

WILLOW RUN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Ypsilanti, MI

Regular Meeting

January 24, 2002

The regular meeting opened at 7:30 p.m. at Thurston ECDC, 181 Oregon, with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Those present were:

Clifford Smith, President
Andreas Blakita, Vice President
Claudette Braxton, Secretary
Brenda Clay, Trustee
Mark Wilde, Trustee
Scott Wilson, Trustee

Absent:

Earl Roberson, Treasurer

Also present were:

Dr. Gayle Green, Superintendent
George MacLeod, Director, Special Education
Ray Mellberg, Principal, Kaiser Elementary
Steve Smaka, Director, Business Services
Katie Smith, Director, Technology

President Smith called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Consideration of Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

Dr. Green informed the Board of two additions to the agenda:

- Item VI.E. – Acceptance of Expulsion Reinstatement Committee Recommendation
- Item VIII.B.3. – Approval of Contract for Geotechnical Evaluations

Approval of Agenda

#01020111 Ms. Braxton moved that the Board of Education accept the agenda as amended.
Ms. Clay supported.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Excellence in Education

Ms. Williams, Principal, Thurston ECDC, welcomed everyone to Thurston on behalf of herself, the staff, and the children of the school. She also introduced the Thurston staff.

After the introductions, Ms. Higgs' class recited the motto Thurston ECDC student's say everyday, "I Am a Thurston Student". This motto is recited to help instill the value of making good choices into the students.

Mr. Joseph Campbell gave a brief overview of the two preschool programs in the Willow Run Community School District, one being the Headstart Program and the other being the Michigan School Readiness Program. There are 221 students enrolled in these two programs - 136 in Headstart and 85 in the Michigan School Readiness Program. Mr. Campbell said although they are two different programs they are basically the same in that they both strive to teach children literacy, social, emotional, and safety skills, among other lessons.

Mr. Campbell said that in order to make an impact on the students it is necessary to service the entire family by involving them in activities to help their children grow.

The necessity of servicing the entire family was echoed by Ms. McClee who spoke about the importance of breaking the cycle of poverty so many families find themselves in. She said in order to help families they are encouraged to share with her their needs including those of jobs, food, clothing, and medical care and she will help them find the resources to fulfill these needs.

Ms. McClee also spoke about the "Read to Kids" program, which encourages parents to read to their children everyday. Every member of a family is eligible to receive a free book every month by simply reading ten books each per month.

Ms. Millhouse read a poem which was written by a student in her class of last year, entitled "Strength to Love", a poem about Martin Luther King, Jr., and how he demonstrated the strength to love. The reading of this poem was followed by Ms. Mitchell's preschool class "the Fiddle Faddles", singing two songs, "Snowing" and "Snow Man".

Mr. Cowell then walked the Board through a day in the life of a kindergartener in his class. He emphasized that the words "I can't" are not allowed in his class, but the words, "I can" and "I'll try" are. Mr. Cowell concluded his presentation with the "Did Tooti Taa" Dance, which was performed by him as well as by volunteers from the audience.

Ms. Perlin, made the book, "Trouble with Trolls", come "alive" by acting out the story using the adlib method and props that included skis, a hat, boots, a sweater, and others, and by including the students in the acting out of the story.

The First Steps Collaboration was explained by Don Govyn, Renee DeMerchant, and Mike Rose. First Steps is a program that helps parents ready their preschool children for school, by running playgroups and by going on home visits to teach parents how to use household items as toys and teaching tools. The goal of this program is to teach parents that they are their children's best teachers.

A PowerPoint presentation about the Physical and Occupational Therapy Services provided in the Willow Run Schools was presented by Ms. Acker, P.T., and Ms. Kwiatkowski, O.T.R. They explained that the services they provide are presented in both one-on-one and group settings, and that children are monitored throughout the year to see how they are doing.

Ms. Acker and Ms. Kwiatkowski informed the Board of the early intervention services they provide for infants birth to three years, and that if needed adaptations/modifications are made from first grade on to allow the child to learn in an encouraging environment.

The Thurston program concluded with Ms. Williams thanking her staff for all their efforts to help Thurston students and families.

Mr. Smith thanked Ms. Williams and her staff for their wonderful presentation and said that Willow Run is very fortunate to have Ms. Williams in our district, and that we have a great staff and leader here at Thurston.

Approval of Minutes

#01020112 Ms. Braxton moved that the Board of Education approves the minutes as presented from the regular meeting of January 10, 2002. Mr. Wilson supported.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Approval of Payment of Bills

#01020113 Ms. Braxton moved that the Board of Education approves the payment of General Fund bills in the amount of \$2,594,681.72 and Building and Site Fund bills in the amount of \$123,091.59. Mr. Wilson supported.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Communications

Dr. Green shared the following communications with the Board:

- A thank you from the Salvation Army for the recent Christmas donation.
- An invitation to the 49th Annual Brotherhood Banquet on Friday, February 22, 2002.
- An Executive Declaration from Governor Engler, declaring January 23, 2002, as School Nurse Day. Dr. Green expressed her gratitude to our school nurses, Lori Day and Ann Marie Burdick for the many jobs they do.
- Governor Engler's Executive Declaration of January being School Board Member Recognition Month. Dr. Green presented engraved clocks to the board to thank them for the many hours they give to the Willow Run Community School district.

Board Committee Reports

Mr. Blakita reported that the Finance Committee met prior to tonight's Board meeting. Those present were: Mr. Blakita, Mr. Smith, Mr. Wilde, Dr. Green, and Mr. Smaka. Discussion centered on three areas, the first being the need for geotechnical evaluations at four of the schools (Edmonson, Cheney, Ford, and Holmes). The second item was the second refunding of the 1984 bond issue, which would save the taxpayers of the district approximately \$250,000. The third item up for discussion was the deregulation of natural gas, which means the elementary buildings can put out bids for the lowest gas price. The other buildings are under contract until next year for their gas needs.

Mr. Blakita reported that the Technical Committee also met prior to tonight's meeting. Those present were: Mr. Blakita, Mr. Smith, Dr. Green, Ms. Smith, and Mr. Wilde, along with two representatives from Barton Malow. Discussion at this meeting centered on the installation of fiber optic lines to be put into service at all buildings. This is an action item on the agenda and as such will be discussed later in the meeting.

Acceptance of Donation

#01020114 Mr. Wilson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept the donation of a stove valued at \$200, from Jennifer Shipley, to Holmes Elementary School. Ms. Clay supported.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Approval of Contract with Mac Professionals

#01020115 Ms. Clay moved that the Board of Education contracts with Mac Professionals for 130 hours of support services for computer repair/configurations, in the amount not to exceed \$11,450. Ms. Braxton supported.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Approval of Out-of-State Field Trip

#01020116 Ms. Clay moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve an out-of-state field trip on February 8, 2002, for Ms. Austin's and Ms. Bonich's first, second, and third grade classes to go to the Ritter Planetarium and Brooks Observatory in Toledo, Ohio. Mr. Wilson supported.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Approval of Fiber Proposal

#01020117 Mr. Blakita moved that the Board of Education accepts the bid in the amount of \$214,700 submitted by Advanced Communications Incorporated (ACI) to design/build/install a private-fiber optic wide area network. Expenses will be charged to the Durant Building and Site Fund.

Ayes: Mr. Wilson, Mr. Wilde, Ms. Clay, Mr. Blakita, Ms. Braxton, Mr. Smith
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Discussion

Ms. Smith said installation of these fiber optic lines will allow all the buildings in the district to have the same speed and access abilities for Internet access.

Mr. Twigg, representative from Barton Malow, explained that fiber optic lines will double the capacity of fiber and increase data speeds to allow for better performance. These lines will also enable the creation of an in-district phone system that will allow calls between buildings at no cost.

Acceptance of Expulsion Reinstatement Committee Recommendation

#01020118 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accepts the recommendation of the Reinstatement Committee to reinstate John Paton to Willow Run Community schools, conditional upon the requirements as attached. Ms. Braxton supported.

Ayes: Mr. Wilson, Mr. Wilde, Ms. Clay, Mr. Blakita, Ms. Braxton, Mr. Smith
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Refunding the District's 1992 Bonds

#01020119 Mr. Blakita moved that the Willow Run Board of Education award the firm of Comerica/Standard Federal as Underwriters for refunding the 1992 Refunding bonds. Mr. Wilde supported.

Ayes: Mr. Wilson, Mr. Wilde, Ms. Clay, Mr. Blakita, Ms. Braxton, Mr. Smith
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Approval of Payment of Barton Malow Invoice

#01020120 Ms. Braxton moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the payment of the attached Barton Malow invoice in the amount of \$10,384.50, for services rendered on the 2001 Bond Issue. Mr. Wilson supported.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Approval of Payment of Kingscott Associates Invoice

#01020121 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the payment of the attached Kingscott Associates, Inc. invoice in the amount of \$71,983.51, for services rendered on the 2001 Bond Issue. Mr. Wilson supported.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Approval of Contract for Geotechnical Evaluations

#01020122 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education contract with Materials Testing Consultants of Grand Rapids, Michigan to perform geotechnical evaluations of District property as part of the 2001 building project. Approved expenses shall not exceed \$19,900 and shall be charged to the 2001 Building and Site fund. Ms. Clay supported.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Superintendent's Comments

Dr. Green thanked Ms. Williams and the Thurston staff for their hospitality.

President's Comments

Mr. Smith announced that this is the last Board meeting Mr. Smaka will attend for Willow Run Community Schools, as he has resigned from the district. He then thanked Mr. Smaka for his efforts while in the district.

Board Comments

Ms. Braxton wished Mr. Smaka the best of luck in his future endeavors. Ms. Clay did the same. Mr. Blakita said thank you to Steve for all he has done and said the district would not be half as good as it is without his efforts.