

AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Engage, Inspire, Innovate ... Always Learning

MINUTES

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 12, 2017

Maitland Room, Seaforth Education Centre
62 Chalk Street North, Seaforth, ON

PRESENT:

Trustees: Lynette Geddes, Robert Hunking, Alyson Kent, Julie Moore, Doug Pratley, Nancy Rothwell, Colleen Schenk, Randy Wagler

Senior Staff: Lisa Walsh, Director of Education and Secretary of the Board, Superintendents Janet Baird-Jackson, Jodie Baker, Peggy Blair, Paul Langis, Jane Morris, and Associate Superintendent Cheri Carter

Recording Secretary: Barb Crawford

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wagler called the meeting to order for the Committee of the Whole, Closed Session at 5:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, CLOSED SESSION

MOTION 2017 09 302

(R. Hunking – L. Geddes)

RESOLVED THAT this Board convene into Committee of the Whole, Closed Session.

CARRIED

Vice Chair Alyson Kent was Chair for the Committee of the Whole, Closed Session.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, OPEN SESSION

Chair Wagler called the meeting to order for the Committee of the Whole, Open Session.

MOTION 2017 09 303

(N. Rothwell – L. Geddes)

RESOLVED THAT the Agenda of the Avon Maitland District School Board Committee of the Whole, Open Session meeting be approved as presented.

CARRIED

School Messenger: Communicate Presentation

Manager of Information Technology Jason Hillier introduced the new service that will enhance communication by allowing schools to deliver important information via text messaging to families. This service is intended to enhance existing methods of communication, not replace it.

Possible Changes to Board Meeting Times

Director Walsh reported the proposed changes to the board meeting times that may make board meetings more accessible for parents and families to attend. The proposed times are for the first board meeting (second Tuesday) Committee of the Whole, Closed Session would start at 5:00 p.m., followed by Open Session and 6:00 p.m. and Regular Session at 7:30 p.m. For the second board meeting (fourth Tuesday) Committee of the Whole, Open Session would start at 5:00 p.m., Committee of the Whole, Closed Session at 6:30, Student Advisory Committee at 7:00 p.m. and Regular Session at 7:30 p.m. The schedule of Student Advisory Committee meetings will be reviewed by Superintendent Baker,

in consultation with mentor Vice Principal Jason Burt and Student Trustee Jesse Russell. It was agreed to change the meeting times beginning September 26th and reviewing again in December.

Audit and Finance Committee meetings would be held at 5:00 p.m. which would then adjust the times for the Committee of the Whole, Closed and Open Sessions accordingly. Trustees also discussed having consent items and setting timeframes. Trustees agreed to begin the change in meetings times at the September 26th meeting

For future agenda topics trustees asked about the Trustee Reflection statement.

Retreat Plans for November 2017

A trustee orientation session is scheduled for November 17th and 18th in Stratford. Senior Staff and Trustees will meet the evening of November 17th, and Trustees will meet again on November 18th. Trustees Schenk and Geddes agreed to assist with planning the retreat along with Chair Wagler, Vice Chair Kent and Director Walsh.

RECONVENE IN REGULAR SESSION

MOTION 2017 09 304

(C. Schenk – L. Geddes)

RESOLVED THAT this Board reconvene into Regular Session.

CARRIED

Chair Wagler called the Regular Meeting to order at 8:00 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

Chair Wagler recited the Opening Statement:

“We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of the Anishnaabe Peoples. We wish to recognize the long history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada and show our respect to them today. We recognize their stewardship of the land; may we all live with respect on this land and live in peace and friendship.”

ROUTINE MATTERS

Approval of Agenda

MOTION 2017 09 305

(L. Geddes – C. Schenk)

RESOLVED THAT the Agenda of the Avon Maitland District School Board meeting be approved as presented.

CARRIED

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

No member of the Board declared having a pecuniary interest regarding any item presented in this agenda.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION 2017 09 306

(D. Pratley – J. Moore)

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Avon Maitland District School Board meeting held Tuesday, June 27, 2017 be approved as presented.

CARRIED

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Committee of the Whole, Closed Session, Report to Board Public Session

Vice Chair Kent advised there was nothing to report.

Trustee Reflection – Trustee Rothwell

Tonight I chose to review and reflect on the Education Today Summer 2016 edition, as a couple of articles sparked my interest relating to being a School Board trustee and communication.

To start with... In definition communication can mean: “the imparting or exchanging of information or news; the successful conveying or sharing of ideas and feelings.”

Communication comes from the latin word *to share* *commūnicāre* leading to the word *communicatio* (pronunciation in latin).

Sharing information is so important in education and with trustees and the community.

In the article *Listening and Being Heard*, “Good communication is an art, not a science, and it can look very different in different circumstances,” says Kim Arnott a freelance writer and contributor to Education Today the publication by OPSBA.

In this article Kim interviewed and reflected on insight from three Trustees from Toronto, Waterloo and Peel District School Boards. Now you could argue that Avon Maitland is different from these Boards in some ways, but I believe the article hit the nail on the head with a variety of points that ring true for Trustees in all boards across Ontario and Canada.

I am sure many of you have seen the crazy amount of spiders appear in the last month – making new webs daily. Trustees are only one strand in the web of school communication but we can play a role as Kim says “in contributing to the weave of information that engages and empowers the students, parents, staff and community members whose lives are touched by the school system.”

Shelley Laskin from Toronto DSB Board of Trustees says, “If there’s an issue, that’s when you really have to figure out a mechanism to ensure folks feel listened to even if, at the end of the day, the decision doesn’t go their way.” She believes that face-to-face conversations are helpful through difficult and divisive issues in a school community, and to help people understand that we as trustees have a responsibility to make decisions that benefit the entire school system.

The phrase that communication goes both ways is so true. Communication is just as much about listening as it is about being heard. As trustees we have to be very open to listening to the community – of parents, residents, and students – along with our teachers, educational assistants, secretaries, custodians, and administrators – who are our front line of communication – they know what is going on in their schools and they live it each day.

Listen Carefully – people often think they’re listening but are really thinking about what they are going to say next when the other person stops talking. In such a fast-paced world where we seem to only have a couple of minutes to share an idea or get a point across – it is hard not to interrupt or to get defensive. But hearing them and reflecting back on what they are saying shows them they have been heard. It goes both ways. We as trustees often hear from the community who don’t know where else to turn to or are unhappy with something in the “system.” Carrie Andrews from Peel Board of Trustees, says that through a combination of listening, directing people to the correct resources and encouraging discussion we can be great facilitators. Laskin shares that we also need to help people understand that they can’t always be accommodated, but there may be alternatives they haven’t considered. This is where the ‘no, but’ answer can fit in. “No we can’t do that but here is what we can do.”

And then – we have to have an avenue to share that information and help to guide people through the education system – policies, budgets and so much more.

New technologies certainly have made it easier to share a consistent message with a wide audience. George Bernard Shaw says, “the single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.” Now with so many tools before us, communication is cheaper, faster and easier than ever before, however, it still takes effort and perseverance, says Kim. We can see this through the new improved website for the Board and schools, along with Facebook, Twitter, and more. Some trustees in various boards have weekly email updates, highlighting upcoming events, summarizing

key board decisions and reminders of relevant information, in order to simplify the array of information going out. Communicating to the public is an important way to show transparency and accountability, not only to the parents in the community, but also to community members that may not have children in school.

Michael Barrett also wrote in this edition as his final President's message on *Reflections on trustee leadership*, and he says, "the role of the trustee – a public servant who is of the community, by the community and for the community – continues to be a vital and contributing force for commitment to public education." He continues to say that trustees can be "the pivotal representation of our neighbourhoods" and now in paraphrasing that we can stand up for the voiceless and bring meaning to local decision-making.

Cindy Watson, Trustee from Waterloo School Board says, "foster an intentional exchange of ideas and gather as much information as we can. Better decision-making definitely happens when parents are engaged and involved." We have to be good at listening to the needs and desires of our communities.

I am fortunately able to attend many school council meetings and functions in the North Perth area and beyond as the local School Board trustee. Frequent personal appearances and listening to people definitely help me to better understand the unique issues in Avon Maitland.

How can we help to incorporate information our community has provided into the ultimate decision? Not only by listening but also showing them that their input is meaningful.

In summarizing, communication is fundamental to being a trustee. Kim Arnott writes, "From sharing the Board's goals, challenges, and priorities, to gathering the issues and concerns of the community, trustees need to be constantly listening and making sure they are heard." So let's continue to maintain and improve the web and channels of communication!

Good News

Trustee Schenk announced the 97th Annual Elementary School fair held in Belgrave will be held on September 13, 2017. The parade will begin at 11:15 a.m. and Opening Ceremonies will be held immediately following. This fair is a unique and wonderful tradition as it is the only fair in the province where the sole exhibitors and show persons are elementary students.

Superintendent Blair advised trustees they have received an Inclusion Hero's calendar and drew their attention to the month of June. Two teachers from Stratford Northwestern Secondary School, Heather Jones and Kristen Frank, are published.

Superintendent Morris reported a number of schools are gearing up for attending the International Plowing Match. North Woods Elementary School did a beautification project of gardens and was recognized as the winner in the Beautification Project. The school was presented with a cheque. The money will be used to continue to add to their playground.

Superintendent Langis reported that on September 8th the Ministry announced the LearningHUB is this year's Ontario winner of the Council of Federation Literacy Award. The LearningHUB has done significant work in serving adults' literacy needs across the province. In her announcement Premier Kathleen Wynne recognized the LearningHUB "for their innovative online programming that gives adult learners free access to more than 260 courses they can take at home at their own pace". This accomplishment is a tribute to the dedicated staff at the Centres for Employment and Learning throughout the six sites in the Board.

Student Trustee Update

There was no student trustee update.

Staff/Student Presentation

There were no student/staff presentations.

Public Delegations

There were no delegations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**COMMITTEE REPORTS**Trustee Resignation

Chair Wagler presented the report noting Trustee Cairncross' resignation is effective August 31st.
Chair Wagler passed the gavel to Vice Chair Kent.

MOTION 2017 09 307**(R. Wagler – L. Geddes)**

RESOLVED THAT the Avon Maitland District School Board consent to the resignation of Judy Cairncross, effective August 31, 2017.

CARRIED

Chair Wagler will write a letter to Trustee Cairncross.

Trustee Leave of Absence from Board Meetings

Chair Wagler presented the report. Trustee Pratley has requested to be absent for 3 consecutive board meetings.

MOTION 2017 09 308**(C. Schenk – J. Moore)**

RESOLVED THAT the Avon Maitland District School Board excuse Doug Pratley, Trustee for City of Stratford, for September 26th, October 10th and October 24th board meetings.

CARRIED**DIRECTOR'S REPORTS**Approval of Revised Board Policy #5 re Board Member Code of Conduct.

Director Walsh presented the policy for approval. Trustee Geddes pointed out additional edits which were incorporated into the final policy.

MOTION 2017 09 309**(C. Schenk – L. Geddes)**

RESOLVED THAT the Avon Maitland District School Board the Avon Maitland District School Board approve the revised Policy #5 re Board Members' Code of Conduct.

CARRIED**MOTION 2017 09 310****(J. Moore – N. Rothwell)**

RESOLVED THAT the Avon Maitland District School Board dissolve the Ad Hoc Policy Committee effective September 12, 2017.

CARRIEDTrustee Vacancy

Director Walsh provided background information regarding the protocol for replacement of a trustee.

MOTION 2017 09 311**(L. Geddes – C. Schenk)**

RESOLVED THAT the Avon Maitland District School Board invite interested candidates to express interest by applying for the vacancy. Applicants will submit a letter to the secretary of the board. These letters will include information that speaks to interest for the position, qualifications and other pertinent information.
And that

The deadline for applications will be October 6, 2017 thereby providing three weeks for interested individuals to submit their letter of interest to the secretary of the board.

And that

The interview process will take place in accordance with board policy 9 section 9.4.

CARRIED

Trustees discussed when they would hold the interviews and who would be on the interview committee. Trustees agreed to hold October 19th for interviews and the interviewing committee will be comprised of whatever trustee is available to attend the interviews. Trustees were asked to confirm their availability with the board's recording secretary.

INFORMATION REPORTS

CHAIR'S REPORT

OPSBA – Membership Fee and Central Bargaining Fee

Chair Wagler presented the report. The 2017/2018 membership fee is \$47,787.70 which includes 13% HST of \$5,497.70. There was an increase of \$2,239.66 in membership fees from 2016/2017. In addition to the annual membership fee there is a fee for central bargaining. The funding for the fee is included in the 2017/2018 GSN as part of the board administration funding for each school board. The amount provided to each school board is \$43,316.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Tenders Over the Summer – Facilities Projects

Superintendent Baird-Jackson summarized the projects that were completed over the summer at South Huron District High School for change room upgrades, re-roofing at Goderich District Collegiate Institute, and concrete work at FE Madill Secondary School, St. Marys District CVI and Listowel District Secondary School.

Chair Wagler expressed appreciation to the facilities team for the work over the summer in order to get everything ready for our staff and students for the beginning of the school year.

Staff Adjustments

Superintendent Langis presented the following staff adjustments for information. Superintendent Langis noted that while there is still declining enrolment, the new hires are a result of extension agreements. In the elementary panel, seventeen teachers were hired for an equivalent of 10.0 FTE, in secondary, thirty-four teachers were hired for an equivalent of 18.72 FTE, and fourteen EAs were hired. Resignations:

Karen Code-Stone, education assistant at Listowel District SS effective August 31, 2017

Ashley Dickie, teacher at St. Marys DCVI effective August 31, 2017

Nancy Ferguson, educational assistant at Stratford Northwestern SS effective August 31, 2017

Linda Finlayson, educational assistant at Brookside PS effective August 31, 2017

Marsha Purvis, teacher at South Perth Centennial PS effective August 31, 2017

Colleen Zinn, educational assistant at Brookside PS effective August 31, 2017

Michael Rau, facilities administrator, Education Centre effective September 15, 2017

Lloyd Renecker, custodian at Avon PS effective October 31, 2017

OPSBA Update

Trustee Schenk will be attending the first meeting on September 22nd and 23rd in Toronto. Ontario will host the CSBA Annual Conference in 2019 at the Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto. This conference will be held in conjunction with OPSBA's AGM. If trustees are interested in assisting with organizing committee please contact Trustee Schenk or OPSBA Executive Director Rusty Hicks.

Minutes from Board Committees

Joint Health & Safety Committee: March 30, 2017

Chair's Activity Update

Chair Wagler, Vice Chair Kent and Director Walsh met at the end of the school year and in early August to plan for fall meetings. Chair Wagler gave greetings at the District Leaders' Day on August 28th.

Senior Staff Update

Associate Superintendent Carter reported preliminary opening day enrolment had increased in elementary by 160 students from June estimates. In secondary enrolment for resident students it is showing consistent with June estimates, with a slight increase.

Superintendent Baker reported 212 international students have come to Avon Maitland for Semester I and are attending secondary schools throughout the district. Avon Maitland has partnered with Bluewater District School Board to host twenty-nine students.

Superintendent Blair announced educators will be arriving from the Netherlands at the end of September. They are moving to an inclusive education model in their schools and want to again visit Avon Maitland because they appreciate the great work they saw in our schools when they were here last spring.

Correspondence

Letter dated June 29, 2017 from Chair Wagler to Chair Clodd, Trillium Lakelands District School Board re support of motions within their letter of June 14, 2017

Letter dated July 2017 from Halton District School Board to Honourable Kathleen Wynne re a request from the OSTA-AECO Ontario Student Trustees letter of May 22, 2017

NEW BUSINESS**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Future Board Meetings (at Education Centre unless otherwise noted)

- September 26, 2017 – 5:00 p.m. Audit Committee, 7:00 p.m. Committee of the Whole, Closed Session, 8:00 p.m. Regular Board Session
- October 10, 2017 – 5:00 p.m. Committee of the Whole, Closed Session, 6:00 p.m. Committee of the Whole, Open Session, 8:00 p.m. Regular Board Session

Future Meetings/Events with Trustee Representation (at Education Centre unless otherwise noted)

- Audit Committee: Tuesday, September 26, 2017 – 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT**MOTION 2017 09 312****(L. Geddes – N. Rothwell)****RESOLVED THAT** this meeting be adjourned at 9:30 p.m.**CARRIED**

Approved at Seaforth, Ontario
September 26, 2017

Randy Wagler
Chair of the Board

Dr. Lisa Walsh
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board