

Present:

Lyn Hall, Chairperson
Lois Boone, Vice-Chairperson
Bill Christie, Trustee
Naomi Manning, Trustee
Michelle Marrelli, Trustee (until 9:35 p.m.)
Roxanne Ricard, Trustee
Sharel Warrington, Trustee

Brian Pepper, Superintendent of Schools
Bryan Mix, Secretary-Treasurer
Wendy De Marsh
Executive Assistant (Recorder)

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The following changes were made to the agenda:

- Item 7.3, Vacant Valemount School Site, which had been moved from the agenda of the in camera meeting held earlier in the evening, was added.
- Item 13.6, Letter from the Ministry of Education re: Duchess Park Secondary School Replacement Project, was moved to Item 7.4.
- Item 7.5, GST, was added.
- Items 12.2 District Parent Advisory Council and 12.3 District Student Advisory Council were withdrawn.
- Item 12.5 B.C. Public School Employers Association Update, was postponed to the next meeting.

The agenda was approved as amended.

3. **PUBLIC INPUT**

Matt Pearce, a secondary school teacher, commented on the number of students who came to school hungry and suggested that the district establish more meal programs and provide breakfast to more secondary students. He also suggested that the secondary school schedule be changed so that students begin their day at 10:00 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m., noting that research indicated that teenagers learn better later in the day.

Karen MacKay, representing the Prince George District Teachers Association, described a need for more classroom support for teachers and expressed concern about the district's ability to attract qualified teachers, particular in specialty areas, noting that almost half the teachers in the district were over 50 years old and would be retiring in the next few years.

Dale Laluk, representing the District Parent Advisory Council, reported that DPAC had met in January without any partner groups present and that school planning councils had been discussed at length and that a report summarizing the issues raised would be provided to the Board. He also reported that the executive was planning to travel to the Robson Valley on February 12 and 13 to meet with parent advisory councils and school planning councils.

4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

4.1 Public Meeting

The minutes of the regular public meeting held November 28, 2006 and the inaugural meeting held December 5, 2006 were adopted as circulated.

4.2 Record of In Camera Meeting Minutes

The reports on the items discussed and decisions made at the in camera meetings of November 28 and December 5, 2006 were approved.

5. **PRESENTATIONS**

5.1 Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder – Provincial Resource Program

Teachers Kathi Hughes and Stacey Wakabayashi, accompanied by Corey Fehr, technical analyst, gave an overview of this new program and a PowerPoint tour of the program's website (www.fasdoutreach.ca).

5.2 School Calendar Committee Report

Ms. Warrington gave a PowerPoint summary of the report, and then introduced committee members Evan Odiorne, Sharon Cairns, Shirley Huculak, Carole Whitmer and Tina Cousins. The committee's recommendations were presented one at a time and the members commented on each and answered questions from trustees. The recommendations were then presented as motions.

MOVED:

That the district's spring break always be scheduled to coincide with the provincial spring break, as per the Ministry of Education's standard school calendar.

CARRIED.

MOVED:

That a two-week spring break be considered only in years where, as a result, a maximum of three instructional days must be made up.

CARRIED.

MOVED:

That the ministry-mandated non-instructional day be scheduled prior to the first day of school in September, and that all school staff members be entitled to work that day.

CARRIED.

MOVED:

That non-instructional days be scheduled such that they reduce the discrepancy in instructional time between the semesters in secondary schools.

CARRIED.

MOVED:

That an ad hoc committee, similar to the 2006/07 School Calendar Committee, be convened by November 30 each year to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees, based on recommendations 1 through 4, regarding the calendar for the following school year.

This motion was discussed at length. Concern was expressed about repeating the calendar approval process every year; the possibility of approving calendars in advance for several years was considered.

MOVED:

That the motion be amended to have the calendar committee meet by November 30, 2007 to make recommendations regarding the calendar for the following five school years.

DEFEATED.

It was agreed that parents should be given as much notice as possible of the vacation periods in the school calendar. After considerable discussion, the following motion was agreed upon:

MOVED:

That an ad hoc committee, similar to the 2006/07 School Calendar Committee, be convened by October 31 each year to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees, based on recommendations 1 through 4, regarding the calendar for the following school year and that the committee report back by the first meeting of the Board in January.

CARRIED.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**6.1 Trustee Committee and Liaison Appointments**

Mr. Hall noted that Bear Lake Elementary School should be removed from the list of schools and that one appointment had been omitted from the report – Mr. Christie had been appointed to sit on the Highland Family Resource Centre Steering Committee.

MOVED:

That the trustee committee and liaison appointments, as amended, be approved.

CARRIED.

6.2 Playgrounds Update

Trish Bella, chair of the district's Playground Replacement Committee, reported that, to date, 22 schools were represented on the committee. Subcommittees had been formed to focus on grant research and application, corporate donations and sponsorship presentations, vendor contacts, research support and administrative support. She reported that a playground equipment trade fair was scheduled for February 3 and a meeting with the Minister of Education would take place on February 8. She drew attention to the sample donation form and a draft letter to potential donors, to be sent out on district letterhead, which had been included in the meeting's agenda package.

7. MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**7.1 Committee Report**

Ms. Warrington reported that at its last meeting the committee had dealt with several property issues and received a number of financial reports.

7.2 Amended Annual Budget Bylaw 2006-2007

Ms. Warrington explained that the amendments to the budget passed by the Board on May 30, 2006 reflected an updated estimate of operations based on actual student enrolment at September 30, 2006.

MOVED:

That, in accordance with Section 68 (4) of the *School Act*, all three readings of Amended Annual Budget Bylaw 2006-2007 be given at this meeting.

CARRIED.

MOVED:

That Amended Annual Budget Bylaw 2006-2007 be given first reading.

CARRIED.

MOVED:
That Amended Annual Budget Bylaw 2006-2007 be given second reading.
CARRIED.

MOVED:
That Amended Annual Budget Bylaw 2006-2007 be given third and final reading.
CARRIED.

7.3 Vacant Valemount School Site

Mr. Mix reported that the removal of the buildings that constituted the old Valemount Secondary School was complete and the property was now in a marketable state.

MOVED:
That the Board seek expressions of interest for the purchase of the vacant school site at 1300 Sixth Avenue in Valemount (i.e. the old secondary school site).
CARRIED.

7.4 Letter from the Ministry of Education re: Duchess Park Secondary School Replacement Project

The letter, in which the ministry committed \$25.5 million to the building of a 650-student school and asked the district to contribute the additional \$5.5 million to increase the capacity to 900 students, was discussed. Concerns were expressed about committing of all of the district's available capital funding to one project and about the reference made in the letter to a review by Partnerships B.C. regarding the possibility of a public private partnership for this project.

MOVED:
That a meeting or a conference call be held with Keith Miller, Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, to discuss and clarify the district's position on the Duchess Park replacement project.
CARRIED.

7.5 GST

Mr. Christie reported on a campaign by school districts across Canada to have school districts exempted from paying GST on purchases.

MOVED:
That a letter be sent to the federal Minister of Finance, with copies to local members of parliament, the leaders of all federal political parties, the Prime Minister, the B.C. School Trustees Association and the Canadian School

Boards Association, expressing the Board's support for a 100% GST exemption for school districts.
CARRIED.

8. EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

8.1 Committee Report

Ms. Ricard reported that the committee's January meeting had been cancelled; the committee had received the BCeSIS update at its November meeting.

8.2 BCeSIS Update

Barb Osten, Project Manager, briefly reviewed the report that had been included in the agenda package.

A recess was called at 9:16 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 9:26 p.m. The Board moved to Item 10.1, after which Ms. Marrelli excused herself from the meeting, at 9:34 p.m.; the rest of the agenda was dealt with in order

9. EDUCATION SERVICES COMMITTEE

9.1 Committee Report

Ms. Boone reported that, in addition to the items being brought forward to the Board, at its last meeting the committee had received an update on the plans for the Highland Family Resource Centre and discussed a letter from the owner of Jolley Market Foods regarding Vanway Elementary School parents using the store's parking lot to pick up and drop off their children.

9.2 Westwood Elementary School – Grounds Improvement Project, Phase II

Ms. Boone explained that Phase I of this project had been approved by the Board on May 9, 2006; that work had been done over the summer, and the school was ready to proceed with Phase II.

MOVED:

That Phase II of the garden project at Westwood Elementary School be approved.

CARRIED.

9.3 Joint Use Agreement with the City of Prince George

Ms. Boone noted that the City of Prince George and School District No. 57 had cooperated in the joint use of school and city facilities for many years and that the agreement provided for a fair exchange of facilities and provided the district with \$200,000 annually to offset operating costs.

MOVED:

That the joint use agreement between the Board of Trustees and the City of Prince George be extended until August 31, 2011.

CARRIED.

9.4 Request for Support re: 2011 Western Canada Summer Games

MOVED:

That the Board write a letter to Events Prince George in support of the bid to host the 2011 Western Canada Summer Games.

CARRIED.

10. **POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

10.1 Committee Report

Ms. Marrelli reviewed the items discussed at the last meeting, which included the three policies being brought forward to the Board, as well as some potential changes to Policy 1110 (Communications). In addition, the committee had reviewed the recommendations from the Healthy Choices Committee, which had been approved by the Board at its meeting on June 27, 2006 and the recommendations of the provincial Select Standing Committee on Health.

10.2 Draft Policy 1100 (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy)

Ms. Boone explained that the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* had applied to school districts since 1996 and the district had made considerable efforts to maintain compliance, particularly with respect to the freedom of information; however, recent developments had highlighted the importance of a greater awareness of and closer attention to the protection of privacy aspect of the act, and this policy was intended to address that need.

Ms. Boone noted that Policy 8310 (Policy and Policy Development) required all new policies to be distributed to reference for input prior to final approval by the Board.

MOVED:

That Draft Policy 1100 (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy) be approved for distribution to reference groups for input.

CARRIED.

10.3 Revisions to Policy 6179 (Appropriate Use of Networks)

Ms. Boone reported that significant developments in technology and communications in recent years had made this policy, first developed in 1997, outdated. In addition, the development of Policy 1100 (Freedom of

Information and Protection of Privacy) had raised additional issues that needed to be included in this policy.

Ms. Boone noted that major revisions to policies must be distributed to reference groups for input prior to final approval by the Board.

MOVED:

That revisions to Policy 6179 (Acceptable Use of Networks) be approved for distribution to reference groups for input.

CARRIED.

10.4 Minor Revisions to Policy 5131 (District Code of Student Conduct)

Ms. Boone reported that school districts had received legal advice that weapons policies should be amended to ensure they are in compliance with a recent decision by the Supreme Court of Canada regarding the wearing of kirpans in schools. The proposed revision to this policy conforms with human rights legislation by preventing a student from being disciplined for wearing a kirpan, but allows enforcement in situations of improper use.

MOVED:

That the proposed minor revisions to Policy 5131 (District Code of Student Conduct) be approved.

CARRIED.

11. **DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION REPORTS**

11.1 Superintendent's Report on Class Size

Mr. Pepper presented his report.

MOVED:

That the Superintendent's report on the organization of classes in School District No. 57, as of December 22, 2006, as required under Section 76 (3) of the *School Act*, be accepted.

CARRIED.

11.2 Prime Minister's Certificate of Teaching Achievement

Mr. Pepper reported that Janet Williams, formerly a teacher at Mackenzie Secondary School, and now the principal of Mackenzie Elementary School, would receive the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence - Certificate of Achievement at an event scheduled for February 7 at Mackenzie Secondary School.

11.3 Westwood Vandalism Update

Mr. Pepper reported that, following a number of recent incidents at Westwood Elementary School, the school, along with staff from the maintenance department had reviewed all of their security procedures and were making changes and additions to prevent further such incidents to the degree that was possible. He noted that exterior patrols had been initiated, and a security camera, motion detectors and glass breaks had been installed, and a number of windows had been replaced with shatterproof glass.

Trustees expressed concern about the cost to schools of thefts and vandalism and asked that further information about the costs in this case be provided to them when it became available.

12. **TRUSTEE REPORTS**

12.1 BC School Trustees' Association

Ms. Ricard reported that she would be attending Provincial Council meetings on February 8-10 in Vancouver.

12.1.1 Northern Interior Branch Meeting

Ms. Warrington gave a brief summary of the Northern Interior Branch meeting held in Prince George January 19-21.

12.2 District Parent Advisory Council

This item was withdrawn.

12.3 District Student Advisory Council

This item was withdrawn.

12.4 Springboard to Success Scholarship Committee

Ms. Ricard reported that the scholarships had increased from one \$500 award in the first two years to two awards of \$1,000 last year, and that next year, five \$1,000 awards would be given. She also reported that the Prince of Wales Scholarship had been increased from \$2,000 to \$2,500.

12.5 B.C. Public School Employers Association Update

This item was postponed to the next meeting.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Hall drew the Board's attention to the items of correspondence included in the agenda for information, which were:

- Letter to the B.C. School Trustees Association dated December 4, 2006 re: pine beetle funding
- Letter dated November 9, 2006 from the B.C. School Trustees Association re: pine beetle funding
- Letter dated September 29, 2006 to the B.C. School Trustees Association re: pine beetle funding
- Letter dated November 29, 2006 from the Office of the Prime Minister re: child care
- Letter dated October 6, 2006 to the Prime Minister of Canada re: child care

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.