

SEPTEMBER 16, 2019
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 Boardroom, with the following members in attendance: J. Herring (Chairperson), K. Meissner, C. Millar, S. Piatkowski, M. Ramsay, K. Smith, N. Waddell, C. Watson*, J. Weston, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

*Trustee C. Watson attended via teleconference.

Student Trustees N. Chenthivelnathan and M. Robinson were in attendance.

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

Other staff in attendance: L. Agar, K. Penticost and S. Reidel.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson J. Herring called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Moved by K. Smith, seconded by S. Piatkowski:

That the agenda of the September 16, 2019, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Trustee C. Watson declared pecuniary interest for the In Camera meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson J. Herring started the meeting with a number of announcements. She announced that Trustee C. Watson was attending via teleconference. She then welcomed the new Student Trustees, Narein Chenthivelnathan and Myah Robinson. She congratulated Lila Read on her new position as Associate Director and thanked Chief Communications Officer A. Russell for her work and wished her well as she leaves for her maternity leave.

Trustee J. Weston thanked Superintendent E. Ranney for inviting her and Trustee K. Smith to visit the Summer Learning Program. Trustee J. Weston also attended the System Leaders' Meeting in August with number of other Trustees.

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Trustee S. Piatkowski attended a First Day of School Walk for Edna Staebler Public School with senior staff and the Waterloo Regional Police Services. He also visited Westvale Public School and Mary Johnston Public School.

Chief Communications Officer A. Russell provided a Back-2-School Communications Good News Update. The presentation highlighted many activities which have already taken place this year including the System Leaders' Meeting, the Community Walk on the first day of school, Minister of Education S. Lecce's visit to J W Gerth Public School, Prime Minister J. Trudeau's visit to Sandowne Public School which was as a result of an invitation from students, and the successful #firstdayphotodaychallenge.

DELEGATIONS

The following delegations spoke at this evening's meeting:

- Krista Guenther - Walking Route to Elizabeth Ziegler Public School

Trustees asked a number of clarifying questions.

2. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by N. Waddell:

That the delegation be referred to staff for reconsideration of the bussing decision.

-Carried-

Opposed: K. Smith

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

In light of today's visit from Prime Minister J. Trudeau, trustees discussed a need for a policy outlining rules for political activities occurring in school during an election period. Some, but not all, school boards have policies on this topic. It was the will of the board to have staff look into options and provide information to trustees at the September 23, 2019, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

REPORTS

BANK BORROWING RESOLUTION

Borrowing money to meet operating expenditures is necessary because of timing differences between our collection of revenues from municipalities and the province, and the payment schedules for the expenditures of the WRDSB. The requested borrowing limit remains at \$50M for the 2020 fiscal year.

3. Moved by K. Smith, seconded by K. Woodcock:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board adopt the Resolution, as outlined in Appendix A of the Bank Borrowing Resolution Report to Trustees, authorizing the borrowing of money to meet current expenditures of the Waterloo Region District School Board for the fiscal year 2020.

-Carried-

2019 CAPITAL PRIORITIES PROGRAM SUBMISSION

The Capital Priorities list was completed by a working group that examined planning, facilities, financial, program and accessibility issues. It will be submitted to the Ministry of Education (Ministry) no later than September 30, 2019, through the School Facility Information System (SFIS). Trustees received background information on the process and how the board evaluates needs.

Trustees asked a number of clarifying questions. Changes were made from previous submissions in order to best meet the Ministry of Education's current criteria for successful projects. Although benchmark costs are created through a standard calculation, Trustees were interested in seeing the associated project cost on future reports.

4. Moved by C. Millar, seconded by J. Weston:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the submission of business cases for nine 2019 Capital Priorities Projects to the Ministry of Education identified in Appendix A of the report entitled "2019 Capital Priorities Program Submission," dated September 16, 2019.

-Carried-

ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING UPGRADE

Staff has completed their Request for Proposal and awarded a contract to Altus Business Consultants Ltd. The contract includes an upgrade to the WRDSB's Human Resource Information System, Payroll System and Financial Information System. Trustees previously approved funds to support an upgrade to the WRDSB's Human Resource Information System and Payroll system. Transitioning to a single "ecosystem" mitigates a number of risks to the Board, including data migration, integration and stability. In light of this, the project name has changed to Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) as it more accurately reflects the scope of the project. Trustees previously approved a project budget of \$2.3M. The revised total project budget is \$3.265M.

Trustees asked a number of clarifying questions. The program is anticipated to be flexible to allow for changes as needed for additional Ministry-required reporting. Trustees asked to see

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progress reports on the implementation process and inquired into the potential cost savings and efficiencies created by the new program.

5. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by M. Ramsay:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve an additional commitment of \$965,000 from accumulated surplus to support an upgrade to the Board's Financial Information System and Human Resource Information System as outlined in the report to the Committee of the Whole on September 16, 2019, in addition to the \$2.3M approved on February 11, 2019 to support an upgrade of the Board's Human Resource Information System bringing the total project budget to \$3.265M.

-Carried-

EXTENSION REQUEST FOR ANONYMOUS REPORTING TOOL REPORT

Effective for the 2019-2020 school year, the portfolio responsibility for the Anonymous Reporting Tool Report was moved from Superintendent Peter Rubenschuh to Superintendent Bill Lemon. The closest Committee of the Whole meeting to October 7, 2019, without going beyond the due date is September 23, 2019. With the change in portfolio, staff does not believe this date provides enough time to effectively report on this matter. In order to ensure the feasibility of implementing this type of tool is fully investigated, staff are requesting an extension of the reporting deadline to October 21, 2019.

6. Moved by M. Ramsay, seconded by K. Woodcock:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board extend the written report deadline for the Anonymous Reporting Tool Feasibility Report from October 7, 2019, to October 21, 2019.

-Carried-

MOTION RE: AD HOC SUSPENSION REVIEW COMMITTEE

This report contained a Notice of Motion served by Trustees S. Piatkowski and C. Watson at the May 27, 2019, Board meeting and was supported by Trustee M. Ramsay. Proposed Terms of Reference were also included. Trustees S. Piatkowski and C. Watson spoke to the purpose of the Committee.

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7. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by C. Watson:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board strike an ad hoc committee of appropriate board staff, school staff, parents, students and trustees etc., that would research initiatives that might either accompany/augment suspensions or serve as alternatives to suspensions, where appropriate according to legislation, that would help students understand root causes of inappropriate behavior as well as coping strategies that educate and empower students.

And that recommendations from this committee be presented to the board no later than the end of February 2020.

-Carried-

STAFF AND BOARD REPORTS

New Student Trustees N. Chenthivelnathan and M. Robinson invited Trustees to attend the first Student Senate meeting of the year occurring on October 1, 2019 at the Google Office.

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee S. Piatkowski asked about the effects of the GRT route changes and proposed elimination of the student discount pass. Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard stated that GRT did very little consultation but that B. Bourgault of the Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region, has delegated and will continue to advocate on behalf of students. The changes will result in reduced service and an increase in expenditures for WRDSB and students.

Trustee K. Woodcock asked if staff have a plan in place to deal with the anticipated Health and Physical Education exemption requests. Superintendent A. Mercier confirmed that staff are working to develop a procedure for exemptions and that further details will be available to trustees upon completion.

Trustee K. Woodcock inquired about students without a permanent address who are unable to be enrolled in school. Director J. Bryant confirmed that staff are working on the issue, the associated financial ask and advised staff hope to have elementary students enrolled in schools shortly.

ADJOURNMENT

8. Moved by C. Whethem, seconded by K. Meissner:

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of September 16, 2019, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.