

MAY 17, 2021
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. via video conference, with the following members in attendance: J. Weston (Chairperson), J. Herring, K. Meissner, C. Millar, S. Piatkowski, M. Ramsay, K. Smith, L. Tremble, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

Trustee C. Whetham was unable to attend this evening's meeting.

Student Trustees T. John-Jandles and R. McDonald were in attendance.

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

Other staff in attendance: L. Agar, M. Delisle, N. Hercanuk and S. Reidel.

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Moved by L Tremble, seconded by K. Meissner:

That the agenda of the May 17, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Trustee C. Watson had a declaration of pecuniary interest in the previous in camera meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee C. Millar reminded trustees of the Board Self-Evaluation survey currently open and encouraged all trustees to participate.

DELEGATIONS

The following delegations spoke at this evening's meeting:

- Jennifer Akgol - Masks in Schools
- Cherie Lawson - Masks in Schools
- Milka Stanisic - Masks in Schools
- Sheryl Gatzke - Masks in Schools
- Bojana Marin - Masks in Schools

- Bojana Tanaskovic - Masks in Schools
- Karen Ralon Flores - Masks in Schools

During a delegation from Cassandra Legiehn, a Point of Order was called as the delegation was not speaking to the topic she registered for. Trustees discussed the delegation and voted on whether she should stop her presentation:

2. **That the Waterloo Region District School Board stop the delegation from Cassandra Legiehn for not discussing the topic as registered.**

-Carried-

Opposed:
M. Ramsay
K. Smith
C. Watson
K. Woodcock

Chairperson J. Weston invited Cassandra Legiehn to re-register for a future meeting.

STAFF FOLLOW UP

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

REPORTS

HEATING, VENTILATION, AND AIR CONDITIONING UPDATE

This report was provided for information.

Trustees requested from staff “that a report be presented to the Board of Trustees with prioritized plan that would air condition all Waterloo Region District School Board classrooms that are without air conditioning” by the end of January 2020. It was further requested that updates be presented to Trustees on the status of this initiative. An update was provided in April 2019 and the status of the initiative is again updated in this April 2021 report.

In June 2018, during the budget process, Trustees approved a new initiative to install air conditioning at six of our schools. The schools were prioritized based on a list of socio-economic indicators. This was the first time projects to only air condition schools were put forward. Historically, this type of effort would be coupled with another extensive renovation or school addition project to maximize the benefits of the air conditioning expenditure.

J. Veit, Controller, Facility Services, shared that 69% of schools are air conditioned and provided an update on the twelve schools previously approved for HVAC updates. He reviewed the CVRIS funding provided by the Ministry of Education for improved air quality, which will improve ventilation at sixteen schools.

Trustees asked questions regarding the timing of all upgrades. It was confirmed that staff will provide an update at the Quarterly Major Capital projects Update in the fall. Trustees also asked questions regarding the funding for the secondary schools listed and the CVRIS funding provided.

When asked about the status of any upgrades at KCI, staff agreed that this information could be provided as part of the School Renewal reports in June. Trustees also asked about the CVRIS funding deadline.

ENERGY AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS UPDATE

This report was provided for information.

J. Veit, Controller, Facility Services, presented trustees with the trends for Energy Intensity and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity. He reviewed the impact of the pandemic on budgeted versus actual expenditures of energy. He reviewed the increases in building areas for new schools and additions and the increases in energy costs. He presented the target setting for Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions reductions and ongoing efforts to achieve those targets.

Trustees asked questions regarding WRDSB trade staff and clean electricity.

HURON FISCHER-HALLMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BOUNDARY STUDY (PART II)

Construction of a new 591 pupil Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) JK-8 elementary school has begun in southwest Kitchener. The project also includes a child care centre, EarlyON Child and Family Centre, and a community centre in partnership with the City of Kitchener. It is anticipated that the school will open September 2022. Prior to opening, the WRDSB will need to establish an attendance area boundary for the new school.

N. Hercanuck, Senior Planner, reviewed the current situation and enrolment projections. He also provided the initial scenario developed by staff and the resulting enrolment projections. He reviewed the communication plan for the boundary study. Trustees will continue to be notified of and invited to Boundary Study public meetings.

3. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by C. Millar:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve approve the initiation of a boundary study process involving Southridge Public School, Laurentian Public School, Janet Metcalfe Public School, and Jean Steckle Public School to establish a school attendance area for the new JK-8 elementary school to be constructed on Tartan Avenue in Kitchener.

-Carried-

DEVELOPMENT AREA BOUNDARY DESIGNATIONS

This report is provided for information.

The Planning Department regularly reviews residential development plans to estimate projected enrolment growth and assess the capacity of nearby schools to accommodate the anticipated growth. Where space appears to be insufficient, Board Policies and Procedures provide Planning Staff with a process to create and assign Development Areas (DAs) to holding schools until a capacity solution becomes available.

L. Agar, Manager of Planning, reviewed the development area and associated holding schools. She also reviewed the communication plan and confirmed that no students currently live in these areas.

Trustees asked questions regarding the students living in Mannheim and the ongoing communication with real estate boards to stress the importance of using our school finder to ensure home buyers are given accurate information regarding schools.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC - VERBAL UPDATE

Director J. Bryant provided an update on vaccinations for Youth 12 to 17 years of age. Plans for vaccinations are being developed by the local public health unit in consultation with WRDSB.

Associate Director L. Read shared that communication regarding registration for 2021-22 remote learning will be going out to families tomorrow. She acknowledged that this is not an easy decision for families and that exceptional circumstances will be reviewed at the school level. In an effort to better meet the needs of the community, a new communication was developed with inclusive visuals, simplified language and audio recordings. This will be translated to fifteen languages. Currently, staff are seeing approximately 6% of students requesting remote learning for 2021-22.

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

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 17, 2021 be extended an additional thirty minutes.

-Carried-

Trustees asked questions regarding the mask accommodation process. It was the Will of the Board to receive further information on this process including statistics, if possible. Trustees were provided with example accommodations. Trustees continued to ask questions on the secondary model of learning and vaccinations for youth.

STAFF AND BOARD REPORTS

AD HOC CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE

On June 8, 2020, The Board of Trustees approved the use of the proposed Integrity Commissioner to conduct formal investigations and directed the committee to provide revisions to Board Policy G201 - Trustee Code of Conduct to reflect the updated process. The committee met and revised the policy to reflect the updated process and use of an Integrity Commissioner. The committee has achieved its mandate and can now be dissolved. It was noted that the chart will be updated to reflect the content of the policy.

5. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by J. Herring:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy G201 - Trustee Code of Conduct as presented at the May 17, 2021, Committee of the Whole meeting; and

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the disbandment and discontinuation of the Ad Hoc Trustee Code of Conduct & Use of a Third Party Committee.

-Carried-

POLICY WORKING GROUP - TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Policy Working Group (PWG) had their initial meeting on May 10, 2021. At this meeting, the PWG reviewed the Terms of Reference and determined that it would be beneficial to add one additional trustee to the group in order to include a variety of voices from the Board of Trustees and allow for the work of the committee to continue during unplanned absences of trustee members.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board of Trustees approved the following amendments to the Policy Working Group Terms of Reference:

The addition of section 2.3 stating ‘The committee will develop and recommend a Policy Review & Development Process to review existing and create new policies’; and

The amendment of section 4.1 to replace ‘Two (2) Trustees’ with ‘Three (3) Trustees’.

-Carried-

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee M. Ramsay asked if staff plan to withdraw the All Staff Notice on the Israeli-Palestinian Struggle and its impact in Waterloo Region as he feels it is not neutral. Superintendent P. Rubenschuh noted that it is WRDSB practice to send out notices of support and encourage mindfulness of the impact on families in our Region when traumatic events occur. Staff have determined it is a neutral message of support for local families who have been negatively impacted and staff are not taking on a political position.

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

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 17, 2021 be extended an additional thirty minutes.

-Carried-

Trustee C. Watson asked if schools will resume in-person in June. Director J. Bryant shared that he has been working closely with CODE and the response from the Ministry of Education continues to be that they are working closely with provincial health leads and return of students will only occur if health officials agree it is safe to do so. It is always the hope to return students to schools and we will continue to await further direction. Trustees will be notified if staff receive an official decision.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 17, 2021, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 p.m.