

JUNE 21, 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, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

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, D. Liebermann, S. Miller, C. Newton, L. Read, P. Rubenschuh, G. Shantz, and M. Weinert.

Other staff in attendance: L. Agar, M. Delisle 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 K. Meissner, seconded by J. Herring:

That the agenda of the June 21, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Trustee C. Watson declared a conflict of interest in the previous in camera meeting.

DELEGATIONS

Trustee C. Watson joined the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Trustee M. Ramsay joined the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

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

- Mandi-May Bond - Volunteers in Schools
- Cait Glasson - Board Policy 4020 Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities

POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 1002 - OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

This policy has a requirement to be reviewed annually. A housekeeping change was recommended to Section 1.7.

2. Moved by C. Millar, seconded by J. Herring:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 1002 - Occupational Health and Safety as presented at the June 21, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting with the change of “they” to “employees” in Section 1.7.

-Carried-

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 1004 - HARASSMENT

This policy has a requirement to be reviewed annually. A housekeeping change was recommended to add “Ontario” to the Occupational Health and Safety Act in the Legal References and Section 4.1. Harassment in social relationships was clarified.

3. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by J. Herring:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 1004 - Harassment as presented at the June 21, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting with the addition of “Ontario” to the Occupational Health and Safety Act in the Legal References and Section 4.1.

-Carried-

REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY 1009 - VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

This policy has a requirement to be reviewed annually. A housekeeping change was recommended to add “Ontario” to the Occupational Health and Safety Act in the Legal References.

- 4.

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 1009 - Violence in the Workplace as presented at the June 21, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting with the addition of “Ontario” to the Occupational Health and Safety Act where mentioned.

-Carried-

REPORTS

COVID-19 PANDEMIC - VERBAL UPDATE

Director J. Bryant introduced the update and the topics to be covered. Associate Director L. Read updated trustees on the regularly scheduled vaccines for students, and that at this time, we have not been informed of any requirement for students to receive both COVID-19 vaccinations in order to attend school. Superintendent B. Lemon updated trustees on the vaccination rollout and vaccination sites. He noted that the use of volunteers in schools next year will be determined by the Ministry of Education's reopening guidelines. He also shared that staff worked closely with local Public Health to determine the health and safety protocols for year-end activities and connections.

Trustees asked questions regarding advocating for volunteers and receiving the reopening guidelines from the Ministry as soon as possible, fall commencement and year-end activities.

2020-2030 LONG-TERM ACCOMMODATION PLAN

The final version of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) 2020-2030 Long-Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP) updates the 2017 LTAP. It identifies short-term (one-to-five years) and medium-term (six-to-ten years) accommodation recommendations. The recommendations highlight priority areas for classroom additions, boundary studies, partnership opportunities and pupil accommodation reviews.

5. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by K.Meissner:

That the the Waterloo Region District School Board approves the 2020-2030 Long-Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP); and

That staff be directed to submit the LTAP to the Ministry of Education and all entities outlined in the notification list in Administrative Procedure 4990 - Community Planning and Facility Partnerships.

-Carried-

2021-2026 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN UPDATE

Coordinating Superintendent M. Gerard shared the background of the Accessibility Plan. D. Ahluwalia, Human Rights and Equity Advisor, shared the working group membership and information on the consultation process. They also reviewed the six main areas of plan objectives: Customer Service, Employment, Systemic, Communication and Information, Physical Environment and Transportation. The presentation also included next steps and the recommendation for approval.

Trustees asked questions regarding the consultation and plans for communication.

6. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by K. Meissner:

That the Board of Trustees approve the 2021 - 2026 Accessibility Plan presented to Committee of the Whole Meeting on June 21, 2021, in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians Act.

-Carried-

BOARD REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP IN THE ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION

Trustee L. Tremble reminded trustees of the benefits of OPSBA membership and noted that there were some revisions made to the policy to allow more flexibility in determining the Director and Voting Delegate.

7. Moved by L. Tremble, seconded by K. Smith:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve Board Policy 3007, and continue with membership in the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) for 2021-2022.

-Carried-

ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION (OPSBA) UPDATE

Trustee L. Tremble provided an update from the Annual General Meeting and Board of Directors' Meeting. The OPSBA Annual Report is available on the OPSBA website. She shared that OPSBA will be watching for further updates on the Ministry of Education's online learning proposal. OPSBA has started its Above and Beyond public awareness campaign and work continues on Project Compass.

Trustees were encouraged to read the OPSBA discussion paper in preparation for next Monday's discussion.

AD HOC SUSPENSION REVIEW COMMITTEE 2020-21

Trustee S. Piatkowski provided background on the work of the Suspension Review Committee and the delays it faced due to the pandemic and labour sanctions.

Superintendent B. Lemon provided a presentation which reviewed the challenging times, learning from the suspension data, The Keeping Students in Schools pilot program, restorative practices and the resulting recommendations.

Trustees asked questions regarding expanding the Keeping Students in Schools program.

8. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by J. Herring:

That for the Fall of 2021, staff of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) develop an implementation plan that prioritizes the role of restorative practices in schools, ensuring these practices are informed by evidence and the principles of equity and social justice. In addition, in the school year following the implementation of the new Student Information System, WRDSB staff will develop a strategy for ongoing monitoring and analysis of Suspension & Expulsion data at the school and system level; and with the acceptance of the recommendation, this ad hoc committee will be disbanded as its mandate is complete.

-Carried-

AD HOC SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER REVIEW COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT

Trustee K. Meissner provided an opening statement regarding the final report from the Ad Hoc School Resource Officer Review Committee. She referenced the work of the committee, including the decision to not consult WRDSB students so as to not cause additional harm or trauma. The committee used data gathered from other sources such as research papers and other school board reviews. The committee believed that the results of a survey would not show anything new or different compared to that of other school boards.

Trustees discussed the recommendation including the decision to not consult with students.

At the June 28, 2021, Board Meeting the related motion to postpone was replaced by a new motion to postpone and additional discussion.

Trustees discussed the motion to postpone in order to do further consultation.

Trustees discussed a motion to postpone.

9. Moved by M. Ramsay, seconded by C. Watson:

To postpone the motion from the Ad Hoc School Resource Officer Review Committee to April 11, 2022.

-Defeated-

Opposed:
J. Herring
K. Meissner
C. Millar
S. Piatkowski
L. Tremble
C. Whetham
K. Woodcock

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

That the June 21, 2021, Board Meeting be extended an additional thirty minutes.

-Carried-

Discussion continued on the main motion and some trustees commented that consultation with students was needed.

Trustee C. Watson moved to amend the motion to consult the Student Senate, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group and the Student Social Justice Group. This amendment was not deemed germane to the recommendation and was not allowed.

11. Moved by M. Ramsay, seconded by K. Smith:

To table the motion.

-Defeated-

Opposed:
J. Herring
C. Millar
K. Meissner
S. Piatkowski
L. Tremble
C. Whetham
K. Woodcock
R. McDonald*
Abstained:
C. Watson

* Student Trustees votes are recorded for the purpose of public record and for accountability to the student body; however, it is recognized that “a student trustee is not a member of the Board” (Education Act, Section 55 (2))

12. Moved by K Woodcock:

Call the question.

-Carried-

Opposed:
M. Ramsay
K. Smith
C. Watson
T. John-Jandles*

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R. McDonald*

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Trustee M. Ramsay requested a recorded vote.

13. Moved by K. Meissner, seconded by S. Piatkowski:

The School Resource Officer Review Committee recommends the following:

1. That the Waterloo Region District School Board issues a public apology acknowledging the harms of the School Resource Officer (SRO) Program to Black, Indigenous, and Racialized students.

2. That the Waterloo Region District School Board agrees to end the School Resource Officer (SRO) Program effective immediately.

3. That the Waterloo Region District School Board develops a clear procedure limiting the role of police in schools, other than incident response. Community partners with the capacity to deliver presentations and support services currently being provided by police officers should be identified, vetted, and promoted throughout the system.

4. That the Waterloo Region District School Board reviews the local School-Police Protocol through an equity, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive lens.

5. That the Waterloo Region District School Board explores restorative justice strategies and practices when addressing student discipline issues.

6. That the Waterloo Region District School Board write a letter to the Region of Waterloo, requesting that the funds previously used to deliver the School Resource Officer Program within the Waterloo Region District School Board be reallocated to community-based services for youth.

7. That the Board of Trustees dissolves the Ad Hoc School Resource Officer Review Committee.

-Carried-

In Favour:

J. Herring
C. Millar
K. Meissner
S. Piatkowski

Opposed:

M. Ramsay
K. Smith
T. John-Jandles*

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L. Tremble
J. Weston
C. Whetham
K. Woodcock

Abstained:
C. Watson
R. McDonald*

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14. Moved by J. Herring, seconded by C. Millar:

That the June 21, 2021, Board Meeting be extended an additional thirty minutes.

-Carried-

AD HOC SCHOOL NAMING REVIEW COMMITTEE UPDATE

Per the mandate established in the Terms of Reference, the Ad Hoc School Naming Review Committee (Committee) reviewed Policy 4020 - Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities using an anti-racist, decolonial and trauma-informed lens. Committee members independently used the Policy Review Guide developed by the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Department to review the existing policy. The revised Policy 4020 redresses the omissions in the existing policy and reflects the WRDSB’s commitment to Indigenous education, equity and inclusion, human rights and the importance of Reconciliation.

Trustee K. Woodcock provided an update on the work of the Committee to date and information on upcoming work. Superintendent P. Rubenschuh shared that engaging the community was a priority for the committee.

Trustees made comments in favour of the motion. It was asked if the committee had considered assigning a temporary name for Sir John A. MacDonald Secondary School while a review is undertaken.

15. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by L. Tremble:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the revised Policy 4020 Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities as presented at the June 21, 2021, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

-Carried-

TRUSTEE SELF-EVALUATION 2021

16. Moved by C. Millar, seconded by J. Herring:

That the Trustee Self-Evaluation 2021 be postponed until the June 28, 2021, Board Meeting.

-Carried-

QUESTION PERIOD

Student Trustee R. McDonald began to make a statement regarding the Ad Hoc School Resource Officer Review Committee Final Report. Chairperson J. Weston reminded him that as it was question period, he was required to pose a question. Trustee C. Watson called a Point of Order requesting he be allowed to make a statement. Given discussion on the agenda item had been completed, Chairperson J. Weston ruled against the Point of Order and directed Student Trustee R. McDonald to ask a question.

Student Trustee R. McDonald asked if next year the Board would consider further consultation regarding police involvement in schools. Superintendent P. Rubenschuh shared that there is a provincial police protocol in place that will provide direction for our relationship with the Waterloo Region Police Service. The motion approved today includes plans regarding community support.

Trustee M. Ramsay asked when the Board would have a renewed focus on student achievement for all students rather than have a revolution every day. Director J. Bryant confirmed that staff continue to focus on student achievement and well-being for all students, even through the pandemic.

Trustee C. Watson asked when and how the School Resource Officer program ending will be communicated to students, families and the community. Director J. Bryant reminded trustees that the decision will have to be ratified at the upcoming Board Meeting, after which a communication plan would be developed.

ADJOURNMENT

17. Moved by J. Herring, seconded by K. Meissner:

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of June 21, 2021, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 10:17 p.m.