

WILLOW RUN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
Ypsilanti, Michigan

REGULAR MEETING

December 17, 2009

The Board Meeting opened at 6:30 PM at Willow Run High School, 235 Spencer Lane, 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

Ms. Brown arrived at 6:40 p.m.

Ms. Jenson left at 9:00 p.m.

Members of the Administrative Council Present Included:

Laura Lisiscki, Acting Superintendent
Renee Smith, Principal Cheney Academy
Joe Ann Allen, Principal Ford
Delores Jenkins, Principal Holmes
Kelly Webb, Principal Secondary Complex
Charles Raski, Assistant Principal Secondary Complex
Laura Frey-Greathouse, Title I Coordinator
Dr. Laconda Hicks, Director Student & Teacher Services
Cecilia Queener, Human Resources Coordinator

Ms. Washington called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Acknowledgments/Correspondence

None

Consideration of Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

Ms. Jenson requested the addition of item VI.b. – Approval of Resolution for Cost Cutting 2009-2010. Mr. Smith and Mr. Wilde supported the addition.

Approval of Agenda

#0910121701 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 – Executive Session (Open)

#0910121702 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the minutes of the December 3, 2009 Open Executive Session as amended. Mr. Smith supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Discussion:

Mrs. Stewart requested a change to the minutes of her statement concerning Dr. Jackson's residence. The minutes were approved with the amendment.

Approval of Minutes – Regular Session

- #0910121703 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the minutes of the December 3, 2009 Regular meeting as presented. Ms. Stewart supported.
Ayes – 7
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Approval of Payment of Bills

- #0910121704 Ms. Stewart moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the following General Fund checks, check #51956 through and including check #52134 with the exception of voided checks as noted on page 8 of the General Fund Check Register totaling \$1,769,779.54; and Building and Site checks #1534 totaling \$1,250.70. Mr. Wilde supported.
Ayes – 7
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Presentation:

Ms. Lisiscki introduced Ms. Bridgit Cook who led the 8th grade choir in several songs including 'Deck the Halls' and an African American Spiritual, 'Yonder Come Day'.

Approval of Contract – Math Coach

- #0910121705 Ms. Stewart moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the contract by and between Willow Run Community Schools and Dorothy Stanton, to serve as Math Curriculum/Teacher Coach from December 3, 2009 through June 9, 2010, in the amount of \$14,500. Mr. Wilde supported.
Ayes – 7
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Discussion

The Board requested the signature page of the contract be corrected to include a signature for a Board member. Mr. Wilde, Board Secretary, stated that he would be by to sign the contract December 18, 2009.

Approval of Resolution – Race to the Top

- #0910121706 Mr. Garrett moved that the Willow Run Board of Education authorizes the board president to act upon the Memorandum of Understanding for the 'Race to the Top' grant application. Mr. Wilde supported.
Ayes – 7
Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Discussion

Ms. Lisiscki and Mr. Smaka provide the Board members with a package of information concerning the grant. It was noted that the Memorandum of Understanding requires the signatures of the board president, superintendent and teacher union and must be signed by January 6, 2010 in order to take advantage of the potential funds.

Approval of Resolution for Cost Cutting

#0910121707 Ms. Stewart moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the attached resolution for cost cutting and revenue generated with said actions to be implemented during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years. Mr. Smith supported.

Discussion

Ms. Washington explained to the audience that the resolution outlines parameters for cost cutting. Mr. Wilde expressed concern over the elimination of Hockey. Mr. Wilde confirmed that there are two Willow Run students on the team of 20, and that the students pay \$1000 each to play. Mr. Wilde suggested that Hockey be used as a way to draw school of choice students. The board members discussed the importance of athletics as a draw for students. Mr. Smith emphasized the need for public relations – stating that Ypsilanti Public Schools has a PR person. Ms. Washington cautioned the audience that the funding for a sport is being cut, not necessarily the sport - but emphasized that alternate funding sources must be found and suggested the Athletic Council research possibilities. Ms. Washington, on the advice of her colleagues, proceeded to read aloud the list of Phase I cuts to be implemented January 2010 (attached). Mr. Smith asked that Ms. Washington refrain from releasing Phase II as the finance committee is still considering the options. As a result, the motion was amended.

Approval of Resolution for Cost Cutting - amended

#0910121708 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the attached resolution for cost cutting and revenue generated with said actions to be implemented during the 2009-2010 school year. Mr. Smith supported.

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

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Acceptance of Resignation

#0910121709 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept the resignation of Bianca Glover, Bus Aide, effective November 26, 2009. Mr. Wilde and Mr. Smith supported.

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

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Acceptance of Recall

#0910121710 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve the recall of Tanya Taylor to Transportation as Bus Aide, effective January 4, 2010. Mr. Smith supported.

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

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Acceptance of Retirement

#0910121711 Mr. Smith moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept the retirement of Darlene Bentley, custodian, effective December 31, 2009. Ms. Jenson supported.

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

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Acceptance of Retirement

#0910121712 Mr. Garrett moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept the retirement of Rickey Bentley, maintenance, effective December 31, 2009. 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 Cisco Data and VOIP Maintenance Contract

#0910121713 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education approve a purchase order to InaComp for Cisco Switch and VOIP maintenance support for the period January 5, 2010 through January 4, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$19,800.25. Mr. Smith supported.

Discussion

Ms. Washington asked if the service was 24/7. The board was referred to the information provided in the package – specifically the quote - which detailed the services. It was asked if we needed this service, and how often we have used it. It was explained that it is an annual renewal and the company was chosen on the advice of the Systems Specialist, Mr. Godin and that he would be best able to answer questions. The motion was tabled until questions were answered.

Approval of Cisco Data and VOIP Maintenance Contract - Tabled

#0910121714 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education table the motion to approve a purchase order to InaComp for Cisco Switch and VOIP maintenance support for the period January 5, 2010 through January 4, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$19,800.25. Ms. Brown supported.

Approval of Student Discipline

#0910121715 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept time served for the student known to the board as #S121709530. 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 Student Discipline

#0910121716 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept time served for the student known to the board as #S121709545. 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 Student Discipline

#0910121717 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education expel the student known to the board as #S121709600 for 180 days. 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 Election Date Change Resolution

#0910121718 Ms. Stewart moved that the Willow Run Community Schools Board of Education adopt the following resolution to effectuate a change to a November election cycle as presented:

WHEREAS:

1. The consolidated election laws enacted in December of 2003 and amended in July 2005, authorize the Board to redetermine a regular election date from the dates authorized within the statute; and
2. The Board desires to consider a new regular election date for the District; and
3. The Board is required to give notice of a hearing in connection with the establishment of the date and to adopt a resolution establishing the date before December 31, 2009.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Board does hereby determine to consider a new regular election date as provided by law and to hold a public hearing in connection with the establishment of the date.
2. The Board does hereby ratify and affirm the publication of a Notice of Public Hearing to establish a regular election date, said hearing to be held on December 29, 2009.
3. The Board does hereby determine that the Notice attached hereto as Exhibit A shall be published as a display ad at least two (2) columns wide in a newspaper of general circulation in the District one time on or before December 20, 2009, and does further determine that publication is the form of notice calculated to reach the largest number of the District's qualified electors in a timely fashion.
4. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution be and the same are hereby rescinded.

Ms. Jenson supported.

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

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Discussion

Ms. Stewart explained that other school districts are moving to holding elections in November and that the district would be responsible for the cost if elections remain in May and therefore it behooves the district to change the date.

Acceptance of Donation – Holmes

#0910121719 Ms. Jenson moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept the donations of gifts for eleven families including 15 children coats from the Blue Cross Blue Shield information office. Ms. Brown and Mr. Smith supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Citizen Questions

Mr. Blakita was recognized and read aloud a letter provided to the board (attached) expressing his concern for the lack of board transparency and actions taken/not taken regarding the management of the board vacancy created by Mr. Harold Wimberly's resignation. Ms. Washington stopped Mr. Blakita at five minutes.

Ebony Birton was recognized and asked for clarification concerning plans for the transportation / maintenance supervisor.

Karen Cook, President of the Management Support Unit noted that the list of cost-cutting items read this evening are more than the eight presented on Monday night. Did the Board approve all the cuts? Ms. Washington stated she would answer on the “green comment sheet”.

Charlotte Tillerson expressed her concern over 10 additional teacher layoffs given staff are stretched with the number of students at the elementary schools. Ms. Tillerson also expressed a concern about further changes to the health insurance.

Belinda Styron asked if phase II was discussed. The answer was ‘no’. When would phase I cuts start... second semester or middle of the month; there was no clear date. Ms. Washington responded January 2010. Who would run the media center when clerks are gone? Ms Styron recommended mirroring what Milan schools do regarding sports – children fundraise. She also recommended looking again at offering alternative education perhaps in a partnership as Ypsilanti Public Schools. Finally, Ms. Styron recommended concentrating obtaining students for the secondary level as the elementary schools have many programs and are ‘busting at the seams’.

Kathleen Miller referred to when the new middle school was opened in 2004 and urged ‘PR with a promise’. Ms. Miller also was concerned about cutting sports – stating that hockey may only have three students but that is still lots of dollars to the district.

Meshell Glenn introduced herself as Holmes PTO president and expressed her concern over the list of eliminations and layoffs. Ms. Glenn suggested that serious consideration be given to closing all the schools and consolidating in the Secondary Complex. She also recommended selling the property Willow Run is not using.

John Brooks reminded the audience that public relations starts with the board. Many times the attitudes of the board members has been embarrassing. Mr. Brooks urged the board to do more than place a plan on paper – members should be at every function; be seen in the community; board members should be doing what they are saying. He believes that cutting programs will mean losing more students. Mr. Brooks urged the board and community to join him in presenting a positive image of Willow Run everywhere you go!

Tim King shared that he has written to Representative Dingell and Senator Levin concerning the state of the economy and Willow Run.

Sharion Day asked about phase I cuts and eliminating maintenance and custodial positions since two retirements were accepted tonight and one at the last meeting. The audience explained that the elimination was by attrition. Ms. Day also asked is Mr. Jihad still her supervisor?

Acting Superintendent

Ms. Lisiscki reinforced that while these are difficult times, the voices of the people of Willow Run have been heard and success can come with teamwork.

Board Member Comments

Ms. Jenson wished the audience ‘happy holidays’ and urged them to hold their families close.

Mr. Wilde encouraged participation in the caroling this Saturday with students. Twenty turkey baskets have been donated from Zingerman’s to share with families in need.

The student representative to the board, Ms. Erika Terry, was introduced and will be joining the Board in January.

Board responses to Concerns:

Mr. Brooks asked about the status of responses to the concerns he expressed at the last meeting.

Ms. Washington read the criteria to select a superintendent; among them: minimum of a masters degree; advocate for students, staff and the educational process; ability to build a team; skilled in school finance; effective manager; evidence of personal development.

Ms. Washington also read a response to what the board was doing to attract students.

Ms. Washington suggested the need for a public forum and stated that Dr. Jackson created a very good strategic plan, but it didn't have all the elements.

Move to closed session – student discipline

Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education move to closed session for student discipline hearings. Ms. Stewart supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Move to Open session

Mr. Smith moved that the Willow Run Board of Education move to open session. Mr. Wilde supported.

Ayes – 7

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Approval of Student Discipline

#0910121720 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education accept time served for the student known to the board as #S12170973. Ms. Stewart supported.

Ayes – 6 - Ms. Brown, Mr. Garrett, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Mr. Wilde,
Ms. Washington

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Approval of Student Discipline

#0910121721 Mr. Wilde moved that the Willow Run Board of Education expel the student known to the board as #S121709800 for 180 days. Ms. Stewart supported.

Ayes – 6 - Ms. Brown, Mr. Garrett, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Smith, Mr. Wilde,
Ms. Washington

Nays – 0 – motion carried.

Adjournment

Ms. Brown moved to adjourn. Mr. Wilde supported.

Ms. Washington adjourned the meeting at 9:12 p.m.