

WILLINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

October 11, 2022

Virtual Meeting: Zoom

7:00 p.m.

Minutes

[Zoom Recorded](#)

Members Present (all present remotely through Zoom)

Michelle Doucette Cunningham - Chair

Herb Arico- Secretary

Ann Grosjean- Vice-Chair

Tracey Anderson

Donna Cook

Briana Ross

Laura Rodriguez

Also Present

Phil Stevens, Superintendent of Schools, members of the public.

1. **Call to order**

Chair Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Cunningham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Present to speak**

Nicholas Tella, 49 Mirtl Road, inquired about the curriculum and the availability. He also voiced his concerns regarding the school building project and the reimbursement percentages.

4. **Chairman's report**

Chair Cunningham wanted to remind her colleagues about the CABA conference that is coming up in November. Also, she discussed Covid cases still being very present in the community so they will be continuing their meetings virtually on zoom for a little longer.

5. **Communications**

None.

6. **Superintendent Report**

a. General enrollment

Superintendent Stevens discussed the professional development plan, his meetings with other Superintendents in the region, data that has shown how students transition to E.O. Smith from Hall Memorial School, COVID cases leveling off, and that they are moving forward with Rosetta Stone for HMS World Language. He also discussed a "phishing" audit that took place as part of their cyber security upgrade.

b. Enrollment

Superintendent Stevens discussed how many students are currently enrolled in Willington Schools, a total of 400.

H. Arico inquired about the projection numbers versus the actual enrollment.

c. Curriculum calendar

Superintendent Stevens shared a chart, which showed in detail the writing and approval schedule.

The board discussed project-based learning and how it would be implemented. They also discussed the chart in detail- the dates, the development, adoption, and implementation/revision.

d. BOE Capital Improvement Plan

Superintendent Stevens shared a chart of what projects are still needed and when they should be completed. But he discussed how he felt they should wait on some of them until they know what the building committee and town decide about the building project.

The board discussed the chart in detail such as specific items they had concerns about, what the dates meant and represented, and prioritizing safety items first.

e. ARPA requests

Superintendent Stevens shared that a parent had mentioned that students should benefit from the COVID funds as they had been through a lot as well. He discussed a few requests that he had. The first was having Center School playground rubberized surfacing. The second was bringing in some outside groups to have workshops or assemblies. The third was for recess supplies with help from students identifying items for purchase. Lastly, having a book vending machine.

The board agreed with Superintendent Stevens and thought this was a great idea. They discussed the options presented and tried to prioritize. It was also suggested to add more field trips.

f. Staffing

Superintendent Stevens discussed changes in the staffing: Deanna Vokoun, paraeducator resigned for a position that more closely matched her job goals; hired Sarah Jean as a paraprofessional.

7. Financial Report

a. October 2022 financial report

Attachment #1

Superintendent Stevens shared the October financial report. He shared what programs had a significant difference from last month to this month.

b. 2021-2022 end-of-year financial report before transfers

Attachment #2

Superintendent Stevens shared what the budget looked like at the end of the school year and the funds expended in each program.

c. 2021-2022 end-of-year budget transfers

Attachment #3

Superintendent Stevens shared budget transfer requests and explained where the money is needed and how it would be used.

D. Cook moved to transfer \$50,471 from program 03 Special Education Prek-8 to Program 01 Center School Elementary School K-4. Also, \$50,150 from Program 03 to Program 07 Utilities, and \$57,381 from Program 10 Fringe Benefits to Program 09 Systemwide Support.

L. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

7 yes, motion passes unanimously.

d. 2021-2022 end-of-year financial report after transfers

Attachment #4

Superintendent Stevens stated that from what he shared above the board can see where he got the 0% balance in particular programs after the transfers.

8. New Business

a. Approve minutes of September 13, 2022 meeting

Attachment #5

b. Approve minutes of September 19, 2022 special meeting

T. Anderson moved to approve the regular meeting minutes from September 13, 2022 and the special meeting minutes from September 19, 2022.

B. Ross seconded the motion.

D. Cook had a correction on the special meeting minutes #6 which had her present however she was absent.

7 yes, motion passes unanimously.

c. Non-lapsing fund request to Board of Finance

Superintendent Stevens shared and explained a chart with their current funds. He discussed what he thought they should request from the board of finance.

The board inquired for more details and the reasoning. They also discussed the amount, what programs could be covered and what money would be put into the account.

D. Cook moved to request \$105,000 be transferred from the Willington Board of Education operating fund into the Willington Board of Education non-lapsing fund.

H. Arico seconded the motion.

Friendly amendment that the funds come from the Willington Board of Education operating fund from last school year- 2021-2022.

D. Cook accepted the friendly amendment.

7 yes, motion passes unanimously.

d. 2023-2026 Administrator Contract

Superintendent Stevens discussed that negotiations typically come down to salary and insurance requests. He explained what the committee was recommending/requesting for their contract in detail.

D. Cook moved to accept the 2023-2026 administrator contract, as negotiated.

B. Ross seconded the motion.

7 yes, motion passes unanimously.

9. **Old Business**

a. Afterschool program cost

Superintendent Stevens discussed in detail the costs of the afterschool program. He also stated that using the funds from the non-lapsing account would be the right account to help pay for this program.

The board discussed how this would help families.

D. Cook moved that they pay for the after-school program for the days that the teacher education out of the non-lapsing funds. The maximum amount being \$5,200.

H. Arico seconded the motion.

7 yes, motion passes unanimously.

b. Dress Code policy #5132

Superintendent Stevens discussed another draft of the policy and questions that came up while reviewing it.

The board discussed in detail the wording and the meaning of portions of the updated policy.

D. Cook moved to accept the dress code policy as Superintendent Stevens amended it to remove point 2.

L. Rodriguez seconded the motion.

Vote:	Yes	No	Abstain
H. Arico			x
M. Cunningham	x		
D.Cook	x		
T. Anderson	x		
A.Grosjean	x		
B. Ross	x		
L. Rodriguez	x		

6 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain, motion passes.

c. Educational specifications

Superintendent Stevens discussed the updated educational specifications. He shared the summary square footage. He shared info regarding his visit with the state. He also explained the changes he made and why, and that a draft should be ready to vote on at the next meeting.

Chair Cunningham explained that the rates were revised last week and remain about the same. They went down slightly .7%. She explained the rate and how it varies from town to town.

The board discussed the different items that go into the educational specifications. This included ventilation, insulation, plumbing, internet, phone system, security, fire alarm, emergency generator, and so on. They also discussed what the maximum square footage could be for the state to reimburse them and space waivers as an option.

10. **Present to Speak**

Nicholas Tella, 49 Mirtl Road, thanked the Board for this portion of the meeting being done tonight and not pushed into a special meeting. He also discussed the overage of square footage. He expressed frustration with the meetings being hybrid, especially blaming COVID for it. He asked the Board about air testing and water testing at the schools. He also expressed concern about spending \$90,000 on the playground for rubber surfacing. He discussed the dress code and his personal views on portions of the policy.

Arthur Christensen, 14 Birch Meadow Lane, thanked the board for covering the afterschool program during the teacher days. He also supported the rubber coating for the playground and found it would be very beneficial for the students. He also had a friendly suggestion about moving the CAT 7 cable and why it would be beneficial.

11. **Board Comment**

H. Arico stated he is looking forward to getting a copy of the ed specs. He also inquired for a copy of the principal funds at Hall School and a copy of the stipends for the athletic program, activities, clubs, and field trips.

L. Rodriguez stated she is excited about the convention in November. She wanted to wish a farewell to the staff that were leaving and welcomed the new staff. She wanted to thank everyone for such an efficient meeting and thanks to the folks that came and voiced their opinion.

B. Ross wanted to thank D. Cook for giving her such a good example of how to make a motion correctly. She also discussed how she attended curriculum night at Hall School as a parent, and how nice it was to be all together again. The presentations were wonderful and the new teachers did a great job and they fit right in with the school community. She suggested to other families to try and attend these types of events as it is a great way to learn what their students are doing in school.

T. Anderson agreed with everything that everyone already said.

D. Cook stated she wanted to be provided with the vocabulary lists. She still would prefer hybrid meetings. She also stated that the sex education program needs to be available for parents and the parents should be able to opt-out if they choose to. She also stated she would like to receive test results, such as SBAC and iReady. She stated it was important for them to see these results and be presented at a meeting. She then shared a quote: "If you want to make the world a better

place, go home and love your family.”

Chair Cunningham thanked the board for being so efficient. She knows it is hard to keep these meetings under three hours. She explained she knows how important it is to add items to the agenda but they are going to manage it monthly. She suggested having a special meeting where the community can be involved. The budget process begins only in a few months. She wanted everyone to be aware the more you ask for the longer these meetings will become and the more likely there will be more special meetings. They are trying to balance all the different competing priorities and get everything done in 2.5 hours.

12. **Adjournment**

L. Rodriguez made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 pm.

D. Cook seconded the motion.

6 Yes Motion passes, unanimously

Nicole Fusco
Recording Secretary

Next regular meeting November 8, 2022