic achievements.
  - B. **School Visits January:** The members of the board of education will be going on site visits to both of the schools.
  - C. **Security Grant Award and New Application:** Willington was awarded the security grant that J. Jacoby applied for at the rate of 60% reimbursement. The majority of that grant was for exterior doors at HMS. P. Stevens just applied for another round of the security grant for security cameras, doors and locks, portable radios and chargers, and knox box upgrades. If the grant is received, the money must be spent on school security related items.
  - D. **Teacher Evaluation Plan:** P. Stevens is working with the administrators and union to improve the teacher evaluation plan. Once the changes are made the Board of Education will see the plan before it is submitted to the state.
6. **Financial Report:** This is a very tight budget. P. Stevens may recommend considering a budget freeze, to be discussed at the next Board of Education meeting. Special education is

tight and the department may need additional funding. Supply related spending can be held. Any items critical to instruction will still be purchased. Considering the freeze in order to try to avoid going back to the town to ask for more money. M. Doucette Cunningham states that the schools are one emergency away from having to go back to the town to ask for more money.

**7. Committee Reports**

Finance Committee: H. Arico reported that he signed off on bills.

**8. New Business**

**A. Approve minutes of November 13, 2018 Meeting**

H. Arico made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2018 meeting as written. Motion seconded by E. Testa.

<b>VOTE:</b>	Yes	No	Abstain
Herb Arico	--X--	----	----
Tracey Anderson	--X--	----	----
Chiara Bambara	--X--	----	----
Michelle Doucette Cunningham	--X--	----	----
Ann Grosjean	--X--	----	----
Stephanie Summers	-----	----	--X--
Elena Testa	--X--	----	----

Motion passes.

**B. Approve minutes of December 3, 2018 Special Meeting**

T. Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2018 special meeting. Motion seconded by C. Bambara.

<b>VOTE:</b>	Yes	No	Abstain
Herb Arico	--X--	----	----
Tracey Anderson	--X--	----	----
Chiara Bambara	--X--	----	----
Michelle Doucette Cunningham	--X--	----	----
Ann Grosjean	----	----	--X--
Stephanie Summers	--X----	----	----
Elena Testa	--X--	----	----

Motion passes.

**C. Review and Assign BOE Committees**

**Finance Committee:** H. Arico, C. Bambara, and S. Summers with M. Doucette Cunningham as alternate

**Curriculum and Instruction:** C. Bambara, E. Testa, and T. Anderson with A. Grosjean as alternate

**Policy:** A. Grosjean, M. Doucette Cunningham, and E. Testa with S. Summers as alternate

E. Testa and A. Grosjean will also be working on contracts.

**D. Approve BOE 13 Month Meeting Calendar**

The proposed BOE meeting schedule is the second Tuesday of every month with the exception of April.

H. Arico made a motion to approve the 13 month BOE calendar as presented. A. Grosjean seconded the motion.

<b>VOTE:</b>	Yes	No	Abstain
Herb Arico	--X--	----	----
Tracey Anderson	--X--	----	----
Chiara Bambara	--X--	----	----
Michelle Doucette Cunningham	--X--	----	----
Ann Grosjean	-X---	----	----
Stephanie Summers	--X----	----	----
Elena Testa	--X--	----	----

Motion passes.

**E. Approve BOE Budget Workshop Dates.**

S. Summers made a motion to approve the BOE Budget Workshop dates as presented. E. Testa seconded the motion.

<b>VOTE:</b>	Yes	No	Abstain
Herb Arico	--X--	----	----
Tracey Anderson	--X--	----	----
Chiara Bambara	--X--	----	----
Michelle Doucette Cunningham	--X--	----	----
Ann Grosjean	-X---	----	----
Stephanie Summers	--X----	----	----
Elena Testa	--X--	----	----

Motion passes.

**9. Old Business**

**A. Review draft 2019-2020 School Calendar**

P. Stevens shared that legally students can go to school on holidays providing that the school does an educational program, excluding December and January holidays. The proposed calendar shows students going to school on Veterans Day. The students would do a program to learn about the importance of the day. November is a choppy month; going to school on

Veterans Day would provide more consistency. It will also be meaningful to students to go to school on that day.

C. Bambara shared that in her experience, veterans like to come into the school to be honored. Its meaningful for both the veterans and the students to have school with a special program on Veterans Day.

H. Arico feels strongly that Veterans Day should be a day off for students. The education can be provided on another day. He feels that the importance of the holiday is downplayed by a short assembly.

Two options for staff development include October 11th, which would be a half day for students and a half professional development day, or May 22nd. P. Stevens recommends October 11th. He also noted that if school is held on Veterans Day, they would have to negotiate with on of the unions.

C. Bamabra suggested looking at doing staff development on Columbus Day and having students go to school on the following Tuesday in order to retain Veterans Day as a day off without extending the school year.

S. Summers suggested that it may be easier to take Veterans Day away as a holiday on a year that it does not create a long weekend. It might be easier on families if we wait until next year to make the change.

P. Stevens will share the board's feedback with the unions and get their feedback. The calendar will be discussed again at the January meeting.

## **B. Capital Improvement Projects**

P. Stevens shared a proposed five year CIP plan with the Board. The plan presents the CIP to be done at both schools, cost information, priority level, and proposed year. P. Stevens walked the Board through each of the projects with their rationale.

The year 18-19 projects have already been approved in the CIP. The money stays there until the project is complete. The CIP for future years may be changed or re-evaluated. Grant reimbursement amounts were shown for applicable proposed CIP projects.

High priority items include HMS roof, CES heating project, district phone system, HMS security cameras, and CES fiber optic cable.

The board discussed the roof project in more detail, including the bid process, the reimbursement process, the estimated cost, and potential economies of scale. There is no way to guarantee a better price for doing both roof projects at the same time. The roofs could be done in sections over several years; it would increase the cost of engineer and architect plans. There was some concern over investing money in the school buildings before a decision is made on the future of the buildings. P. Stevens explained that timing wise, the roofing projects would not be started due to the state bid process until after a decision was made on the future of the buildings. Even if all of the projects were approved and completed, they would not be ideal instructional spaces. There are a lot of other projects that also need to be completed that do not belong on the CIP list.

S. Summers would like to move the HMS Front Entrance Repairs to medium priority and move it up a year in the timeline.

E. Testa shared that she has too many questions about the roof pricing and the facility before she can support the proposed CIP projects. She wants a decision about the facilities before any money is spent on the buildings. Although the projects are important, she can only support spending money on projects that can be taken to another building.

M. Doucette Cunningham made a motion to accept the proposed CIP priority map with a change in the CES heating project cost to reflect the 62,000 that was already approved. S. Summers seconded the motion and offered a friendly amendment, to list the HMS front entrance project as medium priority in year 2. M. Doucette Cunningham accepted the friendly amendment.

The board discussed the cost of the projects, possible ways that might make the roof project less expensive, and the purpose of the CIP priority map.

E. Testa made a motion to approve only the HMS security cameras and the phone systems for presentation to the CIP committee. H. Arico seconded the motion.

S. Summers shared that the CIP priority map should be viewed as a road map; it is not binding in terms of real spending. She thinks it is valuable to show the CIP committee the needs of the school buildings. Removing all of the other elements from the CIP plan would leave the town without a clear understanding of the issues.

Vote- motion to approve only the HMS security cameras and the phone systems for presentation to the CIP committee:

<b>VOTE:</b>	Yes	No	Abstain
Herb Arico	----	-X----	----
Tracey Anderson	----	-X----	----
Chiara Bambara	----	-X----	----
Michelle Doucette Cunningham	----	-X----	----
Ann Grosjean	----	--X--	----
Stephanie Summers	-----	--X--	----
Elena Testa	--X--	----	----

Motion does not pass.

Vote- motion to approve the proposed CIP priority map the following amendments: change the cost of the CES heating project to reflect the 62 thousand that was already approved and list the HMS front entrance as a project of medium priority in year 2.

<b>VOTE:</b>	Yes	No	Abstain
Herb Arico	----	----	--X--
Tracey Anderson	--X--	----	----

Chiara Bambara	--X--	----	----
Michelle Doucette Cunningham	--X--	----	----
Ann Grosjean	-X----	----	----
Stephanie Summers	--X-----	----	----
Elena Testa	----	--X--	----

**10. Present to Speak**

Mike Cioe, HMS teacher, as co-president of the teacher’s union thanked Phil for including them in the teacher evaluation process. As a teacher, invited the BOE members to attend the pep rally and winter concert.

**11. Board Comments:**

Herb Arico- Congratulate Holly on her retirement. She has done a great job. Thanks for Phil for presenting budget information and for work on the CIP. He enjoyed having the students present to hear about their accomplishments. Would like to see HMS sign spruced up. He would also like to see the updated curriculum online and request a social studies textbook.

Tracey Anderson- Reiterated thanks, appreciates the ability of the board to have heated discussion and still end on a positive notes.

Chiara Bambara- Thanked Phil and collaborators for their work. Thanked Herb and Stephanie for sharing their views.

Michelle Doucette Cunningham- Congratulate Connor and Alivia on their accomplishments. Apologize to Herb for interrupting.

Ann Grosjean- Congratulate Holly on her retirement.

Elena Testa- Thanks to Phil for his hard work.

Stephanie Summers- Appreciates the preparation that Phil did to prepare for a lively discussion. Values the learning experience.

**12. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:40pm

Respectfully submitted,  
 Bekah Rupert  
 Recording Secretary