

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Education
Willow Springs Consolidated School District No. 108
Tuesday, September 29, 2020
Willow Springs School Gym**

Oath of Office

President, Mary Ellen Weeg administered the Oath of Office for Ryan Tortorella to take Lauren McSweeney's seat on the Board.

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, 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 21-026 by Weeg, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the superintendent's Agenda.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

Public Comment

Teacher Kim Cahill talked about Preparedness: Acquiring and maintaining PPE supplies; Not to discriminate symptoms; Burden of proof on families to get COVID tested and/or a doctor note which may or may not be covered by insurance; Teachers being prepared to change routine from in person learning back to remote; Sending students/staff home and being prepared to have either be on remote platform; Cost of being prepared; And we, as teachers, like to be prepared.

Teacher/ Union President read a statement from the Willow Springs Teachers Union:

After an uncertain summer, it has been a comfort to settle into a routine with the students and to see their faces every day. Despite the contact, we miss the kids and we know they miss us. However, the union still believes in the position we held in July, that it is not the time to open the school for hybrid learning, but to continue with remote learning.

Remote learning allows us to deliver a focused curriculum that students and parents are becoming accustomed to. We are proud of the improvements we've made in our ability to deliver the curriculum remotely and the students are getting into the flow of it. We have been working with the administration to help those students who are struggling. There is value in continuing the consistent educational plan that we have established.

Moving from one plan to another is an adjustment for the staff, students, and families. We acknowledge that many families welcome this adjustment. Because we would be opening at the beginning of flu season, there is a very real chance that the school will open and then have to abruptly close, before those adjustments have been made. As we stated in July, the hybrid model is destined to fall apart causing everyone to have to scramble.

We will eventually move from remote to hybrid learning. We feel that at the beginning of flu season, when the positivity rates are moderately high is not the opportune time. Because the virus is probably airborne, gathering almost 300 people into an enclosed area daily can be dangerous. For the sake of health, safety, and consistency, the Willow Springs teachers' union recommends that we don't go hybrid yet.

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)

Community members: Ivana Jevtic Grzesiak(11 Cliffside Circle, WS); Joanna Stasik(8141 Lake St.)
Teachers: Amanda Lascola, Kim Cahill, Jill Craig, Michelle VonBank, Ann Musto, Dena Brockob, Jaclyn Dondlinger & Sarah Haussy.
Valerie Wacker took the minutes.

Minutes

A copy of the July 28, 2020 minutes were in the packet. The August 25, 2020 regular meeting minutes were email to the Board on Monday, September 28, 2020.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting for July 28, 2020.

Motion 21-027 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting for July 28, 2020.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting for August 25, 2020.

Motion 21-028 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting for August 25, 2020.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

Budget Hearing

By law, we are required to hold a Budget Hearing. The purpose of the Budget Hearing is to receive any public testimony in regards to the FY21 Budget.

The tentative budget presented to the Board last month is substantially the same except:

Jumping to the biggest picture:

The budget increase over FY20 is just under 1%.

The budget shows a \$241k spend down of fund balance. Of that amount , \$212k is from the Capital Projects fund to finish off the summer construction work. That was a planned spend down. The actual spenddown is just over \$30k.

The budget is also built on the State receiving additional help from the Federal government. Should it not, the budget will need to be amended in the spring.

A copy of the budget was in the packet. The official budget will be given out at the September 29, 2020 Regular Board Meeting. The superintendent reviewed the Budget with the Board and audience and answered all questions before opening the Budget Hearing.

The budget we have been operating under thus far has been a tentative budget and was accepted last month. It has been on display for the past 30 days, no one has come into the office to review it.

The superintendent recommends opening the Budget Hearing at 6:48 pm.

Motion 21-029 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the superintendent the Budget Hearing opened at 6:48 pm.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

The Budget hearing took place.

The superintendent recommends closing the Budget Hearing at 6:51 pm.

Motion 21-030 by Ciota, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the superintendent the Budget Hearing closed at 6:51 pm.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

The superintendent recommends the adoption of the FY2021 budget as presented.

Motion 21-031 by Bohac, seconded by Tortorella as recommended by the superintendent the FY2021 Budget is adopted as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

Financial Report

The auditor's report for the month of August was in the packet. Nick Cavalier from Baker Tilly did not make it to the meeting. The superintendent answered all questions.

Consent Agenda

The superintendent recommends the approval of the consent agenda.

Motion 21-032 by Bohac, 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 \$262,998.55 (9A-1-2-3), the reimbursement of the Imprest Fund in the amount of \$1,232.35 (9B) and approval of the Activity Fund balance of \$53,153.04 (9C) for the month of September 2020.

Consent #2

The superintendent recommends the approval of the financial report for the month of August 2020. Fund balances: Educational: \$4,735,326; Operations & Maintenance: \$345,074; Debt Service: \$822,404; Transportation: \$578,742; IMRF: \$249,974; Capital Projects: 225,340; Working Cash: \$533,639; Tort: \$79,982; and Fire Prevention & Life Safety \$4.

Consent #3

The superintendent recommends the acceptance of the 2017 Health Life Safety Plan as presented as it is a complete and comprehensive plan.

Consent #4

The superintendent recommends the destruction of the audio recordings from Closed Session meetings of January 22, 2019 and February 26, 2019 as accurate written record of those sessions exist.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

10A Notices and Communications

The superintendent presented the following news articles:

A-a. 1 Journal article related to National and Illinois Education Issues at this time.

From the Chicago Tribune, 9/15/2020, an article talking about the Illinois budget shortfalls and what will happen if the federal government does not provide stimulus dollars to states.

A-b. 1 Newspaper and related articles related to Willow Springs School

The public hearing listing for the FY2021 Budget.

Item 10B Legislative/SCOPE report: 1 Item.

As the legislature has been out of session, there is nothing to report. But we monitor the news about the ComEd investigation and Speaker Madigan.

The superintendent included a brief report from SCOPE

Item 10C State Board of Education Correspondence: 0 Items.

Item 10D Illinois Association of School Boards Correspondence: 0 Items.

Item 10E AERO Correspondence items: 0 Items.

Item 10F EBC Health Insurance Co-op Correspondence items: 0 Items.

Item 10G Village of Willow Springs Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 10H County Clerk Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 10I Intermediate Service Center Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 10J Township Treasurer Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 10K

Superintendent Correspondence Received: 0 items.

Superintendent Correspondence Sent: 0 items.

Item 10K-A Freedom of Information Act Requests and Notices 0 items.

Special Education

Micki Bohac reported:

The agreement with the Legal Architect and IHC construction manager for the new building for Queen of Peace new facility project was approved by the AERO Governing Board.

AERO is arranging for the interest on the construction bonds to be distributed proportionately to the 3 districts, 104, 108 and 109, that are bond holders. The bonds incur interest until it is spent down.

AERO's on line daily attendance rate for the past month ranges from 93% to 59%. The multineeds population has the lowest percent which is devastating.

Principal's Report

Principal Smuda reported:

It is hard to believe we are at the midterm for quarter 1! Midterm reports were printed on September 23rd and mailed home. Many students are achieving straight As, while others are struggling in the remote model.

Mentor Club: The junior high team analyzed the students' midterm data to determine which students need help in homework completion. The Mentor Club will be held virtually and in small groups. Besides assisting with homework, the teachers are hoping to add some motivation and encouragement.

Each year, students must be administered an assessment to show growth measures in both reading and math. The 4th-8th grade students are using MAP testing. The 1st-3rd grade levels are using Curriculum Based Measures (CBM) while kindergarten is administrating ESGI. The staff will use these same tests in January to acquire each child's growth from fall to winter.

The 3rd-8th grade classes remotely tested in the MAP program during the past few weeks. Some testing days ran very smoothly, while others experienced spotty outages. Overall, our technology held up while running Zoom and MAP together. The staff will be analyzing the results after district scores are generated.

Technology in the remote learning environment is going well! Most teachers are using double monitors during instruction; curricular content is shared from one screen while the grid view of the students' faces are displayed on the second screen. For the most part, the internet is holding up! All of the students are able to participate using video, teachers are able to put the students into small group breakout rooms, and the students can even share their screens, too. At times, the audio lags, but the kids type in the chat box to communicate. Technology is getting better each day; only get a few calls now.

Staff is working creatively. First grades usually start out the year with completing 4 of the wonders chapters, this year they are on the 3rd chapter. So a little behind last year. Teachers also tried teaching in person and on Zoom at the same time but it does not work.

Each morning, the principal sent a recorded Pledge of Allegiance message to play during the morning meeting time. Well, the recording has been taken to a new level! The principal included segments of "Where is Mrs. Smuda standing at school?", "What's growing in Mrs. Smuda's garden?", and mystery guests. Many teachers have told the principal that the kids love her antics!

12A Class Size Information

The report was given out at the meeting.

Item 13A Remote Learning Update

The superintendent and the principal provided an update of how our Remote Learning is going. We continue to have a bit over 95% of our students in attendance. That's just down a percent or 2 from a typical school year.

As it's mid-term of the first quarter, they have monitored grades, and are implementing homework clubs for our students that are having difficulty completing and submitting assignments.

The staff are working hard to create engaging lessons for our students. Map testing was done remotely, grades 4-8. Other measures are being used for K-3rd grades.

An agreement with the Union over teacher evaluations for this coming school year is nearly signed off on.

Item 13B In-Person Learning Planning

At the August meeting, the Board planned to revisit remote and in-person learning. A few facts:

Suburban Cook County overall positivity rates are below 5%

Willow Springs 60480 has a 7 day rolling positivity rate of 12.5%, with 4 days of the past 7 above 8%.

Justice 60458 has a 7 day rolling rate of 3.23%. Summit has a 7 day rolling rate of 20.78%, with 3 of the last 7 days above 8%.

The superintendent met with the Argo feeders and Argo this morning. District 109 is returning to in-person instruction this week, but their rates are significantly lower than Willow Springs.

Administration is working with the Union to address their concerns.

Several problems have been identified with the Blended Learning model, and will be fine-tuned in the coming week.

An average of at least 5 staff members out per day because they have been exposed and need to quarantine. The superintendent is concerned about having enough staff present for in-person learning.

Look at eliminating in school lunch for the students. We would give it to them to take home. Pretty much how it is working now, after school is out students pick up lunch and take it home to eat it.

Also thinking in person in the AM and Remote Learning in the afternoons still having Blue & Gold days. Keeping specials totally remote.

ARGO is looking to go into Blended Learning November 9th.

The superintendent recommends at this time that we remain in Full Remote through quarter 1 (10/23) and if health metrics improve, return on 10/27 at the earliest.

Motion 21-033 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the Superintendent that at this time we remain in Full Remote through quarter 1 (10/23) and if health metrics improve, return on 10/27 at the earliest.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

Item 13C Expansion of ELL Program

When we began the ELL program about 6 years ago, we had only 22 students. Now there are over 60. Our current part-time program does not meet the needs of our students.

Increasing Deana Brockob from .6 FTE to 1.0 FTE will cost the district about \$23k more per year. This is well worth the investment.

The superintendent recommends the expansion of the ELL position from .6 FTE to 1.0 FTE for FY21.

Motion 21-034 by Bohac, seconded by Tortorella as recommended by the Superintendent that the position of the ELL teacher be expanded from .6 FTE to 1.0 FTE for FY21.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

Item 13D Kindergarten Expansion

In moving towards in-person learning, the number of kindergartners has increased. There are currently 41 kindergartners. With social distancing, we can just accommodate that number in our 2 existing classrooms, however, they will be wide-spread across the room and well over the 15 we've been aiming to hold our classes at. With a shortened school day, this is not setting our kids on the strongest path we can set them on.

The superintendent proposes the addition of a 3rd kindergarten class. This will cost roughly \$50,000 with benefits (pro-rated for missing the first quarter).

The superintendent recommends the addition of a 3rd section of kindergarten.

Motion 21-035 by Bohac, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the Superintendent that a 3rd section of kindergarten be added.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

Item 14 Calendar Information

Item 15 Closed Session

The Board did not go into Closed Session

Item 16 Final Actions

The superintendent recommends the approval of the Closed Session Minutes from the August 25, 2020 Closed Session meeting and to keep them closed to the public.

Motion 21-036 by Weeg, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the Superintendent that the Closed Session Minutes from the August 25, 2020 Closed Session meeting and to keep them closed to the public.

Roll Call Vote: Yeas: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins and Bohac

Item 17 Adjournment

Motion 21-037: Adjournment at 7:41 pm

Motion made by, Ciota Seconded by Bohac

Hearing no objections so moved.



President



Secretary