

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

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

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

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

Motion by Baker and seconded by Stangler to approve the special meeting minutes of October 8.

Four members voted in favor - Bowman, Schneider, and Velishek abstained by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

Motion by Baker and seconded by Stangler to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from Oct. 26. Five members voted in favor - Houlihan and Velishek abstained by roll call vote - motion declared passed.

Motion by Michael and seconded by Schneider to approve the November Finance report. The bills and payroll from the report were \$1,913,124.10, deposits were \$1,408,978.50, and transfers were \$900,000. Comments included a payment of \$35,049 to Scholastic Equipment Co., LLC for lockers, a payment of \$22,855 to Cummings Mobility Conservation Supply for special education van, a payment of \$37,610.40 to ISD #829 Waseca for special education travel, a payment of \$8,314.93 to Marco, Inc - Owatonna for lap tops, a payment of \$7,969.86 to Tierney Brothers, Inc. for smart boards, and the following payments will be moved to the construction account: American Engineering Testing, Inc. (\$3,685.50), Mavo Systems, Inc. (\$2,118.00), Satellite Shelters, Inc. (\$55), and South Central Service Cooperative (\$4,377.84).

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

VISITOR COMMENTS

A letter was read from Brenda Heuss which included concerns about distance learning and continuing extra-curricular activities.

NON-MONETARY DONATIONS

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Baker to approve two donations. They were a donation of The Berenstain Bears Visit the Firehouse from the Ms. Vetsch's Family and Friends, and a donation of adjustable masks from Mandy Boese.

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

REPORTS

WEM Principal Bobbie Jo Bastian and WEM Principal Dr. Jennifer Wilson (PreK-12th Grade) presented the following report:

PreK-6 Grade

* With the absences of our annual Veteran's Day Program, Sara Gorski, our music teacher, produced a video to thank veterans. Third grade student artwork was featured with their desk drumming showcased as background music. Their special tribute can be found on the WEM website.

* Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences were held Thursday, Nov. 19 and will continue tomorrow. All teachers conducted their conferences using Zoom or by phone. Thank you to the parent volunteers who supplied dinner for staff.

* All staff have been working to prepare for the pivot to distance learning on Nov. 30. Much time has been used to ensure students have the skills and materials necessary to successfully join their teachers virtually. I would like to express my appreciation for all of their hard work and dedication to our students. This a year like no other and our WEM staff have risen to every challenge with grit and grace.

7-12 Grade

* Parent/Teacher Conferences were held last Thursday (November 19) and again tomorrow (November 24). Conferences are virtual or teleconference pending parental preference. While this is a change from the past the ability to be safe and meet the needs of our families is being done to the best of our ability. While most conferences are being done with the parent and their student's advisor, we have also pulled teams together as well as IEP meetings.

* We had a number of parents provide food to our staff during conferences. Thank you to all that donated, took time to provide a meal to our staff. It is greatly appreciated.

* Until further notice, all district IEP meetings will be

conducted virtually. This decision is out of safety for all staff, students, and parents.

* Friday, November 20 and Wednesday, November 25 staff are using no-student days to prepare for distance learning which will begin on Monday, November 30. While there are some concerns with student mental health, SPED programming and service of students with 504s as we transition to distance learning I believe we have guidance and plans in place to serve all our students virtually.

* Recent guidance from public health indicates that will likely become unsafe for students to be in the building (in relation to case counts). We will continue to monitor and make entry into the building for instruction on a case by case basis. The priority will be on our most vulnerable students, students who are not able to learn effectively due to a disability followed by instruction that isn't able to be done from home. A survey went out to our teachers in an effort to gain information on any professional development that is needed for the transition to distance learning. Dan Lemcke provided technology sessions for various platforms based on the survey results in Morristown as well as Waterville on Friday, November 20. He will offer additional sessions on Wednesday, November 25. Dan is also monitoring the technology situation with devices and hot spots. Distribution of hot spots is at full capacity. Dan has ordered additional hot spots so we can continue to serve students throughout distance learning.

* Counseling Services of Southern Minnesota delivered CARE packages for our teachers. Packages were distributed throughout all district campuses. A second distribution will occur mid-December. Counseling services is continuing to offer a Teacher Connection support group. This group is hosted virtually for WEM teachers on Tuesday afternoons.

* Mrs. Wold, high school counselor, is working with students to complete/make changes to their Semester II schedule. We will be adding a new course, street percussion, to our schedule. Mrs. Sara Gorski will be providing the instruction for it.

* I would like to thank the JH and HS staff for all their work throughout hybrid as well as the transition to distance learning. The work over the last few weeks has been quite challenging and we are continuing to make way with positivity. I'm proud of our staff. I would also like to thank the families and students for their patience, understanding, and willingness to work together. This transition to distance learning and restrictions we are experiencing in Minnesota will continue to take a toll on many of us. I appreciate each and every person's role they are playing and taking during this time.

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

ATHLETICS

- * Volleyball - Finished up their season undefeated beating Minneota (2018 and 2019 returning State Champions) 3-1 on Friday, Nov. 20.

- * Football - Finished their season last Tuesday night at GFW.

- * Currently all winter sports and fine arts are in a "pause" as announced last week. (Executive Order 20-99) Boys basketball was scheduled to begin tonight (11-23), wrestling (11-30), and girls basketball (12-7). Fine arts activities, speech and one act play are currently on hold. Still waiting to hear what the Region may be planning. "The earliest these seasons could begin is December 19, 2020.

- * Conferences and schools may be more restrictive, at their discretion. It is my hope that we bridge the Holiday Season and are able to get started and hold an uninterrupted Winter Activity Season.

- * The Gopher Conference ADs will be meeting tomorrow to discuss schedules and pertinent information related to starting Winter Activities.

- * Coaches may connect "virtually" with participants with work out suggestions and for support. Virtual contact is "not" allowed on Sundays as per MSHSL rule.

- * All school facilities are closed to use for sports and outside use as per the latest Executive Order (20-99). Again through December 19 at a minimum.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

- * School Age Child Care is gearing up for movement into Distance Learning. Currently 22 students are registered to attend with over half being children of families with two tier -non essential worker parents. Hours are 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on days scheduled as "school days."

- * In revisiting the home visitor service of the ECFE program over 20 parents have been recently notified regarding the service. This service uses "Growing Great Kids Curriculum." ECFE will also be making available (starting in January) for families with very young children kits that can be picked up and used and returned until we can utilize a more traditional classroom.

- * Kindergarten Connection will also be moving into Distance Learning. Staff is working hard to make learning available, age appropriate, and safe.

- * We are in the process of finishing up 23 students in the WEM Driver Education Classroom session. Tonight is the last evening class. Some students may need to use electronic means to finish any

time that they missed. WEM has also recently become certified to offer on-line learner permit tests.

Motion by Michael and seconded by Schneider to approve Resolution of School Board supporting Form A Application to Minnesota State High School League Foundation.

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

WEM Superintendent Joel Whitehurst presented the following:

* Whitehurst said the federal government said schools still need to administer the MCA Tests. He also said the MSBA Convention will be virtual this year on Jan. 14, 21, and 28.

ACTION

Motion by Bowman and seconded by Michael to approve the second readings of the following policies:

Policy 419 - Tobacco-Free Environment

Policy 516 - Student Medication

Policy 607 - Organization of Grade Levels

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

Motion by Michael and seconded by Baker to approve the 2020-2021 Consortium Agreements.

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

Motion by Michael and seconded by Houlihan to pay support staff who may not have responsibilities during Distance Learning.

Motion by Michael and seconded by Schneider to amend the motion to add pay the staff through the end of the 2020-21 school year. It was determined that administration would attempt to find things for these staff members to do during the distance learning period.

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

Motion and second to approve Debra Lamont as a van driver and to correct custodial new hires information. this included Cole Long, B22/Step 6, \$15.13/hour to coincide with start date and Terry Whitaker, B22/Step6, \$15.13/hour to coincide with start date.

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

Motion by Michael and seconded by Baker to approve a 50/50 fund balance transfer from the ECFE and School Readiness Funds to cover the deficit fund balances in the Food Service Fund (\$40,916) and Community Ed (\$29,126). This is the first time a transfer like this has been allowed by the State.

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

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Stangler to approve the following coaches:

Wrestling: Head Coach Mike Richards (\$5,277) and 1st Assistant Shawn Murphy (\$3,761).

Boys Basketball: 1st Assistant Dan Forcelle (\$3,761), 2nd Assistant Jason Roemhildt (\$3,004), Junior High Jeff Frodl (\$2,261), and Junior High Tauston Taylor (\$2,261).

Girls Basketball: 1st Assistant Dan Lemcke (\$3,761), 2nd Assistant Lois Masberg (\$3,004), Junior High David Schuster (\$2,261), and Junior High Paige Pittmann (\$2,261).

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

Motion by Schneider and seconded by Houlihan to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

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

ATTEST:

Pam Baker, Board Chair

Jay Schneider, Board Clerk