

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Education
Willow Springs Consolidated School District No. 108
Tuesday, July 28, 2020
Willow Springs School Gym**

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:33 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

Administration: Superintendent Patrick & Principal Smuda

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President, Mary Ellen Weeg.

Acceptance of the Superintendent's Agenda

The superintendent recommends the approval of the Superintendent's Agenda.

Motion 21-001 by McSweeney, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the superintendent's Agenda.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

Public Comment

Three Teachers, Terri Baricovich, Jill Craig & Kim Cahill spoke regarding why they think starting the school year with Remote Learning will be beneficial for all.

Community members are invited to share their questions, comments or concerns with the school Board. When speaking, citizens should state their name and address for the record and limit their presentation to three minutes. All comments are a matter of public record and as such will be documented and recorded. Where possible, the Board will answer factual questions immediately. A written response may be provided when information is not available. If a response would involve discussion of board policy or decisions which might be of interest to citizens not present at the meeting, the Board may place the item on a future meeting agenda.

Additionally, board policy 2:230 permits the Board President to shorten a person's opportunity to speak. "The President may also deny the opportunity to speak to a person who has previously addressed the Board on the same subject." (2:230)

No community members present. Teachers: Megan Henderson; Elena Delahera; Terri Baricovich; Laura Baricovich; Jill Craig; Stephanie Kelch; Ray Weissenstein; Deanna Swicionis; Joy Tristano; Jadda Castaneda; Ann Musto; Kim Cahill; Michaele Strauch; Jason Noble; Michelle VonBank; Emily Moses; Meghan Litko; Dena Brockob; Jaclyn Dondlinger and Custodian Mary Sheehan.

Valerie Wacker took the minutes.

Minutes

A copy of the June 30, 2020 regular meeting minutes were included in the packet.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting for June 30, 2020.

Motion 21-002 by Weeg, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting for June 30, 2020.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

Financial Report

The auditor's report for the month of June was in the packet. Nick Cavalier from Baker Tilly was unable to attend the meeting due to Baker Tilly policy about attending meetings in person but he shares:

He noticed that property tax revenue on a cash basis was lower than budgeted across all funds. This could be due to increased refunds, we will look at this for external reporting purposes and additional revenues may need to be "accrued" into FY 2020 after we do the property tax analysis. He knows that the TTO mentioned that the District ended the year with a tax liability, which basically means more refunds were issued by the County than tax collections at the end of June.

The decreased collection in taxes on a cash basis did not have as significant of an impact on FY 2020 ending fund balances due to some rather large under budget line items. Most notable to him is special education tuition costs, purchased services in the O&M Fund and Transportation Costs. They will be diligent in reviewing the July and August check registers for any expenditures that may need to be "accrued" back to FY 2020.

Overall the District ending fund balance as of June 30, 2020 was higher than the starting position for fiscal year 2020. Let's say \$6.1M across all funds start of the year, compared to \$6.3M end of the year. It is important to note that the District expended approximately \$200K in the Capital Projects Fund as well during the year. (all rounded figures)

He is not sure how much of this will wash out once they give consideration to accrual adjustments and things are still subject to change until these analysis are completed. Historically Accounts Payable accrual have not been material due to the purchasing cycle at the District, however this may have changed due to COVID response.

Overall the message he sees here is that the District's financial position at the end of fiscal year 2020 continues to be strong and well prepared to manage the impacts that COVID may bring in FY 2021 regarding decreased revenue collections and likely increased costs attributable to the new learning environment.

Consent Agenda

The superintendent recommends the approval of the consent agenda.

Motion 21-003 by Hawkins, seconded by Weeg as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the consent agenda.

Consent #1

The superintendent recommends the approval of the payroll and the approval of the bills in the amount of \$158,409.90 (8A-1-2), the reimbursement of the Imprest Fund in the amount of \$1,394.11 (8B) and approval of the Activity Fund balance of \$49,570.24 (8C) for the month of July 2020.

Consent #2

The superintendent recommends the approval of the financial report for the month of June 2020. Fund balances: Educational: \$3,643,478; Operations & Maintenance: \$302,940; Debt Service: \$604,799; Transportation: \$489,205; IMRF: \$233,057; Capital Projects: 394,652; Working Cash: \$533,315; Tort: \$78,299; and Fire Prevention & Life Safety \$4.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

Notices and Communications

The superintendent presented the following news articles:

A-a. 0 journal articles related to National and Illinois Education Issues at this time.

A-b. 0 Newspaper and related articles related to

A-c. 0 Newspaper and related articles related to early childhood education.

Item 9B Legislative/SCOPE report: 4 Items.

There was a brief update of what SCOPE is focusing on this summer: COVID-19.

Item 9C State Board of Education Correspondence: 0 Items.

Item 9D Illinois Association of School Boards Correspondence: 0 Items.

Item 9E AERO Correspondence items: 0 Items.

Item 9F EBC Health Insurance Co-op Correspondence items: 0 Items.

Item 9G Village of Willow Springs Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 9H County Clerk Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 9I Intermediate Service Center Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 9J Township Treasurer Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 9K

Superintendent Correspondence Received: 1 item.

1. An introduction letter from Argo's interim superintendent

Superintendent Correspondence Sent: 0 items.

Item 9K-A Freedom of Information Act Requests and Notices 0 items.

Special Education

Micki Bohac reported:

AERO is going out for the 25 million Bonds. The interest is low right now so it is a good time to get them.

They are moving from Mentia to CPI Training.

Principal's Report

Principal Smuda reported:

Superintendent, Principal and Mrs. Litko have been working tirelessly finalizing the Blended Learning Plan and Remote Learning Plan. They are fully prepared with both plans. The principal Made changes several times to the schedules but believes they are finally done.

This past week, the principal hosted 3 parent meetings that lasted 45 minutes – 1 hour informing parents of our re-opening plans. She showed a lot of photos and had a lot of positive response.

On Monday, she will host another meeting in Spanish, with the help of Carina. One objective is to give some answers to many of the questions. The principal felt confident in communicating that the District is committed to the CDC guidelines and is reducing the risk as much as possible.

Online registration was a huge success! It provided convenience for the returning families as well as ease to paying with a credit card. For new families, the principal asked them to register in person because she wanted to personally meet them.

Because of the success of the online registration, we cancelled late registration! There are still 17 students not registered and we've been frequently calling them. She was unable to contact 6 of them.

Through the registration questions, we discovered 5 families stating they have no internet service. The principal found a few solutions through the Justice Library and communicated with all of the families. The Justice Library usually turns off their WiFi at the end of the day but they will leave it on so the students can use it on their devices.

As of July 22nd, it looks like we'll have approximately 100 bus riders each day. We anticipate the numbers rising after Labor Day.

Many staff members have been participating in staff development trainings. There's been Google, Google Classroom, Zoom, and Seesaw.

11A Class Size Information

The report is in the packet.

Item 12A Return to School Update

The superintendent and principal provided up to the minute information about the start of the coming school year. Information changes regularly on a daily bases that affects the plans. At this point they plan to start the year out with the Blended Learning program, with EC through 2nd grade coming to school every day and 3rd – 8th grade classes being split into Gold and Blue groups where Gold will come to school every Tuesday and Wednesday and the Blue will come to school every Thursday and Friday. They will alternate Mondays.

The superintendent also worked with the YMCA and the Village of Willow Springs for the YMCA to use the community center to care for up to 30 students whom will be able to do their Remote Learning while their parents work. The Village just gave the superintendent the rental price of \$600 for the YMCA which is a very fair price. The school will clean the community center each day.

Item 12B Approval of First Student Contract Extension

The superintendent gave information regarding the 1 year contract extension from First Student.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the 1 year transportation contract with First Student.

Motion 21-004 by Weeg, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the Superintendent for the approval of the 1 year transportation contract with First Student.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

Item 12E August and September 2020 Board of Education Meeting Change

The Board's August meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 17th. Only 2 weeks away. Because the school year has already started by that point, the superintendent would propose that the Board change its August meeting to Tuesday, August 25, 2020. Then we need to move the September 22nd meeting to September, 29th so that it is 30 days from the August meeting for the eLearning Plan public hearing.

The superintendent recommends that the School Board meeting scheduled for August 17, 2020 be changed to August 25th, 2020 and the meeting scheduled for September 22, 2020 be changed to September 29, 2020.

Motion 21-005 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the Superintendent for the approval to change the scheduled Board meetings for August and September as listed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

Item 12C eLearning Plan for Weather Emergency Days

While we have a plan for remote learning during the Pandemic, that plan does not meet the statutory requirements for an eLearning Plan for a snow day or other weather emergency day. The major difference is that it requires a public hearing.

The superintendent is on the fence about this. In theory, he is not sure that he believes it is the best possible answer, but we have most of the pieces in place. Also, our neighbors in 104 and 109 are adopting one, which means that we would be alone. It's probably best to have it in our back pocket and then decide to use it or not down the road.

The superintendent recommends that a public hearing to adopt an eLearning Plan e called for August 25, 2020 at 6:30pm.

Motion 21-006 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the Superintendent a public hearing to adopt an eLearning Plan e called is set for August 25, 2020 at 6:30pm at the next Board Meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

Item 12D School Resource Officer

The superintendent worked with Chief Ritz and together they learned that there is very little (none) empirical data regarding the effectiveness of school resource officers in schools, and nothing much to speak of any kind of research in middle schools.

The Chief has submitted a letter stating the positives of an SRO from his point of view

The superintendent has given a great deal of thought to this since the Board's June meeting. He understands that there are SROs who abuse their authority and don't have the best interest of the students at heart. This behavior can no longer be tolerated. It is reprehensible.

When we moved towards using SROs, we were concerned about external threats. That continues to be his number 1 concern for having an SRO presence in the building. That concern has not gone away. In fact, it probably has increased with our current political climate of intolerance and self-centeredness. Staff are assured by the program. He believes many families feel safer with the program.

We don't use SROs for student discipline. Our intergovernmental Agreement prohibits it. The only time we would involve the SRO in a discipline issue is if we would have called the police anyway. This should eliminate SROs putting hands on any student, reducing the opportunity for abusive behavior.

The superintendent has given thought to the "creepiness" effect expressed by some students. As he considered that, our SROs were in the getting to know the building stage. They were in the hallway, dropping in on classes and observing. We were just getting ready to implement the class sessions with the SROs instructing on DARE, Stranger Danger, Gang Prevention, etc. when the statewide closure was implemented. It is his belief that once we implement the class sessions, and the kids and officers get to know one another, that the creepiness will go away.

That leads to one of the perceived benefits of the program: building a positive relation between the students and the police. We need that now more than ever. He is troubled by the statements that children are afraid of the police and worry that it will impact their decision to call the police when a police emergency arises. That could be tragic. It also helps conversely in that the officers learn to know the students as people.

No question, we need to hold the police accountable when they abuse their power. No doubt, that is the superintendent's duty and obligation should that abuse happen in the school. He will meet that duty and obligation.

It is his recommendation that the District continue its Intergovernmental Agreement with the Village for SRO duties with the District. The Board agreed that this is a good and necessary program to continue.

Item 12F Student Handbook Revisions

There are a number of revisions to the student handbook that were outlined in the meeting.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the revised Student Handbook for the 2020-21 school year.

Motion 21-007 by Bohac, seconded by Weeg as recommended by the Superintendent for the approval of the revised Student Handbook for the 2020-21 school year.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

Item 14 Closed Session

The Board did not go into closed session.

Item 15 Final Actions

Every 6 months, the Board is required to review its findings that Closed Session Minutes need to be kept closed.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the Board's findings that the need for confidentiality still exists as to all or part of the following closed session minutes as listed.

Motion 21-008 by Hawkins, seconded by Weeg as recommended by the Superintendent for the approval to keep all the closed session minutes closed.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

The superintendent and principal are please to recommend the hire of Alyssa Ochenkowski as our third 1st grade teacher and Dawn DeAndda as a parapro for the 2020-21 school year.

Motion 21-009 by McSweeney, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the Superintendent the hiring of Alyssa Ochenkowski as our third 1st grade teacher and Dawn DeAnda as a parapro for the 2020-21 school year.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

This is Lauren McSweeney's last meeting as she moved out of the District.

The superintendent recommends that Lauren McSweeney's resignation from the Board be approved with gratitude for her service to the school and the community.

Motion 21-010 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the Superintendent that we accept Lauren McSweeney's resignation from the Board with gratitude for her service to the school and the community.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ristić, McSweeney, Hawkins and Bohac

Item 16 Adjournment

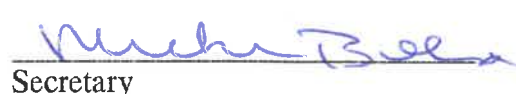
Motion 21-011: Adjournment at 8:25 pm

Motion made by, Bohac Seconded by McSweeney

Hearing no objections so moved.



President



Secretary