

WILLOW RUN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Ypsilanti, Michigan

REGULAR MEETING

November 19, 2009

The Board Meeting opened at 6:35 PM at Holmes Elementary, 1255 Holmes, Ypsilanti, Michigan with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Those present were:

Sheri Washington, President
Dorothy Stewart, Treasurer
Mark Wilde, Secretary
Anglesia Brown, Trustee
Don Garrett, Trustee
Joi Jenson, Trustee
Clifford Smith, Trustee

Members of the Administrative Council Present Included:

Laura Lisiscki, Acting Superintendent
Renee Smith, Principal Cheney Academy
Delores Jenkins, Principal Holmes
Charles Raski, Assistant Principal Secondary Complex
Laura Frey-Greathouse, Title I Coordinator

Presentation:

Excellence in Education

Ms. Delores Jenkins welcomed the Board and audience to Holmes Elementary. Ms. Jenkins presented the Board members with a packet which provided an overview of the energy saving measures incorporated last year at Holmes. The program featured student Mistress of Ceremony Ms. Reeves, who delivered a speech on being a student leader; Lauren and Allison spoke on Accelerated Reading/Accelerated Math Family Nights; Clinton explained his "Skittles" graph to the audience, as an example of Technology in the classroom; the band played "Old McDonald had a Band", led by instructor Mr. McWethy; the Honors Choir sang, led by Ms. Safieddine and a video of learning activities during a day at Holmes.

Ms. Washington called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m.

Acknowledgments/Correspondence

None

Consideration of Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

Mr. Wilde requested the addition of item VII.e. - the appointment of a business manager. In response to Mr. Smith's inquiry, questions concerning the appointment would be entertained after the motion was on the table.

#0910111901 **Approval of Agenda**

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

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

#0910111902 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the minutes as presented from November 3 and November 5, 2009. Ms. Jenson supported.
Ayes – 7
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Approval of Payment of Bills

#0910111903 Ms. Stewart moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the following General Fund checks, check #51695 through and including check #51955 with the exception of voided checks as noted on page 13 of the General Fund Check Register totaling \$1,923,738.00; and Building and Site checks #1531 through and including check # 1533. Mr. Wilde supported.
Ayes – 7
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Approval of Contract – Head Start amended

#0910111904 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the amended contract with the Washtenaw County Head Start program in the amount of \$536,450. Ms. Stewart supported.
Ayes – 7
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Discussion

Ms. Renee Smith confirmed that the amendment included the ARRA funds and \$50,000 to be used to replace the heating/cooling roof top units.

Approval of Leave

#0910111905 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the FMLA of Jamie LaGoe, Teacher, which began October 30, 2009 with an expected return date of January 14, 2010. Ms. Stewart supported.
Ayes – 7 - Ms. Brown, Mr. Garrett, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson, Mr. Wilde, Ms. Washington
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Approval of Leave

#0910111906 Ms. Brown moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the FMLA of Paula Gutzman, Management support, which began October 30, 2009, with an undetermined return date. Ms. Stewart and Ms. Jenson supported.
Ayes – 7 - Ms. Brown, Mr. Garrett, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson, Mr. Wilde, Ms. Washington
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Approval of Contract

#0910111907 Ms. Brown moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approved the attached Agreement for Independent Contractor Service between Willow Run Community Schools and S.J. Smaka Consulting, L.L.C. for the services of Director of Business Services to begin Friday, November 20, 2009, at a rate of \$450.00 per day not to exceed a total of contracted amount of \$25,000. Mr. Wilde supported.

Discussion

Mr. Smith expressed his concern about receiving a contract the same night as a vote is scheduled, noting the board knew since October 10th the position would be vacant. Further, given the amount of the contract (\$25,000), at least three (3) candidates/firms should have been interviewed by a committee of the Board or the Board as a whole in an open meeting. Mr. Smith referred to both state law and WR board policy and explained the rationale behind the policies. Ms. Lisiscki offered that after speaking with Bill Miller of the WISD and the board president, she met with Mr. Smaka, and, given his history with the district and his experience in working with deficit elimination plans did not talk with anyone else. When asked about background check, Ms. Lisiscki explained that Ms. Queener reviewed the background. Ms. Brown suggested that the contract be acted on as temporary since the need for financial person is growing more desperate every day. Ms. Stewart expressed concern that no one was present to speak to the reference check. Ms. Washington read aloud the termination clause as stated in the contract. Mr. Smith reinforced the policy for 3 bids given the amount of the contract. It was suggested to lessen the contract amount to one that does not require bids. Following discussion it was determined to amend the motion to read the amount that Willow Run Board policy states a superintendent may approve without board action (\$5,000).

Approval of Contract – amended motion

#0910111908 Ms. Brown moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approved the attached Agreement for Independent Contractor Service between Willow Run Community Schools and S.J. Smaka Consulting, L.L.C. for the services of Director of Business Services to begin Friday, November 20, 2009, at a rate of \$450.00 per day not to exceed a total of contracted amount of \$5,000. Mr. Wilde supported.
Ayes – 7 - Ms. Brown, Mr. Garrett, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson, Mr. Wilde,
Ms. Washington
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Acceptance of Retirement

#0910111909 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept the retirement of Ed Moore, Maintenance, effective December 31, 2009. Ms. Stewart supported.
Ayes – 7 - Ms. Brown, Mr. Garrett, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Ms. Jenson, Mr. Wilde,
Ms. Washington
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Discussion

Mr. Moore was in the audience and was recognized. He shook hands with each member and shared his family history at Willow Run. Ms. Washington wished him well.

Citizen Questions

Mr. Blakita read aloud the update sent to the community concerning Dr. Jackson stating her recovery was progressing nicely and thanking the community for prayers and cards.

Mr. Blakita then read aloud a Freedom of Information Act request sent to Ms. Lisiscki concerning the board vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. Wimberly. Ms. Tillerson, member of the “PR Crises Committee” thanked the board members who responded to her invitation to speak to students today during this “National Education Week”.

Board Member Comments

Mrs. Stewart encouraged the audience to get a copy of the Ypsilanti Courier which had a nice write-up on the Hall of Fame.

Mr. Wilde reminded the audience that Hockey season is starting and he is acting as a security guard.

Ms. Jenson thanked Ms. Tillerson for the invitation to speak to students, stating that the experience was priceless.

Mr. Garrett also thanked Ms. Tillerson for the opportunity to go back to Cheney where he spoke with Ms. Sykes’ kindergarten class. He reminded the audience that it is about the kids.

Ms. Washington shared that she also participated and had lunch with a kindergarten class and was impressed by the level of questions. She also thanked Ms. Tillerson.

Ms. Washington explained that Willow Run is in a financial crisis and will need to work together on a solid action plan and goals to turn it around.

Acting Superintendent

Ms. Lisiscki reinforced that lunch is a good time to sit with children to learn about them. She also thanked Mr. Smaka for his willingness to work with her.

Mr. Smaka was offered a chance to speak and he thanked the board for the invitation. He agreed with Mr. Smith that if there is a process, it should be followed. Mr. Smaka shared that he is a certified public accountant and has worked with other districts successfully regarding DEPs. He asked for patience and reinforced the need for sacrifices.

Ms. Washington adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.