

WILLOW RUN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Ypsilanti, Michigan

WORK/STUDY MEETING

October 1, 2009

The meeting opened at 6:50 PM at the Secondary Complex-High School, 235 Spencer Lane, Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Those present were:

Sheri Washington, President
Harold Wimberly, Vice President
Dorothy Stewart, Treasurer
Mark Wilde, Secretary
Anglesia Brown, Trustee
Joi Jenson, Trustee
Clifford Smith, Trustee

Members of the Administrative Council Present Included:

Dr. Doris Jackson, Superintendent
Dr. David Houle, Director of Finance
Laconda Hicks, Director, Student Services
Kelly Webb, Principal Secondary Complex
Renee Smith, Principal Cheney Academy
JoeAnn Allen, Principal Ford Elementary
Delores Jenkins, Principal Holmes Elementary
Laura Lisiski, Principal Kaiser Elementary
Penny Morgan, Academic Services Facilitator
Charles Raski, Assistant Principal Secondary Complex

Citizens' Questions regarding the agenda

None

President Washington called the meeting to order at 6:53 p.m.

Acknowledgements

None

Additions / Deletions to the Agenda

The members were asked to consider adding an employee recall; rescinding a resignation, at the request of the employee; and adding the action on the Strategic Plan.

Approval of Agenda

#0910100101 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept the agenda as amended. Ms. Jenson supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0 – Motion carried

Discussion

Post discussion, the decision was made to amend the agenda as follows: add the recall; rescind the resignation; keep the Strategic Plan as a discussion item; and remove the Sheriff's contract completely from the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

#0910100102 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the minutes as amended from the regular meeting of August 20, 2009. Ms. Stewart supported.
Ayes – 7
Nays – 0 – Motion carried

Discussion

Ms. Brown asked to have removed from the minutes, record of her vote on motion 1718 – she was absent.

Ms. Stewart requested the change to her title on page 8 from Mr. to Ms.

Mr. Wilde noted to remove his name from support of motion 1714.

Presentations:

Strategic Plan

Dr. Jackson and group facilitators (Ms. Allen, Ms. Hicks, Dr. Houle, Mrs. Jenkins Ms. Lisiski, and Mrs. Morgan), were present to provide a brief overview of the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan Document is the culmination of two full days invested by 125 community members from all aspects of Willow Run. The plan is intended to be a working document to guide decision-making and assessment of those decisions for the period, 2009 to 2014. While the document, provided to the members one month ago, identifies goals, objectives, responsible parties and assessment tools, the presentation this evening is meant to highlight the plan, which when approved, will be posted on the Willow Run website. Dr. Jackson asked any participants present to stand to be acknowledged.

Following the presentation, Ms. Washington referring to the written plan, shared her vision of technology in the district; 1:1 laptop capability at every building, Willow Run network accounts for students and parents; Ms. Washington was interested in the leadership training for whom and how; and emphasized the very important objective identified by group 7: that of building trust between all stakeholders.; Ms. Jenson asked that a customer service component be added; Ms. Brown would like to see step-by-step detail in how the objectives are to be met and asked Dr. Houle to refresh the Board's memory concerning the energy analysis process undertaken last school year; Ms. Washington supported the request for detail and used the AlertNOW system as an example to supply written steps for implementation; Mr. Wilde expressed his desire to hear from one of our most important stakeholders – the students.

Ashford & Simpson

It was reported that the concert by Ashford & Simpson was a success. It was noted by Ms. Roach that both Willow Run and the Christ Temple Church will benefit from the concert with some of the proceeds earmarked to support a Willow Run Scholarship. There is also hope of future support by Ashford & Simpson to the Willow Run Music Department. The high school students who served as welcoming ambassadors, as well as Mr. Scott Heister were acknowledged by Ms. Washington for the vital role played in hosting the event. There are plans for the distribution of a DVD recording of the concert.

Financial Report

Audit Update

Dr Houle presented an update of the June 30, 2009 preliminary financial results for the General Fund. He indicated that the net results are on target with the operating budget. The budget was predicated on a net operating loss of \$658,781 whereas the actual preliminary loss is in the amount of \$744,088. He commented on certain variances in the local tax revenue and in the State Aid area as a result of the use of ARRA funding to make up for reduced State Aid. He indicated that the audit was progressing well and that the Capital asset / improvement fund and the MDA remain as items to be completed.

2010 Budget Update

Dr. Houle also presented an update on the June 30, 2010 operating budget based on the initial enrollment estimate for the district. He indicated that the District had a Blended Count for FYE-2009 of 2,026.22 FTE and had projected a budgeted Blended Count for FYE-2010 of 1,929.49 FTE, or a projected loss of 96.73 FTE students. Based in the initial enrollment estimates for the year, the Blended count is estimated to be in the range of 1,789.63 FTE, or 139.86 FTE fewer than budgeted. This coupled with the fact that the budget was predicated on a \$150 increase for the per capita Foundation Allowance results in a negative impact on planned net operating results of \$1,376,004. Therefore, instead of the \$692,578 surplus budgeted as required under the State approved Deficit Elimination Plan, the District would be incur a \$683,426 operating loss in the event that the Board take no mitigating action. Dr. Houle further indicated that in light of the budget dilemma currently at the State level, a further reduction of \$218 per pupil would result in an additional loss of \$375,642.

Pastor Wimberly questioned Dr. Houle about how the District would have to address the financial challenge that the unanticipated drop in enrollment now presents. Dr. Houle responded that the Deficit Elimination Plan approved by the State already calls for the closing of another elementary building this year due to the fact that the Fall General Education enrollment appears to fall below the 1,840 threshold established in the Plan. He further indicated that the Board and Administration will need to envisage a vision of a different looking District relative to its new enrollment realities.

Mr. Smith, in speaking against compliance with the approved Deficit Elimination Plan, commented that the Board would not “dismantle the District”. He called for “thinking-out-of-the-box” on the part of the Business Manager wherein he wanted to be presented with solutions to the financial dilemma that did not involve any expense cuts. He commented that if the current Business Manager couldn’t do that, He’d get one that could. Ms. Jenson agreed with him. He then added that he wanted a Business Manager who would know better than to present unfavorable financial information to the Board at an open meeting with news media members in the room.

Approval of Contract – Michigan Department of Human Services

#0910100103 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the contract with the Michigan Department of Human Services in the amount of \$15,000. Ms. Jenson supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0 – Motion carried

Discussion

It was noted that the contract documented the county as Wayne. Mrs. Morgan, Academic Services Facilitator, was in the audience to clarify that the county is a typographical error by the State and the error has been brought to their attention

for correction. Mrs. Morgan further confirmed that criminal checks have been done on all employees associated with the grant as they are Willow Run staff. Finally, Mrs. Morgan reminded the Board members that this grant supports the Learn & Serve “Healthy Habitats” activity presented to the Board at the end of the 2008/2009 school year.

Approval of Contract – 2010 Sponsorship Agreement Scripps National Spelling Bee

#0910100104 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the sponsorship agreement with 2010 Scripps National Spelling Bee in the amount not to exceed \$6,000; and, to be a host site for the 2010 Scripps National spelling Bee for Washtenaw County. Ms. Stewart supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0 – Motion carried

Discussion

During the 2007-2008 school year Dr. Jackson identified the goal of engaging our students in a Spelling Bee ultimately to advance toward participating in the National Scripps Spelling Bee. Since that time, Mrs. Morgan and Mrs. Jenkins took on the challenge of coordinating the district-wide spelling bee. This year, the County Superintendents have committed to supporting a county-wide endeavor, hosted by Willow Run. It was noted that Michigan has not had a winner of the National Bee, but it is hopeful that a Washtenaw County student will proceed to the finals. The fee will support the transportation and accommodations for that student and one parent.

Debt Millage Allocation

#0910100105 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education allocates the 2009 total debt millage levy of 10.3 mills as follows:

5.6 mills towards the 2001 Bond Issue

2.1 mills towards the 2005 bond Issue (2001 issue refinanced in 2005).

2.6 mills towards the 2006 Bond Issue (1996 issue refunded in 2006).

Ms. Brown supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0 – Motion carried

Discussion

A question was raised concerning the refinance of a 2005 bond in 2005. Dr. Houle was not on staff at that time and deferred to Mr. Smith, Board member, who responded that the bond was refinanced to obtain a better interest rate.

Acceptance of Resignation

#0910100106 Ms. Brown moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept the resignation of Keisha Alexander, Management Support, effective September 28, 2009. Ms. Jenson supported.

Ayes – 6– Mr. Wimberly, Ms. Stewart, Ms. Brown, Mr. Smith, Mr. Wilde,

Ms. Washington

Nays – 1 – Ms. Jenson. Motion carried.

Discussion

A request was made for a closed session; in discussion, it was determined that any personnel issue should first begin with Dr. Jackson, the Superintendent.

Approval of Leave

#0910100107 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the FMLA of Mary Galligan, Teacher, which began September 14, 2009 with an expected return date of October 26, 2009. Ms. Stewart supported.

Ayes – 7– Mr. Wimberly, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson, Ms. Brown,
Mr. Wilde, Ms. Washington

Nays – 0. Motion carried.

Approval of Intermittent Leave

#0910100108 Ms. Stewart moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the intermittent FMLA of Cecilia Queener, Human Resource Coordinator/Payroll Facilitator. Ms. Jenson supported.

Ayes – 7– Mr. Wimberly, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson, Ms. Brown,
Mr. Wilde, Ms. Washington

Nays – 0. Motion carried.

Discussion

A question was raised concerning how the responsibilities of Ms. Queener will be managed. It was noted that, at this time Ms. Queener anticipates being present three (3) days per week. The responsibilities on days off will be shared by her Central Office colleagues. The request was made that Ms. Queener coordinate – in advance of days off – the management of projects due.

Approval of Recall

#0910100109 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the recall of Teresa Perlin as Holmes Kindergarten Teacher, effective October 1, 2009. Ms. Brown supported.

Ayes – 7– Mr. Wimberly, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson, Ms. Brown,
Mr. Wilde, Ms. Washington

Nays – 0. Motion carried.

Discussion:

It was noted that Ms. Perlin has been back – this is the formal recall as in the collective bargaining agreement.

Approval of Appointment

#0910100110 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the appointment of Ms. Aimee Price, as Secondary Complex Chemistry Teacher, effective October 2, 2009, at a salary according to the WCEA Salary Schedule, Bachelors, level 0, \$34,756 for the 2009-2010 school year. Mr. Smith supported.

Ayes – 6– Mr. Wimberly, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson,
Mr. Wilde, Ms. Washington

Nays – 1- Ms. Brown. Motion carried.

Discussion:

Ms. Brown expressed her frustration by the lack of diversity in the interview committee.

Ms. Price was in the audience and rose to thank the Board and offered that she has 35 hours toward a Masters which she stated was submitted online to the Human Resources Department.

The information was not available at the time of the decision to offer employment, and it was noted that past practice has the staff being hired at the salary for which there is documentation and then adjusting it as information is received. Ms. Brown noted her displeasure at the process.

Ms. Price was welcomed to Willow Run by Ms. Washington.

Approval of Salary Adjustment

#0910100111 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the salary adjustment for Jennifer Marengi to \$54,990, effective September 18, 2009 for the 2009-2010 school year according to the WREA Salary Schedule, MA, Step 7. Mr. Smith supported.

Ayes – 6– Mr. Wimberly, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson,
Mr. Wilde, Ms. Washington

Nays – 1- Ms. Brown. Motion carried.

Discussion:

Ms. Brown again expressed her displeasure with documentation having been incomplete and demanded that every piece of paper be reviewed prior to the request for board action. It was noted that this is a unique situation. Ms. Marengi's employment years (5 on staff at Lincoln Consolidated Schools) were augmented by temporary assignment time submitted directly to the State by Ms. Marengi. She approached the Superintendent with documentation from the State Retirement System illustrating that the time had been accepted, totaling seven (7) years of service; further, given her role in a position which as been identified by the State as "an area of shortage", and that Ms. Marengi has successfully served the students of Willow Run as a contracted employee, the members are being asked to reconsider her placement on the salary schedule, according to Board Policy.

Approval of Employee Status Adjustment

#0910100112 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve to rescind the termination of Dietra James and include the employee in the pool of laid off WREA employees, effective immediately. Mr. Smith supported.

Ayes – 7– Ms. Brown, Mr. Wimberly, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson,
Mr. Wilde, Ms. Washington

Nays – 0- Motion carried.

Acceptance of Donation to Henry Ford Elementary

#0910100113 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept the donations of six (6) boxes of assorted school supplies from i3 Pharmacology Research Company of Ann Arbor and six (6) school backpacks filled with school supplies from JCIM Manufacturing of Romulus. Mr. Smith supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0- Motion carried.

Discussion

The Board thanked Mr. Davis of JCIM Manufacturing, a former Ford Elementary student, and i3 Research representatives Ms. Karen Gross and Mr. Gregg

Dearammer. It was noted that Ms. Allen worked with the building Social Worker to distribute the supplies to those students most in need.

Approval of Education Reform Committee of the Board

#0910100114 Ms. Brown moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve an Education Reform Committee of the Board for the 2009-2010 school year to focus on district-wide education reform and school improvement. Mr. Smith supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0- Motion carried.

Discussion

Ms. Washington noted that a similar committee (WRSI) existed several years ago and it is her stated hope that the committee will include representatives from each group in the district. The committee will make recommendations to the Board. Board members assigned include: Ms. Washington, Ms. Brown and Ms. Stewart. Ms. Washington stated her desire to have the committee begin meeting the week following the meeting tonight.

Approval of Policy Committee of the Board

#0910100115 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve a Policy Committee of the Board for the 2009-2010 school year to review and recommend board policy. Mr. Smith supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0- Motion carried.

Discussion

Ms. Washington noted a need to resurrect the policy committee. Board members assigned include: Mr. Wilde, Ms. Jenson and Mr. Wimberly. Ms. Washington stated her desire to have the committee begin meeting the week following the meeting tonight.

Approval of Personnel Committee of the Board

#0910100116 Ms. Brown moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve a Personnel Committee of the Board for the 2009-2010 school year to review staffing proposals and recommendations. Ms. Stewart supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0- Motion carried.

Discussion

Ms. Washington noted the issues raised earlier by Ms. Brown concerning personnel would be managed by this committee. Board members assigned include: Ms. Brown, Mr. Smith and Ms. Washington.

Approval of Athletic Council

#0910100117 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve a Board Athletic Council for the 2009-2010 school year to develop and maintain athletic policy and procedures, academic guides and oversight. Mr. Smith supported.

Ayes – 6

Nays – 1 – Mr. Wimberly- Motion carried.

Discussion

Ms. Washington noted that the athletic council is in the board policy - she believed to be in the 7000 series. It was noted that the council had begun meeting informally the first Monday of every month at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Greene has been in attendance and Ms. Jenson has been representing the Board.

Board members assigned include: Ms. Jenson, Ms. Brown and Mr. Wimberly. Mr. Wimberly expressed concern that the council has been meeting with a board member without formal action.

Ms. Washington stated her intention to have each committee report to the Board as a whole and requested Ms. Jenson to provide a summary of the informal meetings.

Approval of Employee Settlement Agreement

#0910100118 Ms. Brown moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the settlement agreement for the employee known to the Board as E040209. Ms. Jenson and Ms. Stewart supported.

Ayes – 7– Ms. Brown, Mr. Wimberly, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson,
Mr. Wilde, Ms. Washington

Nays – 0- Motion carried.

Citizen Time

Ms. Belinda Styron identified herself as a teacher at Holmes and expressed her recommendation that parents be given access to the network in order to encourage involvement in Accelerated Reader nights.

Mr. Joseph Jordan Jr., identified himself as a Willow Run High School student and offered his suggestions on several topics: his view that students are leaving the district because teachers are leaving. Mr. Jordan stated the current security staff doesn't "scare" the students which may affect safety. He recommended additional technology training for teachers on the "Smart Boards" [interactive whiteboards] as a result of his experience that he and many of his peers often teach the teachers how to use them. Mr. Jordan also shared that unless they are in computer class, laptops are not used in the high school. Finally, he suggested that accountability for academic success be directed at students themselves, vs. at teachers.

Superintendent Comments

Dr. Jackson thanks everyone for an orderly meeting and the opportunity to start many new projects.

Board Comments

Ms. Jenson apologized for her verbal outburst at the last board meeting but identified herself as a "work-in-progress" who is passionate about Willow Run and the success of students and for that passion, she would not apologize. She urged all members of the Willow Run Community to review their commitment to Willow Run.

President Washington declared the meeting adjourned: 9:50 p.m.