

W-E-M BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES REGULAR MEETING

Monday, February 28, 2022, 6 p.m.

The WEM Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, February 28, 2022 at the Waterville Building. The meeting was called to order by Board Chairman Gary Michael at 6:31 p.m.

Board Members Michael, June Rezac, Jay Schneider, Jon Velishek, and Jeff Stangler attended the meeting. Also present at the meeting were Superintendent Joel Whitehurst, Principals Dr. Jennifer Wilson and Bobbie Jo Bastian, Activities Director Jeff Boran, and Business Manager Margaret Jewison.

Motion by Stangler and seconded by Rezac to approve the agenda. Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Rezac and seconded by Stangler to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from January 24, 2022. Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Michael and seconded by Schneider to approve the February Financial Report. The bills and payroll from the report were \$2,287,929.23, deposits were \$1,014,932.47, and transfers were \$2,150,000. Comments on the report included a payment of \$1,073.75 to James Brothers Construction for toilet jetting in Morristown and drain issues in Waterville, a payment of \$939,311.25 to Bond Trust Services Cooperation for bond payment and interest, a payment of \$2,885.49 to Minnesota Iron & Metal, Co. for elimination of waste from the boilers and science room, a payment of \$3,598.56 to School Management Services for six months worth of travel, a payment of \$1,000 to Camp Omega for junior high student travel registration, a payment of \$7,073.50 to School Outfitters for new desks, a payment of \$3,180 to Faribault Transportation Company for Eagle Bluff Bus Trip, and a payment of \$1,775 to the Gopher Conference for the Honors Concert.

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

VISITOR COMMENTS

There were no visitor comments.

RECOGNITION

Motion by Stangler and seconded by Velishek to approve the following monetary donations:

\$15,000 from the Morristown Firemen's Relief Association to the WEM School District.

\$314.95 from the WEM Bucketeers to the athletic department.

\$500 from the Elysian Agency towards Anti-Bullying.

\$500 from Elysian Bank towards Anti-Bullying.

\$1,500 from the American Legion Post 311 to the athletic department.

\$1,000 from the Le Sueur County Sheriff's Youth Project to the elementary school.

\$250 from the Elysian Bank for a scholarship.

\$8,000 from the Morristown Firemen's Relief Association for upgrade to the football field concession stand.

\$8,000 from the Elysian Volunteer Fire Department for upgrade to the football field concession stand.

\$300 from Rice County Deputies Association towards the PBIS program.

\$3,131.75 from the WEM Class Advisors to the Class of 2022 for Prom.

\$2,000 from Feed Store & More to the FFA program.

\$1,000 from Corteva to the FFA program.

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

The WEM football field concession stand will be upgraded this year as a project by the students under the direction of Dan Forcelle and Tyson Cooley.

REPORTS

WEM Principal Bobbie Jo Bastian and WEM Principal Dr. Jennifer Wilson presented the following report:

All District

Administration and WEM's School Counseling department meet on February 7, 2022 to record our annual World's Best Workforce. The recording has been published on the WEM District website and is active for viewing.

On March 1 we will have our final late start for the school year. Teachers will be working in their PLCs on grade level or department priorities. Paraprofessionals will be training with the special education director.

On March 2 all WEM students will be part of the audience for speaker Cory Greenwood. Cory is a Minnesota speaker who focuses on anti-bullying, kindness, working through challenges and adversities, and being an active, positive member of the community. Students in 7-12 will be part of the first program (approximately 70 minutes) followed by K-6 (approximately 45 minutes).

Parent teacher conferences are approaching towards the end of March (March 22 and 24). Also that week we will conclude Quarter 3.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment window will open March 6, 2022. Testing windows are open through the first week in May (English and Math) and May 10 for Science.

PreK-6 Report

Fifth grade students had a successful field trip to the Eagle Bluff Environmental Learning Center, February 14-16. Students learned a great deal about the environment and team work enjoying activities like dissecting owl pellets, hiking and high ropes courses. A huge thank you to Mrs. Heinz, Mrs. Wetzel, Mrs. Landru, and Mr. Svendsen for the time they put into organizing a wonderful experience for our students. Special thanks to parents that attended as chaperones and to many others that donated their time, talents as well as monetary donations to make this trip possible. We are already booked for next year.

K-4 students have been celebrating I Love to Read Month with a calendar of activities including “Hats Off to Books” and Beaching It with Books.” We incorporated 2-22-22 last week with our all school read and dance part at 2:22 on 2-22-22.

7-12 Report

February 22-25 was National FFA Week and Snow Week at WEM. Each day students participated in activities and dress-up days. Thank you Mr. Cooley and WEM’s FFA Advisory. National FFA Week is very busy and active week for him and his membership. They consistently do a great job and their time and shared talents are appreciated.

On Friday, February 25 the second annual Snow Week Coronation was held. The court consisted of freshmen: Preston Grams and Maddie Heuss, Keegan Kuball and Kaedyn Judd, and Ivan Pratt and Annabelle Skurkay. Sophomore court: Caleb Caron and Des Domonoske, Myles Pratt and Izabella Slechta, and Clayton Jans and Josie Volkmann. Junior class royalty: Gabe Androli and Jenessa Baumgarten, Shelby Krienke and Hannah Bruns, and Eli Wetzel and Emma Woratschka. Senior Candidates: Daniel Ackemann and Lydia Ell, Sam Rezac and Alex Heuss, and Wyatt Saemrow and Emma Kuball.

Selected by their class, the crowns went to freshmen Keegan Kuball and Kaedyn Judd, sophomores Caleb Caron and Josie Volkmann, juniors Shelby Krienke and Jenessa Baumgarten, and seniors Wyatt Saemrow and Emma Kuball. Congratulations to our 2022 Snow Week Court and their families.

Students in 7-12 grades will begin the registration process for 2022-23 in March.

Jostens will be delivering caps and gowns for our Class of 2022 seniors on Wednesday, March 2.

I sat in on a 2-hour seminar regarding safe buildings and activity shooters on February 24. The virtual webinar was hosted by Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. Some points were reviewed, but overall the details, conversation, and information was well done, informative, and something that should have an ongoing discussion for preparation. We do practice lockdown drills and fire drills in the district to add context to the drills for our staff will be important moving forward.

On Wednesday, February 9 our junior high students enjoyed a half day at Camp Omega. Thank you to Doug Androli and Pam Heinz for helping to plan the event. Students were able to do outdoor activities such as tubing and ice fishing.

Mrs. Roethler and I met with all junior high students on behavior and language. We have observed and been managing behaviors that are negatively impacting the school culture. Our conversations were a reteach of our BUCS Pride expectations. The meetings were positive and productive. We have experienced less behavior referrals since the meetings during the month of February.

WEM Activities Director Jeff Boran presented the following report:

ACTIVITIES
Girls Basketball: The girls finished the season 13-11 and are the No. 6 seed in the Section 2AA South Sub-Section. The Bucs travel to Mapleton to play No. 3 seed Maple River Feb. 28. If they win the quarterfinal game they would play at Mankato East March 3. The Sub-Section Championship will be March 7 at MSU-Mankato and the Section Championship March 11 at MSU-Mankato. The All-Gopher Conference selections will be made March 2 and not released until all teams are finished competing.

Boys Basketball: The boys regular season ends this week with games Feb. 28 at MVL and Friday vs. TCU. Sub-Section 2AA seeding is March 2. The first game for playoffs will be March 8 at the high seed site. Further rounds will follow the same format and locations as the girls tournaments. The All-Gopher Conference selections will be made March 2 and not released until all teams are finished competing.

Wrestling: The Grizzlies finished the dual meet season 6-19 on the season. The Grizzlies did manage eight place winners in the Section 2A Tournament, highlighted by Carsen Petry (WEM 9th grader - 113 pound runner-up) and Keegan Kuball (WEM 9th grader - Heavyweight Champion). These two have now qualified for the MSHSL State Individual Tournament March 4 and 5. All-Conference selections occurred Feb. 2 and will not be released until after the State Tournament.

Big Shout Out: WEM hosted the 3rd Gopher Conference Honors Band and Choir, and Visual Arts event February 55. The event was well attended with 146 students participating along with their directors and our visiting directors (Brad Mariska - Band - Farmington, and Maria Wilson - Choir - Osseo High School). Seven of the 12 conference schools had several pieces of student artwork on display as well. It was a very entertaining concert and all students involved were awesome.

Spring**Activities:**

- The Band and Concert Choir performed in the Sub-Section 5A Large Group Contests Feb. 28 at St. Clair. The Solo/Ensemble Sub-Section 5A Contest will be held March 26 at MSU-Mankato.
- The WEM School Play “Blather, Blarney, and Balderdash,” by Patrick Rainville Dorn and directed by Andrew Velishek, are busy preparing for a performance March 14. Fourteen students grades 7-12 will be performing.
- Knowledge Bowl teams are also busy competing this late winter/spring. WEM has 11 students grades 9-12 participating. Tim Walker is the coach.
- Speech has begun competitions. WEM has 11 students grades 7-12 participating. Eric Gerst and Rachel Wendlandt are coaches.
- Boys and girls 7-12 Track and Field practice begins March 14.
- Softball begins practice Monday, March 14. Junior high starts March 21.
- Baseball begins practice Monday, March 21. Junior high starts March 28.
- WEM Trap (Clay Target) gets started March 27.

Community**Education:**

- Spring/Summer activities are beginning and we are getting primed for a busy summer.
- Summer 2022 School Age Childcare (SACC) registration currently has 35 registered with a limited availability based on our licensure. The 2022-2023 school year registration will also begin in April.
- 2022-2023 “Little Bucs Preschool” formerly known as “Kindergarten Connection” will begin taking registrations from the public Monday, March 7. We will be increasing options for preschool from two (3-day) and one (2-day) options to two (4-day) and two (3-day) options.
- Driver Education will be having another classroom session beginning March 3, with Summer Behind the Wheel sign up beginning in April for the 2022 summer.

Other:

- The WEM Moving Forward Foundation will be hosting its 10th “Buc’s Night Out” Friday, April 22 in Morristown at the Community Center.

Motion by Rezac and seconded by Stangler to approve the student per diem for State Tournaments: \$10 breakfast, \$15 lunch, and \$18 supper.

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

WEM Board Member Reports

No reports

WEM Board Committee Reports

No reports

WEM Superintendent Joel Whitehurst presented the following:

- Whitehurst commented on School Board Appreciation Week which is Feb. 21 through Feb. 25, informed the board about a zoom meeting with Senator Julie Rosen which included discussions about mental health and lack of substitute teachers, and he informed the board of the 9.25 billion dollar bonus the state currently has.

Information/Discussion

- There was some discussion regarding the Elysian tennis courts and baseball field, in which the school would like to give to the City of Elysian. After discussion between both parties, it was decided a joint powers agreement would need to be in place before any exchange of land would occur.

- Student behavior on the busses has become a problem. Bus drivers write-up students who act up on the bus and after three write-ups they’re kicked off the bus. The board will look at putting cameras in each bus to help with discipline.

Action

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Rezac to approve the updated 2021-22 school district budget. See attachment.

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Michael and seconded by Schneider to approve the February 2022 through January 2023 agreement with SMS Payroll Services in the amount of \$37,132.

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Stangler to approve the highest bid from Jerry Marzahn for the purchase of 12.16 acres of district owned farm land at a price of \$81,300 (with an additional \$2,000 donation to Kindergarten and \$8,000 donation to the WEM FFA).

Four members vote in favor - Rezac voted against - motion declared passed.

PERSONNEL

Motion by Stangler and seconded by Rezac to approve the July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2023 contract with School Age Care Coordinator and staff pursuant to the Child Care Stabilization Grant awarded to the school district.

- \$2,300 stipend for School Age Care Coordinator.
- 96 cents per hour increase for all School Age Care staff, effective September 1, 2021.
- Hourly pay reverts to current hourly rates when the grant is fully expended or upon conclusion of the current contract, whichever is sooner.

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Michael to approve the lane change request from Media Center Instructor Eric Gerst, from MS+10 to MS+20, effective January 15, 2022.

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Michael and seconded by Rezac to approve the following coaches:

Boys Track and Field: Head Jon McDonough (\$5,359) and 1st Assistant Al Baker (\$3,820).

Girls Track and Field: Head Mike Richards (\$5,359) and 1st Assistant Carrie Richards (\$3,820).

Boys and Girls Track and Field: Junior High Matthew Van Houdt (\$2,297).

Baseball: Junior High Ty Kaus (\$2,297).

Softball: Junior High Kelsey Bauer (\$3,820).

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Stangler to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Five members voted in favor - motion declared passed.

Gary Michael, Attest Jay Schneider, Attest