

SEPTEMBER 13, 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, K. Smith, L. Tremble, C. Watson, C. Whetham and K. Woodcock.

Trustee M. Ramsay was unable to attend.

Student Trustees K. Soror and N. Vishkin were in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: j. chanicka (Director of Education and Secretary), D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, R. DeBoer, E. Dougan-McKenzie, M. Gerard, E. Giannopoulos, C. Hill, P. Kaur, D. Lataille-Herdsman, B. Lemon, D. Liebermann, S. Miller, L. Read and G. Shantz.

Other staff in attendance: J. Brown, M. Delisle, S. Dunlop, J. Elmes, R. Lam 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. Woodcock, seconded by K. Meissner:

That the agenda of the September 13, 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

Chairperson J. Weston shared regrets from Trustee M. Ramsay.

DELEGATIONS

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

- Paul Reinheimer - COVID-19 Vaccinations
- Yvonne Haley - COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate

The follow delegation submitted a written statement:

- Allison Reinheimer Moore - COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate

REPORTS

BANK BORROWING RESOLUTION

In the normal course of business, the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) borrows money to meet its operating expenditures. This is necessary because of timing differences between our collection of revenues from municipalities and the province, and our payment schedules for the expenditures of the WRDSB. The Education Act allows borrowing up to the uncollected amount of revenues of the Board. A \$50M borrowing limit has been sufficient to meet the Board's cash flow needs. There is no evidence to support a further increase to the borrowing limit.

Trustee C. Watson moved an amendment to include the dollar value in the main motion. Trustees discussed the amendment and it was suggested by staff that if further information was required in the motion, that the full resolution on Appendix A could be included rather than just one part but that the reference to the details in Appendix A suffices. Manager of Corporate Services S. Reidel indicated that the minutes will include the dollar value.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board amend the motion to read:

“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 up to \$50M to meet current expenditures of the Waterloo Region District School Board for fiscal year 2022.

-Amendment defeated-

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

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

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 fiscal year 2022.

-Carried-

Opposed: C. Watson

SCHOOL REOPENING UPDATE

Director j. chanicka introduced the presentation and noted that the health and safety of students and staff is a priority. Associate Director L. Read reviewed the agenda for the presentation. Interim Chief Communications Officer E. Dougan-McKenzie reviewed the communications to families for returning to school. Superintendent B. Lemon reviewed COVID-19 case and contact management and the return to sports.

Trustees asked questions regarding how the delta variant affects case management and staff supervision for extra-curricular activities.

Coordinating Superintendent G. Shantz reviewed the vaccination disclosure requirements and timeline. Senior Manager of Human Resource & Equity Services J. Brown reviewed further information regarding the vaccination disclosure including education content and testing requirements for non-vaccinated staff. Dr. D. Liebermann, Senior Manager of Research and Evidence-Based Practice, spoke to the reporting requirements for vaccination disclosures.

Trustees asked questions regarding reporting vaccination disclosures and the local public health unit's position on boards going "above and beyond" on vaccination disclosure.

Trustees discussed a motion to explore possible avenues for enhancing the COVID-19 vaccine reporting system including the additional staff time this would require, the decisions made by other school boards, and if staff can be required to be vaccinated.

Trustee J. Herring called a Point of Order on Trustee C. Watson for interrupting Chairperson J. Weston when she was trying to answer Trustee C. Watson's question. Trustee C. Watson called a Point of Order on Trustee J. Herring to indicate that she is listening to the explanation. Chairperson J. Weston stated that she responded to the question and that the discussion will move forward.

Director j. chanicka was agreeable to the timelines in the motion.

Discussion continued and a motion to defer was moved.

4. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by K. Smith:

That the motion be deferred for a couple of weeks to allow staff to provide additional information.

-Deferral defeated-

Opposed:
J. Herring
K. Meissner

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C. Millar
S. Piatkowski
L. Tremble
C. Whetham
K. Woodcock
*K. Soror
*N. Vishkin

* 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))

At the September 27, 2021, Board Meeting further discussion occurred on the related motion as there was a procedural error regarding the timeline for information to be brought back to the Board. Vice-Chairperson S. Piatkowski clarified that no resulting actions were anticipated tonight.

5. Moved by S. Piatkowski, seconded by C. Millar:

That the Director of Education explore possible avenues for enhancing the COVID-19 vaccine reporting system for WRDSB employees beyond the vaccine reporting requirements established by the Province of Ontario; and

That this exploration involve consultation with OPSBA, CODE, other Ontario school boards, bargaining units, non-unionized employee groups, Waterloo Region Public Health, and legal counsel; and

That Trustees be updated on the progress of these discussions no later than the September 27, 2021, Board meeting.

-Carried-

Opposed:
K. Smith
C. Watson

Manager of Health, Safety & Security S. Dunlop reviewed the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements and the WRDSB staff PPE program. Senior Manager of Human Resource & Equity Service J. Brown spoke to the liability related to the PPE program. Manager of Health, Safety & Security S. Dunlop spoke to the Ministry of Education requirements for ASTM Level 1 rated medical masks. Coordinating Superintendent G. Shantz provided concluding remarks regarding masks.

Trustees asked questions of clarification regarding the liability for employees using masks not provided by the WRDSB and it was noted that at this time, the WRDSB is not allowing

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deviation from the PPE program. Clarification regarding portables and access to handwashing was also provided.

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee C. Watson asked why we have oversized class sizes and what staff are going to do to reduce those larger secondary class sizes. Coordinating Superintendent G. Shantz shared that staffing and the number of classes are based on enrolment projections. In September each year, there is a process for elementary and secondary for identifying pressures and addressing the high volume classes where possible, working toward compliance with Ministry requirements and collective agreements.

Student Trustee K. Soror shared that she polled secondary students and found that not all students are receiving a break during the 150 minute learning block. She asked if staff could ensure that all students receive breaks. Superintendent R. DeBoer shared that teachers are using a variety of ways to provide learning or “brain” breaks depending on the course. It was noted that students are required to have 300 minutes of learning in a day and a required number of hours in a semester. Prior to the pandemic, the only break was 5 minutes to walk to their next class. Students with concerns should contact their teacher, guidance counselor or vice-principal.

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of September 13, 2021, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.