

WILLOW RUN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Ypsilanti, Michigan

REGULAR MEETING

December 1, 2005

The regular meeting opened at 7:30 p.m. at Willow Run High School, 235 Spencer Lane Ypsilanti, MI 48198, with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those present were:

Claudette Braxton, President
Andreas Blakita, Trustee
Brenda Clay, Secretary
Tradell Hawkins, Student Representative
Clifford Smith, Trustee
Kristine Thomas, Trustee
Mark Wilde, Vice President
Scott Wilson, Treasurer

Members of the Administrative Council Present Included:

Ron Ciranna, J.D., Interim Superintendent
Dr. Walter Jenkins, Principal, Willow Run High School
Todd LaPrairie, Supervisor, Buildings and Grounds
Laura Lisiski, Principal, Kaiser Elementary School
Lana Tatom, Director, Elementary Curriculum, State and Federal Grants
Katie Smith, Director, Technology
Regina Williams, Director, Secondary Curriculum

Citizens' Time

Mr. Ken Wilson, Cheney attendance area, stated he feels the board's consideration of Dr. Ciranna as Interim Superintendent, which appears on this board agenda, is the result of crisis decision making. He asked the board to consider other options for this position.

Mr. Stanley Stewart, Cheney attendance area, asked why there is no board packet available for public inspection prior to board meetings. Ms. Braxton said the public can view all board packets prior to meetings at the administration building.

President Braxton called the meeting to order at 7:41 p.m.

Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

Dr. Ciranna added the following item to the agenda:

Closed Session of the Board of Education – following the regular meeting.

Approval of the Agenda

#05061201 Ms. Clay moved that the Board of Education accept the agenda as amended.
Ms. Thomas supported.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Excellence in Education

Ms. Lana Tatom and Ms. Penny Morgan gave an overview of the district's grant programs. Ms. Jane Jacobs of the Michigan Department of Education then explained Categorical Funding grants. She said in addition to state grants, Willow Run receives four Federal Grants, as well as the 32E Reduced Class Size Grant.

Ms. Jacobs stressed grant monies are "soft monies", therefore school districts should plan their expenditures on foundation dollars and use grant funds for extra programs and services.

Approval of Minutes

#05061202 Ms. Clay moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes as presented from the special meeting of November 14, 2005 and from the regular meeting of November 17, 2005. Mr. Wilde supported.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Communications

Bond Project Update

Mr. LaPrairie updated the board on the progress of the bond project, reporting everything is going well, with Barton Malow in the process of completing the remaining punch list items.

Mr. LaPrairie said the Press Box was seated on the structural steel and the electrical ties-ins and railing system should be completed Monday. He said the pool timing system is up and running and the remaining items at the elementary buildings are near completion.

Representatives from the company installing the new security camera system said it is near completion, with the server expected to be online by Friday. The middle school, and probably the high school, should be able to record beginning Monday. The elementary schools will be done soon.

Financial Update

Dr. Ciranna gave the board an update of the District's financial affairs. He, along with Brian Marcele, explained the largest factors contributing to the low fund balance are the enrollment decline of 586 students since the 1999-2000 school year, four million dollars in lost revenue, budgeting on property taxes, and the escalating cost of insurance and utilities.

Dr. Ciranna has formed a Budget Task Force to review and forecast the district's long-term planning, staffing and building of the fund equity.

Mr. Smith asked for a rationale of how the district went from a \$2.4 million fund equity to nothing in three-years.

Open Campus

Mr. Hawkins presented an appeal for an open campus for selected seniors. He presented both the pros and cons of such an idea, saying the district should give the seniors more freedom and positive things as a reward for their responsibility.

Mr. Hawkins will work on a presentation for the Policy Committee stating the guidelines for student's inclusion in the open campus program.

Board Committee Reports

Curriculum

Ms. Clay reported there was a Curriculum Committee meeting prior to this board meeting. Those present included Ms. Williams, Mr. Wilde, Ms. Tatom, Ms. Morgan, Dr. Ciranna, Ms. Clay and Ms. Braxton. The committee was given a preview of the grant presentation that took place at the regular meeting.

Personnel

Mr. Blakita reported on a meeting of the Personnel Committee, which took place prior to this meeting. In addition to Mr. Blakita, those present were Dr. Ciranna, Ms. Clay, and Ms. Braxton. The topic of discussion was the consideration of the extension of Dr. Ciranna's Interim Superintendent Contract.

Approval of Overnight Field Trip

#05061203 Mr. Wilde moved that the Board of Education approve an overnight field trip to the Wilderness State Park in Mackinaw City, Michigan, for the Willow Run High School Science Club, from December 8-11, 2005. Ms. Thomas supported.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Adoption of Contract – Police Services

#05061204 Ms. Thomas moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the Police Services Contract for the 2005-2006 Football and Basketball Season, at a cost of \$53.00 per hour, per deputy, \$64.00 per hour, per sergeant, and \$70.00 per hour, per lieutenant, as required by their respective contracts. Ms. Clay supported.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Adoption of Resolution – Authorizing the Transfer of Funds

#05061205 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the attached resolution authorizing transfer of funds for the repayment of the State of Michigan Municipal Bond Note dated August 19, 2005. Ms. Thomas supported.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Approval of Purchase – Truck with Plow Package

#05061206 Mr. Smith moved that the Board of Education approve purchase order #0722C for the purchase of one (1) new 2006 Ford F-250 truck with a western plow package included, from Varsity Ford, in the amount of \$21,454.00. Mr. Wilde supported.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Discussion

The board requested Mr. LaPrairie do a cost-comparison for an outside company verses our employees performing snow removal duties.

Approval of Purchase – WRMS CAD Printer

#05061207 Ms. Thomas moved that the Board of Education approves purchase order #0708C to SEHI totaling \$4,244.88 for a printer to be placed in the middle school CAD Lab. These items are to be charge to the 2001 Building and Site fund. Mr. Wilde supported.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 - Motion carried

Discussion

Ms. Smith explained this printer is unique to the CAD lab and is able to print the blueprints the students create.

Approval of Purchase – Environmental Consultant

#05061208 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the purchase order #0724C in the amount of \$40,639.00 for the environmental consulting services of Technical Service Professionals, L.L.C. Ms. Thomas supported.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Discussion

Mr. LaPrairie explained the consultant will oversee the project for the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and will test any found materials. Additionally they will subcontract the excavation of the site and the transportation and disposal of any found materials.

#05061209

Approval of Contract Extension

Mr. Blakita moved that the Willow Run Board of Education continue to employ Dr. Ron Ciranna, as the Interim Superintendent of the District through June 30, 2007, at an all-inclusive salary of \$120,000 a year, effective immediately. Dr. Ciranna will continue to perform the duties and responsibilities of both the Office of the Superintendent and Human Resources during his term of employment. With the exception of the base salary, travel allowance and annuity. All other provisions of the previous superintendent's contract shall apply. Mr. Wilde supported.

Ayes: 4 – Ms. Thomas, Mr. Blakita, Mr. Wilde, Ms. Braxton
Abstain: 1 – Ms. Clay
Nays: 2 – Mr. Wilson, Mr. Smith. Motion carried

Discussion

Mr. Smith said for Dr. Ciranna to receive an 11.1% increase at a time when finances are tight is not good. He recommended doing an evaluation of Dr. Ciranna's job performance at the regularly scheduled March review, then to decide whether, or not, to extend the contract for another year. He said this is not a crisis situation, adding this is not personal against Dr. Ciranna, it is financial.

Mr. Wilde said the amount he sees for Dr. Benit's total salary is \$126,920 and by hiring Dr. Ciranna the district will realize a savings of \$6,920.

Ms. Braxton reminded everyone that Dr. Ciranna has not been offered a contract and that policy and procedure were not bypassed. She said Dr. Ciranna is doing a fine job and at the time the evaluation is due one will be done. She said a time can be set-aside for goal setting.

Ms. Clay said Dr. Ciranna is doing quite well in some areas, not in others.

Citizens' Questions

Mr. Stanley Stewart said there are three black-owned auto dealerships in the county and he thinks the district would try to obtain bids from a black-owned dealership. He added that at Superior Township's meetings a board packet is available at the door for the public to look over and maybe the district should do this too.

Ms. Renita Gibson, Cheney attendance area, said she thinks the board should consider opening the campus for qualified seniors as she sees a lot of kids who don't eat lunch and are here late. She also stated she was appalled at the spending highlighted in our recent audit.

Ms. Patrice LaGrand, Cheney attendance area and district employee, said she thinks it is wonderful seniors are speaking up for themselves. She added as a parent she would like the board to evaluate the food service program.

Mr. Ken Wilson asked if research-based hiring criteria were used in the decision to hire Dr. Ciranna as Interim Superintendent. Ms. Braxton said she will respond to him in writing. Mr. Wilson said he will put his questions in writing for Ms. Braxton.

Board Member Comments

Ms. Thomas said her daughter brought home one of the new math books approved for the middle school and the layout of it makes it very easy to work with for both students and parents.

President Braxton declared the meeting adjourned at 10:43 p.m.

Motion to Move into Closed Session

#05061210 Ms. Thomas moved that the Willow Run Board of Education move into a closed session. Mr. Wilson supported.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

Motion to Move into Open Session

#05061211 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education move into an open session. Ms. Thomas supported.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0 – Motion carried

President Braxton declared the meeting adjourned at 11:28 p.m.