

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Education
Willow Springs Consolidated School District No. 108
Tuesday, December 15, 2020
Meeting Held Virtually**

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Today's meeting was broadcast via telephone and recorded. The recording will be made available to the public upon request to the superintendent.

President Weeg declared that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent because of a disaster. Physical presence for the meeting is unfeasible due to the health disaster.

All members verified they can hear one another, hear the discussion, and their microphones are working.

Roll Call

Members present: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins (6:40) and Bohac

Administration: Superintendent Patrick & Principal Smuda

Pledge of Allegiance

Given the Open Meetings Act Flexibility afforded by the Governor's Emergency Proclamation, we have a quorum present with 4 members.

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 21-054 by Weeg, seconded by Tortorella as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the superintendent's Agenda.

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

Item 5 Closed Session

The superintendent recommends going into Closed Session to discuss school security; student discipline; the appointment, employment, and/or dismissal of an employee(s) and Board member.

Motion 21-055 by Tortorella, seconded by Bohac to go into Closed Session at 6:34 p.m. with the purpose of discussing probable litigation, personnel, discipline issues and school security measures.

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

Motion 21-056 by Bohac, seconded by Weeg Board returned to open session at 6:42 p.m.

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

Roll Call

Members present: Weeg, Ciota, Tortorella, Hawkins (6:40) Bohac and Boswell Perreault

Motion 21-057 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended Jessica Boswell Perreault be appointed to complete the term of Stephanie Patrick through the election in April 2021.

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

Jessica Boswell Perreault, the new Board member administered the Oath and participated in the meeting.

Public Comment

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)

This meeting was electronically due to the COVID-19 Health Crisis, Public attendance was restricted from the meeting. This was announced on the published agenda. Also announced on the public agenda was the notice to send any public comments or questions or if you wish to attend the meeting by muted phone to the superintendent at fpatrik@willowsschool.org by 5pm December 15, 2020 for inclusion at the meeting.

No statements or questions were emailed to the superintendent.

Teachers: Emily Moses and Jason Noble, Nick Cavalier from Baker Tilly and Valerie Wacker who took the minutes.

Financial Report

The auditor's report for the month of November was in the packet. The finances of the District are on target for this time of year.

Item 8B 2020 Levy Adoption

Last month, the Board directed that the levy be prepared with a 4.89% increase. The Board needed to adopt the levy for our tax appropriations for 2020, it is always in arrears.

The superintendent included the letter from Nick Cavalier from Baker Tilly outlining the strategy behind tax levies, and the schools in particular. It is pretty clear analysis of the current taxing situation and the rationale behind the levy.

The 4.89% is only on new properties to the tax roll, not existing properties. Existing properties would get an increase of CPI, which is 2.3% for 2020. This will generate new money of \$90,369. We are expecting that the State's Evidence Based Funding (EBF) will be reduced by 5% this year, and more the following year. 5% of our EBF is a bit over \$60,000.

As we will be levying less than a 5% increase, we are not required to hold a special meeting to adopt the levy.

The superintendent recommends the adoption of the resolution and ordinance levying and assessing taxes of the Willow Springs School District 108 for 2020 with a 4.89% increase as presented.

Motion 21-058 by Bohac, seconded by Tortorella as recommended by the superintendent the adoption of the resolution and ordinance levying and assessing taxes of the Willow Springs School District 108 for 2020 with a 4.89% increase as presented.

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

Minutes

A copy of the November 17, 2020 minutes were in the packet.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting for November 17, 2020.

Motion 21-059 by Weeg, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the superintendent for the approval of the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting for November 17, 2020.

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

Abstain: Boswell Perreault

Consent Agenda

The superintendent recommends the approval of the consent agenda.

Motion 21-060 by Ciota, seconded by Bohac 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 \$215,852.71 (10A-1-2), the reimbursement of the Imprest Fund in the amount of \$960 (10B) and approval of the Activity Fund balance of \$55,468.17 (10C) for the month of December 2020.

Consent #2

The superintendent recommends the approval of the financial report for the month of November 2020. Fund balances: Educational: \$4,282,888; Operations & Maintenance: \$274,669; Debt Service: \$890,415; Transportation: \$632,160; IMRF: \$223,828; Capital Projects: 145,576; Working Cash: \$535,680; Tort: \$41,876; and Fire Prevention & Life Safety \$5.

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

11 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 US News and world report, an article about children and the COVID vaccine. They're not included in the trials and won't be able to be immunized. The superintendent is wondering if the long term implications are social distancing in schools for a much longer period of time.

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

The annual statement of affairs publication in the DesPlaines Valley News.

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

Item 11B Legislative/SCOPE report: 0 Item.

The legislature has not met since May. The legislature will perhaps meet next in late January.

Item 11C State Board of Education Correspondence: 1 Items.

The superintendent is beginning a war with ISBE over a special education matter. The school has been "invited" (read like the old US military draft) to participate in a group to increase the inclusion of special education preschoolers into the general education setting. While the superintendent has long been a fierce advocate for providing special education services to eligible students, this is an unreasonable request. It's unreasonable because we don't have a general preschool to include the special education students in. When he spoke with the good folks at ISBE about this, the response was that it was the District's responsibility then to partner with other preschools in the community to be able to include them. (There are no programs within the boundaries of the District, either.) This would incur both tuition and transportation costs for the District. This makes it an unfunded mandate.

In the packet is his letter declining the “invitation” to participate. The superintendent is not sure we are really allowed to decline, but we’ll see what happens. Jim Gunnell, AERO’s Executive Director joined the superintendent in signing the letter as AERO serves a portion of our early childhood students and would need to be involved as well.

Item 11D Illinois Association of School Boards Correspondence: 0 Items.

Item 11E AERO Correspondence items: 0 Items.

Item 11F EBC Health Insurance Co-op Correspondence items: 0 Items.

Item 11G Village of Willow Springs Correspondence: 1 item.

The TIF1 tuition payment of \$106k was received.

Item 11H County Clerk Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 11I Intermediate Service Center Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 11J Township Treasurer Correspondence: 0 items.

Item 11K

Superintendent Correspondence Received: 2 item.

1. The superintendent included thank you notes received for the Board’s generous holiday gift to the staff.

Superintendent Correspondence Sent: 0 items.

Item 9K-A Freedom of Information Act Requests and Notices 1 items.

A November 24, 2020 request from SmartProcure for a listing of the District’s vendors. This comes quarterly. It was complied with on November 30, 2020.

Special Education

Micki reported: The Governing Board has not met since the Board’s November meeting.

Principal’s Report

Principal Smuda reported:

Parent Teacher Conferences were held online over Zoom this year. Many parents gave us positive feedback on using Zoom! They found using Zoom saved them time and afforded them more flexibility! For example, one parent was able to see the teachers during her break at work. Overall, the technology worked smoothly and it was a positive experience.

The teachers tabulated their classroom percentages of families attending a conference. Overall, the average was 82.6%! Three classrooms had 100% participation! The junior high average brought down the total. There were only 44 families who participated in the Parent Teacher Conferences for grades 6th through 8th.

The principal cancelled the Outdoor Ed Program for May. For next year, she is working on scheduling two programs in September: one for the 5th graders and the other for the 6th grade classes who missed the 2020 dates. It’s still in the early planning stages, but she believes it’s important that all students get the Outdoor Ed experience!

Lauren Herrera organized a “Giving Tree” for approximately 80 students. Several generous staff members purchased gifts for the students. One teacher’s family sponsored 12 separate students! Additionally, the Willow Springs Lions Club, ARGO High School, and the Orland Park Christian Reformed Church assisted with food baskets and children’s toys. We are so appreciative of everyone’s generosity!

The principal has been speaking with ARGO about 8th grade course registration for next year. The students will be registering for classes on January 20th. ARGO will be sending over a presentation which introduces the high school experience and reviews the registration process. Parents will be able to watch the presentation, too.

The administration team is planning a virtual staff party on Thursday. Invitations were sent out last week along with the Board’s \$20 Amazon card. At the event, we will host some silly trivia games and hand out lots of gift cards! It will be nice for the staff to get-together in a casual setting again.

Board member Ryan Tortorella said he was really impressed with Emily Moses Gym class when he passed by the computer one day. Then Mrs. Smuda told the Board how Ms. Moses combined exercises with a Christmas choice board. The students chose an exercise and had to do it for 25 seconds. Then, the gifts were opened! One gift was a nice gift while the other was a silly gift (example: burrito blanket, bellybutton purse, etc.).

13A Class Size Information

Enrollment continues to fluctuate slightly.

Item 14A Remote School Update and Moving Forward

Attendance remains high at 94%. Administration is pleased at that. They have been focusing on those students whose attendance has been poor. They started the new kindergarten program targeting 6 students who were pretty much absent. Their attendance has taken off. While not yet perfect, we regularly see all of those 6 students – except on Mondays. After the new year, they will figure out how to best transition them to the regular program. The administration is having a more difficult time reaching the older students. Of the 6 we targeted, 4 are daily attenders. The remaining 2 still have poor attendance on Mondays. But we are feeling very successful with the improvement.

Staff has been focusing on adding some holiday magic into the lessons, just as we would for in person learning. The kids always enjoy the holiday themed learnings.

The superintendent said the grade analysis is a similar grade spread as we saw in the first quarter.

Administration is planning to develop a 6 week summer school program that composes 29 attendance days for students over the summer.

So, the million dollar question. When will it be safe to begin blended learning? During this current week, 60480 had a positivity rate ranging from 20-25%. 60458 has been slightly lower, around 18-19%. The superintendent does not know what the Christmas holiday will bring or its aftermath. Will the surge continue? He suspects it will. He recommends that staff have the choice to work from home or from school during the Stay At Home advisory in the current Tier 3 mitigations that Illinois is under. Once that ends, he recommends that staff return to teaching from the building. The superintendent recommends full remote learning from January 4th – 18th, Martin Luther King Jr. Day. That should accommodate any infections being spread as a result of the Christmas holidays.

When we start Blended Learning, a solid plan would be to bring K-2 and special education students in for 2 days, add 3rd-5th graders on the third day, and add 6th-8th graders on the following Monday. This will allow staff to develop routines for entering, exiting and moving about the building in an organized fashion.

Motion 21-061 by Weeg, seconded by Hawkins as recommended Blended Learning will start on January 20, 2021 for K-2nd and special education grades; 3rd-5th grades to start on Monday, January 25, 2021 and 6th-8th graders to start Wednesday, January 27, 2021 with January 19, 2021 being a Remote Learning Planning day.

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

Motion 21-062 by Hawkins, seconded by Bohac The Board will hold a Special meeting on January 11, 2021 to look at positivity rates and discuss the return to school in the Blended Learning model.

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

Item 14B 2021-2022 Board Meeting Calendar

A draft calendar was in the packet. The calendar follows the format the Board has been using for the past several years.

The superintendent recommends the adoption of the 2021-2022 School Board Meeting Calendar as amended.

Motion 21-063 by Weeg, seconded by Bohac as recommended by the superintendent the adoption of the 2021-2022 School Board Meeting Calendar as amended.

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

Item 14C Policy Updates, Second Reading and Adoption

From last month:

With all of the other actions of late, the superintendent withheld Policy Updates. It's time to catch up. There's quite a bit of changes. The packet is big. Crossed out ones in the PRESS packet are ones that are addressed later and the superintendent left only the most recent one for the Board to read. Policies are reviewed at one meeting and reviewed at a subsequent meeting.

There are quite a few that are merely updates in the footnotes or legal references.

There's a large update concerning Title 1X, gender equity in programs. This is a complex one and requires procedures that we are not capable of making on our own. For example, there needs to be an administrator for managing the case, an administrator for investigating the case, an administrator to hear/judge the case, and an administrator to hear an appeal to the case. An administrator may not hold 2 roles. We only have 3 administrators. The superintendent is working with Sabs 110, Stickney's 1 school district, to see how we can work together on this. This one may not be ready for approval in December. (December update: they are not done, but the Board can go ahead and approve it and the superintendent will insert the names later.)

There are some ethics / reimbursement updates for Board members and staff.

There are Open Meetings Act updates regarding the Pandemic. There are many Pandemic updates across the gamut.

The Board vacancy window to fill a vacant seat increased from 45 – 60 days.

There are updates across several policies to reinforce the actions of a State mandated reporter as well as stipulations about hiring a new employee who has a complaint filed against them.

The PARCC test was removed and replace with the IAR.

Privacy updates for both staff and student records have been updated.

The policies regarding physical management have been updated to reflect the new ISBE guidelines which come just short of prone positions. (AERO and its districts have switched to CPI (a vendor that provides physical management techniques' training to staff) from MENTA (which no longer provides those services).

All staff finished the verbal sessions for CPI on 11/2/20. The physical training will be in person in smaller groups.

And an update stating that all visitors to school events must follow school rules.

The superintendent recommends the adoption of updated policies: 2:20, 2:40, 2:50, 2:60, 2:70, 2:100, 2:105, 2:110, 2:125, 2:140, 2:160, 2:200, 2:220, 2:230, 2:250, 2:260, 2:265, 2:50, 2:60, 3:10, 4:15, 4:20, 4:30, 4:40, 4:50, 4:60, 4:80, 4:90, 4:100, 4:110, 4:140, 4:150, 4:160, 4:170, 4:175, 4:180, 4:190, 5:10, 5:20, 5:30, 5:35, 5:40, 5:50, 5:60, 5:90, 5:100, 5:120, 5:130, 5:150, 5:180, 5:190, 5:200, 5:210, 5:220, 5:250, 5:260, 5:280, 5:285, 5:290, 5:310, 5:330, 6:15, 6:20, 6:40, 6:60, 6:65, 6:110, 6:135, 6:150, 6:180, 6:210, 6:235, 6:270, 6:280, 6:300, 6:340, 7:10, 7:20, 7:40, 7:70, 7:90, 7:130, 7:150, 7:170, 7:180, 7:185, 7:190, 7:200, 7:270, 7:290, 7:325, 7:340, 7:345, 8:10, 8:30, 8:80, 8:95, 8:110.

The superintendent recommends the approval of the Policies of the Willow Springs School District 108 Board of Education as listed.

Motion 21-064 by Ciota, seconded by Hawkins as recommended by the Superintendent for the approval the Policies of the Willow Springs School District 108 Board of Education as listed.

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

Item 14D Building Updates

The mold has been remediated from the gym. A contractor has been selected to seal along the ceiling/roof line to prevent mold from forming again. The work should be completed by the end of 2020.

Item 14E Personnel Matters

The superintendent recommends that the retirement of Lori Smuda be accepted for June 30, 2021 with gratitude for her 20 years of service to the students and community as teacher and principal at Willow Springs School.

Motion 21-065 by Bohac, seconded by Weeg as recommended by the Superintendent that the retirement of Lori Smuda be accepted for June 30, 2021 with gratitude for her 20 years of service to the students and community as teacher and principal at Willow Springs School.

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

Item 15 Final Actions

Item 16 Adjournment

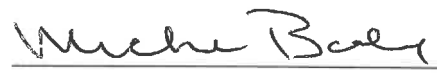
Motion 21-066: Adjournment at 7:32 pm

Motion made by, Bohac Seconded by Hawkins

Hearing no objections so moved.



President



Secretary