

**JUNE 12, 2017**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

The Waterloo Region District School Board held a Committee of the Whole Meeting this evening at 7:00 p.m. in the Education Centre Board Room, with the following members in attendance: S. McMillan (Chairperson), C. Harrington, J. Hendry, T. Martin, C. Millar, M. Ramsay, K. Smith, N. Waddell, C. Waterfall, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

Student Trustees R. Barnes and H. Jamal were in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: J. Bryant (Director of Education and Secretary), R. DeBoer, M. Gerard, S. Lomax, A. Mercier, S. Miller, P. Rubenschuh, E. Ranney, L. Read, G. Shantz and M. Weinert.

Other staff in attendance: J. Herring, N. Manning and L. Slupeiks.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson S. McMillan called the meeting to order at 7:21 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

1. Moved by C Harrington, seconded by K. Woodcock:

**That the agenda of the June 12, 2017, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.**

-Carried-

**DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairperson S. McMillan welcomed Trustee C. Waterfall to her first meeting as the Trustee representing Cambridge/North Dumfries.

Trustee K. Woodcock announced that she attended the State of the Township Inaugural Address in Woolwich Township.

**DELEGATIONS**

The following delegations were scheduled to speak at this evening's meeting:

Maryanne Paul re Pride Flag Initiative  
Jeanette Hiller re Pride Flag Initiative  
Jacki Yovanoff re Pride Flag Initiative  
Sean Henderson re French Immersion Program Review

**REVISE AGENDA ORDER**

2. Moved by N. Waddell, seconded by M. Ramsay:

**That the Governance Policies scheduled for discussion this evening be moved to appear on the agenda after the reports.**

-Carried-

**REPORTS**

**PRIDE FLAG INITIATIVE**

Staff members S. Morrison and Travis Smalley and students Hayley Hagens and Edward Linder spoke regarding the pride flag initiative.

Following the presentations by staff and students and presentation from Chief Communications Officer N. Manning regarding flag protocol, trustees discussed this matter at length.

Several trustees noted that while they support the flag initiative and what it means to our students, they were frustrated with the perceived lack of communication and information received from staff.

Citing a concern with flag protocol, Trustee M. Ramsay questioned if staff had investigated the cost of placing an additional flagpole at each location and N. Manning responded that while they do not know the specific cost at this time, it was felt that the cost would be substantially more than the \$3000 spent on flags this year.

Trustee C. Millar stated that she was frustrated by some of the comments from her colleagues and she felt this was a policy issue. She did however state that she would have liked to see additional information and support for parents.

Trustee J. Hendry stated that he felt this was a political issue and he would like to know why trustees were not informed about this issue. He further stated that while he would not support lowering the flags and has learned a great deal from tonight's presenters he wished that he had received this information some time ago. He stated that in the past trustees were always notified in advance regarding initiatives that might become controversial and that he was disappointed.

Trustee C. Watson stated that trustees believe that all of our students are valuable and we care for all students and want them safe. She believes that the issue is getting clouded and the core issue is communication and that she did not even realize that the flag was being flown for the entire month of June. She also questioned how many incidents of bullying would schools deal with in a month directly related to sexual orientation?

Director J. Bryant responded that studies have shown that these students are at a higher risk of bullying and self-harm and the reason tonight's speakers have come forward is because they feel this is a safe space. He stated the flag is a first step in providing a safe space, but there is more work to be done.

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Chairperson S. McMillan thanked the delegations and staff and students for sharing their views and experiences and helping us to start the conversation.

Trustee K. Smith expressed disappointment that information around this initiative was not brought to trustees prior to the flag raising. She also stated that if staff had done more communication with schools in advance of the event then they could have provided lessons and more opportunity for learning.

Trustee K. Woodcock thanked tonight's speakers and she applauded the action taken by the EIAG Committee in paying for the flags and for staff in implementing this initiative board-wide. She further stated that she believes this falls under the third strategic direction and creates a 'culture of innovation' and thanked everyone involved.

**EXTEND ADJOURNMENT TIME**

3. Moved by C. Harrington, seconded by K. Woodcock:

**That the 9:30 p.m. adjournment time be extended by thirty minutes.**

-Carried-

**INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORT AND FORECAST AT APRIL 30, 2017**

Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard noted that staff is still showing a small surplus for the year of \$0.75 million.

This report was provided for the information of the Board.

**MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS – QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT**

Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard provided an update on the list of major capital projects and noted all projects were on time and there were no cautions at this time.

This report was provided for the information of the Board.

**MOTION – FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM REVIEW**

Trustee C. Watson spoke to a motion she served at the April 24, 2017, Board Meeting speaking to the need for a review of the French Immersion program.

Trustees discussed this motion at length. Trustee C. Harrington stated that he felt the motion was biased as only French Immersion parents were included in the original motion.

4. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by N. Waddell:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board strike an Ad-Hoc Committee for September 2017-2018 to review our French Immersion and Extended French program models and the delivery for elementary and secondary students; and**

**That the review is to include staffing challenges, equitable access for each and every student, transportation and the advantages and disadvantages of a French Immersion Magnet School; and**

**That the committee make recommendations to the Board that will help strengthen and support French Immersion and Extended French Programs; and**

**That the committee include two French Immersion students, two French Immersion parents, three Trustees and appropriate staff members; and**

**That the committee provide a report to the Board of Trustees with recommendations by the end of February 2018.**

Moved in amendment by C. Harrington, seconded by K. Woodcock:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board strike an Ad Hoc Committee for September 2017 to review our French Immersion and Extended French program models and the delivery for elementary and secondary students; and**

**That the review is to include staffing challenges, equitable access for each and every student, transportation and the advantages and disadvantages of a French Immersion Magnet School; and**

**That the committee will make recommendations to the Board that will help strengthen and support French Immersion and Extended French Programs; and**

**That the committee include two French Immersion parents, two parents whose students are not enrolled in French Immersion, two French Immersion students, three Trustees, two Student Trustees and appropriate staff members; and**

**That all recommendations from the committee be supported with financial implications; and**

**That the committee provides a report to the Board of Trustees with recommendations by the end of February 2018.**

-Carried-

Trustee J. Hendry suggested a friendly amendment to the motion, which received consensus, that all recommendations from the committee be supported with financial implications.

Trustee C. Harrington exited the meeting at 9:55 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MEMBERSHIP IN OPSBA**

Chairperson S. McMillan spoke to the annual report requesting that trustees approve the continuation of membership in OPSBA. After a decision was made to continue membership in OPSBA, trustees approved revisions to Board Policy 3007 as outlined in Appendix A of the report.

5. Moved by C. Harrington, seconded by M. Ramsay:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 3007, and continue with membership in the Ontario Public School Boards' Association for 2017-2018.**

-Carried-

**EXTEND ADJOURNMENT TIME**

6. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by J. Hendry:

**That the 10:00 p.m. adjournment time be extended by thirty minutes.**

-Carried with the necessary two-thirds majority-

**FOLLOW-UP ON ITEMS FROM QUESTION PERIOD**

Coordinating Superintendent M. Weinert provided a follow-up response to a question from Trustee C. Watson at a previous meeting regarding whether there are sharps disposal containers available in each school, if students are aware not to touch needles and if staff know how to obtain a container. M. Weinert stated that containers are not currently available in all schools, but if schools ask for a container, one will be provided.

Chief Communications Officer N. Manning spoke to an issue brought to the attention of staff by Trustee N. Waddell. He stated that the Facebook group has been added to the sites that are monitored by staff and his team is regularly sending out social media posts to remind parents how to reach out to school staff. It was noted that there could be a separate page for each Superintendent on the website so it was easier to send a single link to parents. N. Manning responded that he is hoping to make this happen as soon as possible.

Student Trustee H. Jamal exited the meeting at 10:10 p.m.

Trustee K. Smith requested that staff provide trustees with cell phone numbers and Director J. Bryant responded that he will discuss this with staff.

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Superintendent P. Rubenschuh responded to a previous question by Trustee C. Watson regarding the availability of Naloxone kits in the schools. He stated that at this time there is no regional direction and also nothing at the provincial or federal level, but discussion regarding the issue of Fentanyl is ongoing. Trustee C. Watson stated that this is a plague moving across Canada and she will continue to raise this issue.

**QUESTION PERIOD**

There were no additional questions at this time.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

No future agenda items.

**ADJOURNMENT**

7. Moved by T. Martin, seconded by N. Waddell:

**That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of June 12, 2017, be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.