

W-E-M BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES REGULAR MEETING
Monday, March 23, 2020, 6 p.m.

The WEM Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, March 23, 2020 at the Waterville Building in the Board Room. The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Pam Baker at 6:05 p.m.

Present were Board Members Baker, Travis Bowman, Jay Schneider, Jeff Stangler, and Jon Velishek. Board members Dan Houlihan and Gary Michael participated in the meeting via teleconference. Also present were Superintendent Joel Whitehurst, Principals Dr. Jennifer Wilson and Bobbi Jo Bastian, Activities Director Jeff Boran, and Business Manager Margaret Jewison,

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Bowman to approve the agenda. Seven members voted in favor by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

Motion by Bowman and seconded by Stangler to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2020. Seven members voted in favor by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

Motion by Baker and seconded by Schneider to approve the March Financial Transactions. The bills and payroll for the report were \$690,534.17, deposits were \$1,033,157.99, and transfers were \$6,806,405.30. Comments included a payment of \$17,500 to School Management Services for payroll services, a payment of \$113 to MAHS (Minnesota Historical Society), a payment of \$96,026 to ISD #829 Waseca for special education contract, and a payment of \$47,696 to Leisure Time tours for the choir trip. There was also a number of CDs which had matured, with the largest \$4,009,314 and the smallest \$249,439.50.

Six members vote in favor by roll call vote - Bowman voted against - motion declared passed.

VISITOR COMMENTS

None

RECOGNITION

Motion by Bowman and seconded by Baker to approve the following monetary donations:

- * A donation of \$13,249 from the WEM Moving Forward Foundation to the music department.
- * A donation of \$250 from Elysian Bank for a scholarship.

- * A donation of \$1,120 from the Waterville Lions Club for technology.
- * A donation of \$269.50 from the Waterville Lions to the Peace Patrol.

Seven members voted in favor by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

REPORTS

Bobbi Jo Bastian presented the following report:

Staff Update

- * Staff spent the March 3 late start continuing curriculum work by grade level or department

- * Prek-6th grade staff are working diligently to prepare for distance learning. We have one of the more crucial aspects, an online platform already in place, which is a great first step. Teachers are working to prepare materials and lesson to be presented and completed should the need for distance learning begin on March 30.

- * District paraprofessionals are currently working to support the food and childcare needs of WEM students.

Other

- * March 6 the kindergarten students shared their musical talents with friends and family at their music program. Thank you to Mr. Schmitt for his hard work.

- * March 3 was our third preschool screening day this year. Many preschoolers and their parents attended.

- * The fifth and sixth grade science fair was held March 10. There were 69 students and 46 projects and 12 volunteer judges. A total of 17 students earned and invitation to the Regional Science Fair. We had approximately 85 visitors to view projects. Thank you Rachel Wetzel for organizing this great event.

- * Fifth and sixth grade students attended the Young Writers and artists Conference at Bethany College on March 12. The conference is an annual event that allows students to meet authors, artists, educators, and business leaders. Students are given the opportunity to explore a variety of subjects related to writing and creative arts, artists, and offer opportunities.

- * On March 13, 10 sixth grade students participated in the Math Masters Competition at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato. There were 39 teams from the surrounding area with a total of 189 students participating. Students competed in individual and team problem solving components. This year, Avery Wetzel placed 13th and Dillon Roessler placed 18th in the individual rounds. Congratulations to them and the other members as they worked hard to demonstrate their math skills. Thank you to Anna Skidmore, Laura Sammon, and Kylie Korner (student teacher) Math Masters coaches for supporting this great opportunity for our students to shine.

* The third and fourth grade science fair scheduled for late March has been cancelled. The March 26 first and second grade music concert has been postponed at this time.

WEM Principal Dr. Jennifer Wilson presented the following report:

Staff Update

* During our 2-hour late start on March 3 our paraprofessionals received an inservice with Southern Minnesota Counseling Services on the topic of suicide prevention. Our certified staff had time to work in grade level and content area PLCs.

* On March 4 Regional and National AVID reps visited WEM. Their time in the district included site visits at both Morristown and the high school. Observations included general education classrooms and AVID classes. They provided feedback on our teaching staff along with district support and feedback.

* All 7-12 non-tenured staff have received their second formal observation for the year. Additional formal observations for certified staff have been conducted. In the 7-12 certified staff rotation there is one formal observation left to be completed.

* All staff are working hard to complete their district learning plans along with their own plans in the event we transition to a long-term distant learning model.

* Paraprofessionals and support staff are currently working on the frontlines to help bring food and care to our district children. This role will likely evolve if we transition to long-term distance learning.

Other

* Over the last week "business as usual" has been turned upside down. Our current state of what Gov. Walz has asked us to fulfill (distant learning plans) bring new challenges to education. Our students and our staff are being called upon to do things that we are not used to doing. Our learning curves are big. In my interactions with staff and our students the mutual feelings are sadness with slow growing optimism - they miss each other. My ultimate conclusion of this is that WEM's culture for holistic approaches to education are intricate and special. A theme amongst our student athletes has been "together." As a district we have asked our teachers to be flexible. I find the two words to be essential and imperative as we journey through the remainder of the year as a district.

* A survey was created and sent out by administration to each building staff. The survey addressed district financials and other insights. Our questions were directed to staff to respond based on their position and in the building they work in. The intentionality

was to achieve specific and real-time thoughts vs. probability.

WEM Activities Director Jeff Boran's presented the following report:

ACTIVITIES

Winter: Season cut short during the GBB State Tournament and during the BBB Section Tournament.

* 2019-20 WEM boys and girls basketball teams earned Gopher Conference Championships. The boys were the Section 2A South Sub-Section Runner-up. The girls earned their first-ever Sub-Section and Section Championships. They were the Section 2A South Sub-Section Champions and the Section 2A Champions and represented Section 2A in the 2020 MSHSL Class A State Basketball Tournament where they were undefeated.

* All-Gopher Conference Basketball Players:

- Boys: Grant McBroom (12) was named the Gopher Conference "Player of the Year." He was joined by Domanik Paulson (10). Cole Kokoschke (12) was named to the 2nd Team and Zack Sticken (12) was named Honorable Mention. Matthew Van Houdt (12) earned the Sportsmanship Award.

- Girls: Toryn Richards (11) was named 1st Team All-Conference. Brielle Bartelt (11) and Ellie Ready (11) were named to the 2nd Team. Kylie Pittmann (11) was recognized as Honorable Mention All-Conference. Trista Hering (12) earned the Sportsmanship Award for 2019-20.

* WEM senior Tucker Riets was named Honorable Mention All-Gopher Conference. JWP's Ethan Rider was named All-Conference and Ted Carlson earned the Gopher Conference Sportsmanship Award.

* 2019-20 Concert Choir earned a Superior Rating at the Large Group Contest March 2.

* 2019-20 Band also earned a Superior Rating at the Large Group Contest March 2.

Spring: Currently season length TBD

* Boys track: 27 participants 7-12. Girls track: 32 participants 7-12

* Softball: 19 girls out for 9-12 and 13 in grades 7-8

* Baseball: 18 boys out 9-12 and 13 in grades 7-8

* Speech season and junior high play are postponed, TBD.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

* Clay Target Team - 43 participants registered.

* Driver education classroom March 9-20 is suspended with students needing 15 hours of instruction. (Involves 27 students). By state law as confirmed by the Minnesota DPS, this must be finished in the classroom setting. It cannot (at this time) be done on-line. Arrangements with families and students will be made when students are able to return. The classroom session scheduled for May 18-29 (14

currently registered) is TBD.

- * Minnesota DNR and AARP have suspended all in class courses until May 1. On-line courses for many of these do exist.

- * Summer activities TBD - based on COVID 19 and WEM Construction.

- * Currently all facility use is suspended and cancelled at this time, due to the COVID-19 issue. TBD

SHUT DOWN

- * Currently we have 13 students registered (not all come each day) for Tier 1 and Tier 2 Childcare. Times are 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Screening/check-in procedure occur every day and we are doing our best.

- * As of 8 a.m. Monday, March 23 food service staff is preparing 159 meals for grab and go at the Morristown School, Waterville Elementary and Elysian site. Meals consist of a lunch for the day and a breakfast for the next morning.

WEM Business Manager Margaret Jewison presented the following:

- * Jewison presented a revised 2019-20 budget. See attachment.

One of the biggest changes from the preliminary budget was the increase of students from 744 to 782.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Stangler to approve the revised budget. Seven members voted in favor by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

WEM Superintendent Joel Whitehurst presented the following:

- * Whitehurst reported the educational world has been turned upside down. He watched staff come together to do what is best for our kids. He also said new medical rates will not be available until April 8th.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

- * There was a brief update on the Governor's closing of schools.

- * There was a building construction update. An interior designer was at the school in mid-March. Asbestos abatement was discussed. Work on the construction project could start early if school is shut down for the remainder of the year.

- * Budget proposals for the 2020-21 school year were discussed. See attachment. No action was taken at this time. A number of different scenarios were brought forth, including reductions of \$40,000, \$110,000, and/or \$200,000.

ACTION

- * Motion by Stangler and seconded by Michael to approve the tentative 2020-21 academic calendar. See attachment. Seven members

voted in favor by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

* Motion by Baker and seconded by Michael that due to the declared health pandemic and the declared state of emergency and pursuant to Minnesota Statute 13D.021, until further notice, all WEM School Board meetings will be held by teleconference or other electronic means. Seven members voted in favor by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

Personnel

Motion by Bowman and seconded by Stangler to approve Grace Roeker, paraprofessional, \$11.80/hour, 7.5 hours/day.

Seven members voted in favor by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

Motion by Stangler and seconded by Schneider to approve Laura Borneke-Shaurer's request to continue her Leave of Absence through the 2020-2021 school year.

Six members voted in favor by roll call vote - Velishek voted against - motion declared passed.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Bowman to approve Ron Greenwald as a volunteer track and field coach.

Seven members voted in favor by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

Motion by Baker and seconded by Schneider to approve John Kaplan as a volunteer track and field coach.

Seven members voted in favor by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Houlihan to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Seven members voted in favor by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

ATTEST:

Pam Baker, Board Chair

Jay Schneider, Board Clerk