

**WATERFORD UNION HIGH SCHOOL
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Monday, May 19, 2025**

The meeting was called to order by President Schoenfeld at 6:30 p.m. Board members present at the meeting were: Gary Beck, Kelly Datka, Dennis Purtell, Mike Schoenfeld, and Doug Schwartz.

This meeting was noticed by way of publication in the *Waterford Post* on Thursday, May 15, 2025, was posted at the District Office (Door #7) and at Entrance #19, and was published on the District's website. The meeting was also posted at the following municipal offices within the WUHS District: Town of Norway, Town of Waterford, Village of Raymond, Village of Vernon, Village of Waterford. Minutes from the regular board meeting of March 17, 2025, and from the special meeting on April 3, 2025, are posted on the District's website.

President Schoenfeld led the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD REORGANIZATION

Election of Board Officers

Section 120.05(1)(c) Wis. Stats., requires that the school board annually elect a board president, vice president, treasurer, and clerk from among its members at a school board meeting held on or within 30 days after the 4th Monday in April.

The floor was opened for nominations for Board President. Board member Datka nominated Dennis Purtell for Board President; board member Schwartz nominated Mike Schoenfeld as Board President. Board members were asked to vote by paper ballot with the following results: three votes for Mike Schoenfeld; two votes for Dennis Purtell. The Board President for the 2025-26 term is Mike Schoenfeld.

There followed a nomination by board member Beck for Dennis Purtell to serve as Vice President; board member Schwartz seconded the nomination. There being no other nominations for Vice President, board members were asked to verbally vote by stating "aye" in favor of the nomination or "nay" if opposed. The vote was recorded as all ayes; Dennis Purtell shall serve as Vice President for the 2025-26 term.

Board member Schwartz nominated Kelly Datka to serve as Board Treasurer. There being no other nominations for Treasurer, board members were asked to verbally vote by stating "aye" in favor of the nomination or "nay" if opposed. The vote was recorded as all ayes; Kelly Datka shall serve as Board Treasurer for the 2025-26 term.

There followed a nomination by board member Beck for Doug Schwartz to serve as Clerk. There being no other nominations for Clerk, board members were asked to verbally vote by stating "aye" in favor of the nomination or "nay" if opposed. The vote was recorded as all ayes; Doug Schwartz shall serve as Board Clerk for the 2025-26 term.

Board member Datka expressed her concerns regarding President Schoenfeld's leadership in relation to the direction of the Board and explained her rationale for nominating board member Purtell as Board President. Mr. Schoenfeld responded to Mrs. Datka and acknowledged they share a fundamental difference of opinion with regard to her vision of the Board, its guiding principles, and the Board's role in the overall governance of the District.

There followed a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Beck, to confirm the board officers for the 2025-26 term. Superintendent Francois reminded board members that all of the board officers had been duly elected for the upcoming term through a vote, and if the Board would like to discuss its vision for the direction of the district, a discussion could be added to a future meeting agenda. The motion before the Board was withdrawn.

Board Committee Assignments

There was a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Beck, that Board committee assignments remain the same for the 2025-26 term. There being no board discussion or objections, the motion was put to a vote. All ayes; motion carried. Board committees shall remain as follows.

- *Building and Grounds*: Beck, Schwartz
- *Finance*: Beck, Datka, Schwartz
- *Personnel*: Purtell, Schoenfeld
- *Curriculum and Policy*: Datka, Purtell

2025-2026 Board Meeting Dates

There was a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Beck, to approve the 2025-26 board meeting dates as presented. There being no board discussion or objections, the motion was put to a vote. All ayes; motion carried.

Board Representative - CESA 2 Delegate Convention (June, 2025)

There was a motion by Datka, seconded by Schwartz, to nominate Dennis Purtell to represent the WUHS District at the CESA 2 Delegate Convention in June, 2025. There being no board discussion or objections, the motion was put to a vote. All ayes; motion carried.

District Delegate for 2026 WASB State Education Convention

Board member Beck nominated Kelly Datka to serve as the District's delegate to the 2026 WASB State Education Convention. It is anticipated that the Delegate Assembly will be held on Wednesday, January 21, 2026. Board member Datka nominated Dennis Purtell to serve as the District's delegate. There being two nominations, Board members were asked to vote by paper ballot with the following results: one vote for Kelly Datka; four votes for Dennis Purtell. Board member Purtell shall serve as the District Delegate to the 2026 WASB State Education Convention Delegate Assembly. Board member Schwartz nominated Kelly Datka to serve as the District's alternate delegate. Ms. Datka accepted the appointment; there were no objections.

CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were presented to the Board for approval under the consent agenda:

- A. Review of Paid Bills – April 17 to May 16, 2025
- B. Minutes of the Monthly Board Meeting - April 21, 2025 (Open Session, Exec. Session)
- C. Minutes - April 28, 2025 (Open Session, Exec. Session)
- D. Minutes - May 12, 2025 Special Meeting (Curriculum Committee, Open Session, Exec. Session)
- E. Staffing Updates
 - (1) Letter of Resignation - Susan Schmecht, Custodian (1.0 FTE)
 - (2) Resignation - Elizabeth Morrissey, WEC Physical Therapist (1.0 FTE)
 - (3) New Hire - Megan Baranek, WEC Speech/Language Pathologist (1.0)
- F. Open Enrollment Applications 2025-26 SY
- G. DPI Special Education Policies and Procedures Manual, and Model Forms

There was a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Purtell to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Board member Datka stated that the minutes from the Executive Sessions held April 21, April 28, and on May 12 contained errors. Board member Schwartz rescinded his motion to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. Board member Datka moved to approve the items presented under the Consent Agenda with the exception of the Executive Session minutes of April 21, April 28, and May 12, 2025. Board member Schwartz seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken; all ayes. The motion carried.

RESIDENT COMMENTS

Community member John Mirsburger addressed the board as the father of a bi-racial student currently attending Waterford Union. Mr. Mirsburger expressed concern about the racially charged remarks made against visiting team athletes at a recent track meet hosted by Waterford, and urged the Board and Administration to protect all children against violence and discrimination.

President Schoenfeld thanked Mr. Mirsburger for coming forward and sharing his thoughts, noting that the WUHS Board agrees that the incident is reprehensible and unacceptable. Mr. Schoenfeld acknowledged that the Administration immediately began an extensive investigation into the allegations and will be addressing this matter later during the meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Student Council Report

Sergeant at Arms Owen Hoffman provided an update of recent student activities. Student Council is finalizing plans for a blood drive May 23 and for the annual senior sunset event for the outgoing senior class. Election of next year's Student Council officers will take place soon. NHS held a clothing drive to benefit Love, Inc. as well as a bake sale in conjunction with the FFA plant sale held earlier this month. Proceeds of their fund-raisers were donated to a mental health organization. Earlier today, NHS members visited Waterford Senior

Living dressed in their prom attire for community members unable to attend the grand march over the weekend. C.L.A.W. members participated in a highway clean-up along Hwy. 36, assisted Evergreen staff with various tasks, and sold spirit wear at the FFA plant sale. French Honor Society inducted five new members and will be participating in their annual bocce ball tournament against the Spanish Club on May 30. CHASE members set a record of nearly 3,000 volunteer hours during the 2024-25 school year, and wrapped up their year with a pot-luck celebration. Spanish Club members held a “Gauc Off and Salsa Showdown,” participated in “Locura de Marzo” music competition, and are practicing for the bocce ball tournament. Best Buddies held a bake sale with proceeds going to the Matthias Academy and wrapped up the year with a pizza party and outdoor games.

FFA members held their end-of-year banquet on April 27, their annual plant sale on May 3-4, and hosted Ag. Adventure day on May 16 for the area feeder school students. FFA members submitted and are anxiously awaiting the results of their National Chapter application. Miranda Bernau submitted her FFA state officer application in late April and will undergo a series of intense interviews during the state FFA convention in June. Twenty-five WUHS FFA members will be attending the state FFA convention to receive awards and to compete in various competitions there.

Debt Prepayment (Defeasance) and Phase I Financing Authorization

Erik Kass, PMA Financial, introduced his associate intern, who is learning about becoming a municipal advisor. Mr. Kass shared a presentation explaining a proposed defeasance of the District’s existing debt of General Obligation Bonds dated June 13, 2019, which are not yet at their call date. Two earlier prepayments of this debt have resulted in the District realizing savings of more than \$625,000 in interest to date. By continuing the District’s strategic approach to debt levy management, the additional proposed debt defeasance action would mark the third consecutive year of prepayment, applying approximately \$5.7 million in available funds to retire callable maturities from the District’s 2019 bond issue. This move is expected to generate an estimated \$1.05 million in net savings overall to future debt service obligations. Mr. Kass explained the financial impact, escrow requirements, and timeline for completion of the debt defeasance, with final escrow deposit anticipated in early June, 2025.

Mr. Kass next shared a presentation guiding a discussion of debt issuance relative to the February 18, 2025 successful \$24.9 million building referendum. The proposed initial issuance of \$14 million in general obligation bonds is to provide necessary project liquidity while taking advantage of favorable market conditions and the Small Issuer Exemption. Mr. Kass explained that when determining the timing and strategy for borrowing, they consider several factors including interest rate environment, cash flow needs of the project, maximization of interest earnings to avoid arbitrage, property tax levy commitments and targets, as well as amortization of debt.

The WUHS Board will be asked to authorize a competitive bond sale scheduled for June 16, 2025. It is anticipated that PMA will receive bids at 10:00 a.m. that day. Following completion of their final analysis, information will then be provided to bond counsel for final resolutions. The WUHS Board will be asked to consider the final approval of the prepared resolution to accept the low bid and secure the financing.

President Schoenfeld asked when the remaining funds would be borrowed. Mr. Kass noted that the second issuance of bonds for the remaining \$10.9 million of the building project is slated for March 1, 2026, although that date could possibly change.

Joint Statement and Executive Summary – May 7 Track Meet Incident

Superintendent Francois shared a synopsis of the District’s formal investigation into the allegations of racially charged comments and discriminatory actions directed toward visiting team student athletes who were participating at a track meet hosted by Waterford Union on May 7. Following the decision by Rufus King High School to leave the meet early because they did not feel safe, the WUHS administration team launched an investigation immediately on May 8. WUHS administration worked closely with MPS throughout the investigation. Principal Foster and Athletics/Activities Director Stobber were designated as compliance officers per Policy 5517, which outlines prohibited behaviors as well as what is to happen when there is a formal complaint. Dr. Francois noted that interviews were conducted with student athletes at Rufus King, as well as with respondents named in the complaint. The administration also spoke with more than 40 witnesses at the event, and anyone who was involved was given an opportunity to be heard. Video footage from the track area and outside facilities was reviewed; each member of the WUHS administrative team spent more than 100 hours

examining what transpired that day. The culmination of this extensive research into the incident was summarized in a Final Executive Summary, which was later shared with Waterford families as well as MPS. The MPS administration was cooperative in assisting with the investigation and agreeable to releasing a joint statement released to the public and shared at this meeting.

Dr. Francois noted that the discipline process is currently underway, with due process protocols being followed for one student found to be involved to be given an opportunity to be heard. Moving forward from this incident, the District has committed to providing meaningful and impactful training for all staff and students on culturally appropriate conduct in order to promote a culture of dignity, equity, and mutual respect for all. The District will continue to support its students through intentional conversations, learning opportunities, and systems that ensure all young people feel safe, respected, and valued.

President Schoenfeld acknowledged and commended the swift reaction of the Administrative team and the manner in which they have responded to this incident.

Policy 5722 - School-Sponsored Publications and Productions

Board members were presented Policy 5722 with revisions recommended by Neola for their consideration and first reading. This policy has been reviewed by the administration, including the Director of Communications Kate Brown, and will be presented to the board for action at its June 16 meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

The following items were presented for board action.

A. **Resolution Authorizing the Transfer of Funds, the Establishment of an Escrow Account with Respect to and the Defeasance of Certain of the General Obligation School Improvement Bonds, dated June 13, 2019**

The Board will consider approval of a resolution authorizing the defeasance of a portion of the District's outstanding General Obligation School Improvement Bonds dated June 13, 2019. The resolution allows for the transfer of approximately \$5.7 million of available funds into an escrow account to be held by Zions Bancorporation. These funds will be used to fully defease the 2028 and 2029 maturities, partially defease the 2027 and 2037 maturities, and call the 2030 through 2036 maturities for early redemption on March 1, 2029.

The following resolution was then moved by board member Purtell and seconded by board member Schwartz: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ESCROW ACCOUNT WITH RESPECT TO AND THE DEFEASANCE OF CERTAIN OF THE GENERAL OBLIGATION SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT BONDS, DATED JUNE 13, 2019. (A true copy of the resolution as adopted is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.)

Upon the vote being taken, the following voted Aye: Datka, Beck, Purtell, Schoenfeld, Schwartz; Nay: [None]; Abstaining: [None], and the resolution was declared adopted.

B. **Consideration to Add Up to 1.0 FTE in English Language Arts**

Board members were asked to consider the Administration's recommendation for adding up to a 1.0 Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) teaching position in the English Language Arts (ELA) department to support the successful implementation of AP Seminar and Pre-AP courses. The additional staffing will ensure appropriate class sizes, allow for instructional planning and collaboration, and maintain the integrity of the PLC process with additional intervention support. Superintendent Francois noted that the District anticipates receiving an additional \$325 per student in state aide for the forthcoming school year, which will help offset to the additional staffing cost.

There was a motion by Beck, seconded by Schwartz to approve the addition of up to 1.0 FTE in English Language Arts for the 2025-26 school year. All ayes; motion carried.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Francois shared sad news that community member Todd Sobrilsky passed away on May 18. Mr. Sobrilsky, who was a vital member of the 2023 community referendum committee, will be remembered for his passion for coaching, teaching, leadership, and service to others. Condolences were expressed for the Sobrilsky family.

ADJOURN FROM OPEN MEETING

There was a motion by Schwartz, seconded by Purtell, to adjourn the meeting. All ayes; motion carried. This was done at 7:40 p.m.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Monday, June 16, 2025. The meeting will be held in the LGI beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas P. Schwartz, Board Clerk