

**SEPTEMBER 18, 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, S. Estoesta, C. Johnson, J. Meissner, S. Piatkowski, M. Radlein, M. Ramsay, M. Waseem, C. Watson and K. Woodcock.

Student Trustees A. Awan and C. Dong were in attendance.

The following senior administration members were in attendance: j. chanicka (Director of Education and Secretary), D. Ahluwalia, M. Armellini, R. Dallan, E. Dougan-McKenzie, N. Landry, D. Liebermann, S. Miller and G. Shantz.

Other staff in attendance: L. Lima, M. Mayer and S. Reidel.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson J. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:28 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**That the agenda of the September 18, 2023, Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved with the addition of 4 delegations.**

-Carried-

**DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Trustee C. Johnson had the pleasure of joining Coronation Public School on the first day of school.

**DELEGATIONS**

The following delegations spoke at this evening's meeting:

- Amanda Abdo - Indoor Air Quality Ad Hoc Committee Motion
- Ryan Tennant - Indoor Air Quality
- Adam Glauser - Indoor Air Quality Ad Hoc Committee Motion
- Kate Laing - Indoor Air Quality

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

## REPORTS

### **BANK BORROWING RESOLUTION**

Superintendent N. Landry introduced Miruna Armellini, the new Controller, Financial Services.

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 (subsection 243) allows borrowing up to the uncollected amount of revenues of the Board. Staff are recommending that the borrowing limit be maintained at \$65M to ensure we have sufficient liquidity to meet our short-term needs.

Trustees asked questions regarding the Daily Net Cash position.

2. Moved by K Woodcock , seconded by M/ Radlein:

**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 2024.**

-Carried-

### **2024 BOARD RETIREMENT CELEBRATION**

Feedback from retirees, trustees and staff who attended the reception on June 6, 2023, was overwhelmingly positive. Guests appreciated the more relaxed format allowing them the opportunity to mingle and visit with one another, resulting in a more social and enjoyable event. The selection of gifts was also appreciated, allowing each retiree to choose the gift of their preference. The option to donate the equivalent value of the mantle clock (previous gift to retirees) also remained a popular option with 24% of retirees choosing to donate rather than receive a gift.

Trustees asked questions regarding the feedback received and provided their account of the evening.

3. Moved by C. Johnson, seconded by M. Radlein:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve celebrating 2023-24 WRDSB retirees through a reception, in June 2024, based on the success of the June 6, 2023 Retirement Celebration event; and**

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2023**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

**That a small catalogue of gifts once again be provided to the 2023-24 retirees to choose from, including the option to donate the value (of the clock) to either Nutrition for Learning, Food4Kids or WEFI, to acknowledge their service to the board.**

-Carried-

Abstained: C. Watson

**BOARD REPORTS**

**2023 TRUSTEE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT**

This report was provided for information.

The Waterloo Region District School Board Policy G400 - Board of Trustees Planning Cycle and Evaluations - provides for an annual performance self-assessment of the Board of Trustees, augmented by broader input at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. Six out of eleven WRDSB Trustees and Student Trustees participated in the Self-evaluation. The responses can be found in Appendix A of the report.

It was noted that Trustee J. Meissner will be joining the committee.

Trustees discussed the feedback received, noting that each trustee completed the survey based on their own opinion.

Trustee K. Woodcock called a Point of Order stating the survey was supposed to be anonymous when Trustee C. Watson began to read out her own full comments. Chairperson J. Weston sustained the Point of Order reminding trustees that responses were compiled and themes shared in the report. The Committee was asked to take the feedback received today into consideration for next year's survey.

**MOTION: INDOOR AIR QUALITY AD HOC COMMITTEE**

The Notice of Motion was served at the June 12, 2023, Committee of the Whole meeting by Trustee C. Watson with support from Trustee M. Ramsay. Trustee C. Watson spoke to her motion, what was heard from the delegations and the importance of providing transparent air quality data.

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

**That the Waterloo District School Board suspend Bylaw 9.12 allowing trustees to speak without limit on the topic at hand.**

-Carried-

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2023**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

An updated Terms of Reference for the Ad Hoc Committee was accepted as a friendly amendment to the motion.

Trustees discussed an amendment to remove bus air quality from the motion.

5. Amendment moved by M. Radlein and second by K. Woodcock:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board change the motion to remove the following:**

**“That the air quality of buses also be discussed with possible solutions that would help monitor air quality of buses during the school year”**

-Carried-

Opposed:  
B. Cody  
S. Piatkowski  
M. Ramsay  
C. Watson  
J. Weston

A friendly amendment was accepted to change the committee composition paragraph to read: “That the committee include, at minimum, appropriate staff, two trustees, two parents, a relevant licensed professional engineer, two frontline teachers from the elementary and secondary panel as well as student trustees.” It was noted that any changes to the motion would be reflected in the Terms of Reference.

Trustees discussed an amendment to remove “a relevant licensed professional engineer” from the motion. Trustee K. Woodcock called a Point of Order asking that Trustee C. Watson refrain from assuming her motivations for the amendment. Chairperson J. Weston was in favour of the Point of Order and asked Trustees to be conscientious of the way statements are phrased.

Discussion on the amendment continued and staff noted that there are many skilled and knowledgeable employees, including engineers, at the WRDSB supporting air quality. The WRDSB also works with engineering firms to ensure expectations are met. Staff also noted that there are a number of air quality practices already in place with a report coming to trustees in December 2023 sharing the results of the CO2 monitoring pilot program, which may provide insight into this work.

6. Amendment moved by K. Woodcock, seconded by M. Radlein:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board change the motion to remove “ a relevant licensed professional engineer” from the committee membership.**

-Carried-

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2023**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

Opposed: C. Watson

Trustees continued discussion on the amended motion. A friendly amendment was accepted to change the reporting date to a Committee of the Whole meeting in March 2024.

Trustees continued discussion on the amended motion. They discussed the language regarding the development of a policy within the motion. It was noted that with staff on the committee, they could share any efforts started on a policy. When asked, staff clarified the diligent steps being taken to review the CR boxes donated to the Board.

A friendly amendment to write a letter advocating for funding was accepted and language was discussed.

7. Amended motion moved by C. Watson, seconded by M. Ramsay:

**That the Waterloo Region District School Board strike an ad hoc committee that would develop an indoor air quality policy that would consider the following items but not limited to, air purifiers and the ratio of air purifiers for every learning space per school, placement and replacement of air purifiers, the advantages and cost effectiveness of CR boxes, appropriate window use, portable CO2 monitors with real time readings that are easily read within the classroom environment, consideration for ongoing evaluation of emerging technology as well as a reporting procedure that would inform parents, and parent councils and staff about the quality of air in classrooms and working environments; and**

**That the committee include, at minimum, appropriate staff, two trustees, two parents, two frontline teachers from the elementary and secondary panel as well as student trustees; and**

**That the indoor air quality policy upon completion be presented to the Board of Trustees at a Committee of the Whole in March 2024 for approval; and**

**That the Chair write to the Minister of Education, including the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Ontario Chief Medical Advisor and Chair of the Public Health Board, requesting:**

- a) **updates to air quality standards and guidance for public school buildings to support schools in creating the safest possible learning environments; and**
- b) **dedicated capital and operating funding envelopes for reducing the spread of illness.**

-Amended Motion Carried-

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2023**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

8. Moved by C. Watson, seconded by C. Johnson:

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

-Carried-

**QUESTION PERIOD**

Trustee M. Radlein asked what the impact has been on classrooms during start-up in light of our current budget deficit and challenges school boards faced with staffing in the last school year and if there is understaffing in the employee groups or any other unexpected challenges. Associate Director G. Shantz shared that the majority of school-based staff are in place and that the WRDSB continues to look for occasional staff for vacancies, which is still a challenge provincially. He also mentioned that it continues to be a challenge to hire central staff with unique skill sets.

Trustee M. Radlein also asked if staff have any suggestions as to how the Board of Trustees could engage community agencies in supporting staff in student learning. Executive Officer E. Dougan-McKenzie shared that the upcoming Trustee Seminar on Stakeholder Engagement will be useful for trustees looking to engage community agencies.

Trustee K. Woodcock asked staff to explain why we are unable to accept donations of HEPA filters. Associate Director G. Shantz noted that while donations are well-meaning, it is important that the WRDSB maintain certain standards of products and that donations result in items requiring maintenance. Typically, WRDSB needs are met through the Ministry of Education funding but noted that calls for specific donations have occurred in the past.

Trustee M. Waseem asked How the Disengaging From Work protocol applies to the Senior Team and what, if any, gaps in the protocol exist that we may need to be aware of to ensure the Senior Team also have opportunities to meaningfully disconnect from work and recharge. Associate Director G. Shantz shared that the policy is meant to apply to all staff members and that all Ontario organizations with 50 employees or more are required to have such a policy. The Senior Team is making their best efforts to disconnect but it is a learning experience as their work day is quite lengthy. He noted that Trustees can practice the same processes and use good judgment on whether something is urgent or can wait for the work day to be sent.

Trustee C. Johnson asked for some statistics regarding the WRDSB. Associate Director G. Shantz shared that there are 107 elementary schools, 16 secondary schools, between 10-12 other schools such as alternative or adult learning and 65,000 students. He shared that of the 10,000 active employees at the WRDSB, 400-500 work at the Education Centre and all others are school-based staff.

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2023**  
**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

Trustee M. Ramsay asked what criteria is used for speakers invited into schools and if parents are notified. Associate Director S. Miller offered to bring the criteria back to the Board of Trustees at a future meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

9. Moved by C. Johnson, seconded by J. Meissner:

**That the Committee of the Whole Meeting of September 18, 2023, be adjourned.**

-Carried-

The meeting adjourned at 9:39 p.m.