

FEBRUARY 13, 2023
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. Weston (Chairperson), B. Cody, C. Johnson, F. Meissner, M. Radlein, M. Ramsay, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

Virtual Attendees: S. Piatkowski, M. Snyder and M. Waseem.

Student Trustee V. Raina was in attendance and Student Trustee K. Soror attended virtually.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: S. Miller (Interim Director of Education and Secretary), L. Agar, D. Ahluwalia, J. Albrecht, E. Dougan-McKenzie, E. Giannopoulos, C. Hill, N. Landry, B. Lemon, D. Liebermann and G. Shantz.

Other staff in attendance: S. Galliher West, R. Howey, M. Mayer and S. Reidel.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson J. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.

Chairperson J. Weston welcomed Scott Miller as Interim Director for the next few weeks.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

That the agenda of the February 13, 2023, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved.

-Carried-

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trustee M. Radlein and Chairperson J. Weston attended the Winter Walk at Chicopee Hills Public School.

Trustees F. Meissner and M. Radlein attended the art exhibit at the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery featuring sculptures from Grade 11 and 12 students from Forest Heights Collegiate Institute.

Trustee S. Piatkowski shared that retired Associate Director L. Read was awarded MPP Catherine Fife's Leading Women award recognizing the remarkable contributions of women and girls who live in Waterloo and who have demonstrated exceptional leadership to improve the

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lives of others. Chairperson J. Weston announced that Waterloo Collegiate Institute student Paris Cai was also a recipient.

Trustee M. Waseem acknowledged Student Trustees V. Raina and K. Soror for their work on the new Student Trustee elections which are underway and Chairperson J. Weston encouraged all Grade 9 through 12 students to vote.

Trustee M. Ramsay shared that Eleanor Jeavons, a grade 7 student at MacGregor Public School, won the inaugural Waterloo Region ECU Regional Scripps Spelling Bee and will be competing at the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington D.C. He thanked and acknowledged the Education Credit Union for their role. Trustee M. Ramsay will provide the Manager of Corporate Services with the information so that the Chairperson can send a congratulatory letter.

Chairperson J. Weston and Vice-Chair K. Woodcock have been scheduling meetings with local Members of Provincial Parliament to discuss transportation, capital priorities, and timing regarding funding for new schools.

DELEGATIONS

Student Trustee K. Soror joined the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

The following delegations spoke at this evening's meeting:

- Cristina Fernandes - The Board's Role
- Ahmed Kassad - Communication with the Public
- Julia Malott - Fostering Accepting Environments
- Lisa Cook - Closure of the Integrated Support Special Needs Program (ISP)
- Jason Blamire - Closure of the Integrated Support Special Needs Program (ISP)
- Zack Faubert-Tetreault, Kathleen Hayward, Amanda Wright & Jamie Dyke - Cancellation of French Immersion at Cedar Creek Public School

Trustees were provided an opportunity to ask questions of clarification of each delegation.

While trustees asked questions of clarification from Cristina Fernandes, Trustee C. Watson called a Point of Information and asked that Chairperson J. Weston clarify that she suggested that parents only go to the school Principal with concerns and not to the Board of Trustees. Chairperson J. Weston clarified that she was referring to the Process for Addressing Concerns on the WRDSB website which indicated the steps that should be followed by a parent with a concern. Trustee M. Ramsay called a Point of Order on Trustee M. Waseem for providing incorrect information that the Ministry of Education approves library books. Trustee M. Waseem apologized for the error.

After the delegation from Ahmed Kassad, Chairperson J. Weston clarified that the Board of Trustees received information that the consent agenda process decision at the January 30, 2023, Board Meeting was incorrect and Trustee C. Watson received an apology.

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

That the recommendations in the delegation from Ahmed Kassad be referred to staff for consideration and follow up.

-Carried-

Opposed:
S. Piatkowski
M. Snyder

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

That the delegation from Julia Malott be referred to staff for information and follow up.

-Carried-

Trustees discussed a motion to include the delegation in the minutes verbatim.

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

That the delegation from Julia Malott be stated verbatim in the minutes.

-Defeated-

Opposed:
C. Johnson
F. Meissner
S. Piatkowski
M. Radlein
M. Snyder
M. Waseem
K. Woodcock
*V. Raina
*K. Soror

* 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))

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

That the delegation from Lisa Cook be referred to staff to provide a response.

-Carried-

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

That the delegation from Lisa Cook be included on a future meeting agenda as scheduled by the Agenda Development Committee; and

That a staff report be provided including reasons for the decision to end the Integrated Support Special Needs Program (ISP) and if reconsideration is possible.

-Carried-

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

That the delegation from Jason Balmire be referred to staff to respond and to inform the future agenda item on the Integrated Support Special Needs Program.

-Carried-

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

That the delegation from Zack Faubert-Tetrault be referred to staff; and

That the delegation from Zack Faubert-Tetrault be included on a future meeting agenda as scheduled by the Agenda Development Committee including a staff report for possible reconsideration.

-Carried-

STAFF FOLLOW UP

POSTPONED MOTION: LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION

The postponed motion was moved by Trustee C. Watson and seconded by Trustee B. Cody at the January 23, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting. Through a majority vote it was postponed “until such time as staff could contact the Region of Waterloo and determine it would be helpful to the process.”

E. Dougan-McKenzie, Executive Officer, shared that she had an opportunity to communicate with the Commissioner for Transportation Services at the Region of Waterloo (Region). He agreed that a letter from the WRDSB advocating to have the school zone broadened would be of assistance to the Region. The current definition makes it difficult to designate the area in question as a school zone.

Trustees discussed the motion and Chairperson J. Weston noted that in reviewing the map, Pebblecreek Drive to just past Lackner Boulevard or to Idle Creek Drive would encompass the area of concern. Through friendly amendments, Trustees modified the motion.

9. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by B. Cody:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board write a letter to the Minister of Transportation asking that the definition of School Zone be broadened; and

That in Kitchener, Fairway Road North, from Pebblecreek Drive to Idle Creek Drive, be redesignated as a school zone.

-Carried-

REPORTS

DEVELOPMENT AREAS ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Development Areas (DA) Report summarizes recommendations for consideration and decision by the Board of Trustees. The 2022-2023 Annual Development Areas Report recommends the following:

- The establishment of new DAs, effective immediately (Appendix A); and
- The reassignment of existing Development Areas, effective for the 2023-2024 school year (Appendix B).

New DA assignments intend to capture mid- to long-range future growth and development plans. In contrast, DA re-assignments reflect a more immediate or urgent need to re-evaluate holding schools due to growth patterns, student yields, or facility and/or site considerations. The Communication Plan regarding Hunt Club (River Mill North) DA and all other DAs were provided.

Trustees asked questions regarding the Hunt Club (River Mill North) DA. A motion to postpone the decision until parents are informed and consulted was withdrawn after some discussion and clarification that existing students residing in Hunt Club (River Mill North) DA can continue at either Hillcrest Public School until the end of Grade 6 with transportation.

Discussion on the main motion continued including questions regarding the grandparenting process for existing students, kindergarten students not yet registered, the warning clauses now included in agreements of purchase and sale in development areas and communication plans.

Trustee C. Watson moved a motion to postpone pending consultation of potentially affected families. Trustees discussed this motion to postpone and asked questions regarding the transportation cap indicated in WRDSB procedures and consultation processes.

Trustee C. Watson called a Point of Information indicating that staff made it clear there are families in the development area. Chairperson J. Weston noted that her comment was not a Point of Information but that she would call on Trustee C. Watson shortly to clarify this information.

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Discussion continued on the motion to postpone. It was clarified that the families in question would be those living in the Hunt Club (River Mill North) DA with school age children and some not yet in school.

10. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by C. Watson:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board extend the meeting an additional thirty minutes to 10:00 p.m.

-Carried-

Discussion on the postponement continued with questions regarding consultation with the community, concerns regarding the delay and transportation.

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

That the Waterloo Region District School Board postpone the decision until potentially affected families are given this information and the opportunity to delegate.

-Postponement Defeated-

Opposed:
C. Johnson
F. Meissner
S. Piatkowski
M. Radlein
M. Ramsay
M. Snyder
J. Weston
K. Woodcock
*V. Raina
*K. Soror

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12. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by M. Radlein:

That the question be called.

-Carried-

Opposed:
B. Cody
C. Watson

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At the March 6, 2023 Board Meeting, the following motion was approved to refer the Development Areas Annual Report back to staff:

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

That the motion be referred back to staff to gather information on the number of families requiring grandfathering for possible reconsideration; and

That staff take the delegations of the March 6, 2023, Board Meeting into consideration.

-Carried-

In Favour:

B. Cody
M. Radlein
M. Ramsay
M. Snyder
M. Waseem
C. Watson
J. Weston
K. Soror*

Opposed:

C. Johnson
F. Meissner
S. Piatkowski
K. Woodcock

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13. Moved by M. Radlein, seconded by F. Meissner:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the new Development Areas, attached as Appendix A to the report titled “Development Areas Annual Report 2022-2023,” presented at the February 13, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting, effective March 1, 2023; and

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the amendments to existing Development Areas, attached as Appendix B to the report titled “Development Areas Annual Report 2022-2023,” presented at the February 13, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting, effective for the 2023-2024 school year; and

That those students residing in the Hunt Club (River Mill North) Development Area as of February 13, 2023, and registered at Hillcrest Public School, may remain at Hillcrest Public School until the end of Grade 6; and

That transportation be provided to Hillcrest Public School for those students in the

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Hunt Club (River Mill North) Development Area, in accordance with Section 12 (Grandparenting Provision) of Administrative Procedure 4260 - Student Transportation, for a period not to exceed June 30, 2030.

-Referred back to Staff at the March 6, 2023, Board Meeting-

ANONYMOUS REPORTING TOOL UPDATE

Superintendent B. Lemon reviewed the background leading to the implementation of the Anonymous Reporting Tool including the originating motion from the Board of Trustees. He reviewed the process undertaken when a report is filed and lessons learned during the pilot period. He also reviewed the data collected to date.

14. Moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by C. Watson:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board extend the meeting an additional thirty minutes to 10:30 p.m.

-Carried with two-thirds-

Trustees asked questions regarding process, data collection and actions that may result from trends in the data. It was noted that trustees could receive reports in the future. It was suggested that staff consider adding additional guidance to assist the reporters in providing enough information for investigations to occur. Superintendent B. Lemon also indicated that the preferred method for students to bring forward concerns is through speaking with a trusted adult. Trustees asked questions regarding the annual cost, trends in data and communication. It was suggested that it is a valuable tool for students not comfortable sharing their concerns with an adult.

BOARD REPORTS

**MOTION TO SCHEDULE: PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS BY TRUSTEE
C. WATSON**

At the December 19, 2023 Board Meeting, a Notice of Motion, with Bylaw amendments, was served by Trustee C. Watson with support from Trustee B. Cody. The Board of Trustees is required to follow Section 1.3 when dealing with Bylaw amendments. Section 1.3.1. of the Bylaws require a majority vote of trustees present to support the scheduling of the Notice of Motion. If scheduling is approved this evening by a majority vote, the Notice of Motion will be discussed at the March 20, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting as outlined in section 1.3.2. of the Bylaws.

After a short discussion regarding the Policy Working Group's mandate, which does not include bylaw amendments, the motion to schedule was withdrawn by Trustees C. Watson and M. Ramsay.

QUESTION PERIOD

Trustee K. Woodcock asked if staff have made any decisions regarding remote learning options for students who are unable to return to in person learning for a variety of reasons. Interim Director S. Miller shared that the WRDSB would have a remote learning option in both the elementary and secondary panels. A further update will be available in the near future.

Trustee M. Ramsay asked about days of significance, the upcoming Easter holiday and the expectations at school. Interim Director S. Miller noted recent media attention regarding Valentine's Day and reiterated that the WRDSB has not cancelled Valentine's Day. He shared it has been the practice over the last 5-6 years that traditional secular holidays continue to be de-centered and other holidays celebrated by students in the system are also being celebrated as a learning opportunity. Central messaging to administrators includes equity considerations as some activities can cause financial strain, not all families celebrate Valentine's Day and not all students receive cards. Valentine's Day continues to be an opportunity to celebrate love, kindness and caring. Central guidance is given to schools in order to assist school administrators in making school-based decisions on holiday activities. This is often done in consultation with school councils; however, each school community is different.

Trustee M. Radlein asked why the decision regarding Integrated Support Special Needs Program (ISP) was made and what will be different in the regular classroom to ensure student success. Interim Director S. Miller shared that the ISP was never meant to be a true congregated classroom, but one to support students to integrate back to their classroom. Superintendent J. Albrecht provided information on the transition planning process and support available to both educators and students. For students moving out of the Integrated Support Program, individualized, coordinated and detailed transition plans will be developed so that school and board staff will be prepared to meet the needs of the student, contributing to smooth transitions and paving the way for the student's future success. The planning for these transitions will include input from a number of different contributors including the student themselves, the student's family, educators from both the sending and receiving schools, members of the school's Multidisciplinary Support Team and other relevant central support staff, as needed. In addition, where families may be working with community partners, we would happily engage with them as well for the transition planning. This transition planning and work will be happening throughout the spring and as needed as we move into the next school year. In addition to the transition planning and support that will be developed collaboratively, when students are in their new school, staff will continue to be able to access support through our Student Support Process. Through our Student Support Process, schools have access to a Speech Language Pathologist, Psychologist, Social Worker, Special Education consultant, Itinerant staff, Transition facilitator, and our Board Certified Behavior Analysts who are able to provide support for educators and students. Among the resources available to schools, decisions on who will be best suited to provide the necessary support will be made collaboratively with the school's Multi-Disciplinary Support Team.

ADJOURNMENT

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15. Moved by M. Radlein, seconded by K. Woodcock:

That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 13, 2023, be adjourned.

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.