

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE SIR WILFRID LAURIER SCHOOL BOARD HELD ON 2013-12-11

A regular meeting of the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board was held in the boardroom of the Administration Centre, 235 montée Lesage, Rosemere, QC on Wednesday, 2013-12-11.

Present: Commissioners Nick Milas, Chairman; Nazario Facchino, Vice-Chairman; Georges Benoit, Mario Di Domenico, Robert Dixon, Guy Gagnon, Steve Kmec, Elio Lattanzio, Emilio Migliozi, Steve Mitchell, Grace Nesi, Albina Pace, Merle Parkinson, William Pollock, Nancy Rupnik, and Edward Turchyniak; Parent Commissioners Roberto Bomba and Angela Martorana; and Stephanie Vucko, Director General.

Also present were: Eileen Kelly, Assistant Director General; Johanne Brabant, Secretary General; Gaëlle Absolonne, Director of School Organization; Robin Bennett, Director of Information Technology; France D'Aoust, Director of Financial Resources; Frédéric Greschner, Director of Complementary Services; Richard Greschner, Director of Human Resources; Tina Korb, Director of Educational Services; Tina Russo, Interim Assistant Director of Material Resources; Maxeen Jolin, Coordinator of Communications & Public Relations; Ron Turchyniak, Pedagogical Consultant; and Jocelyne Thompson-Ness, Administrative Assistant. Several other persons were also in the audience.

Absent: Commissioners Steve Bletas, Peter MacLaurin, and Mike Pizzola.

The Chairman called the meeting to order.

TIME: 19:30 hours

The Chairman welcomed Penglu Chai to the meeting. Ms. Chai is the first graduate of the International Student Program with a Diploma of Vocational Studies (DVS) in Health, Assistance and Nursing. He wishes her the best of luck in her future endeavours

A certificate of achievement was presented and photos were taken.

1.0 ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA:

CC-131211-CA-0059

Commissioner Steve Kmec MOVED THAT the agenda be approved as presented in document #SWLSB-2013/12/11-CA-001.

Carried unanimously

2.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

CC-131211-CA-0060

Commissioner Edward Turchyniak MOVED THAT the minutes of the REGULAR meeting of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board held on 2013-11-27 having been received by all members prior to this meeting, be approved as written.

THIS MOTION WAS CARRIED ON THE FOLLOWING DIVISION:	
Commissioners voting YEA:	Georges Benoit, Mario Di Domenico, Nazario Facchino, Guy Gagnon, Steve Kmec, Elio Lattanzio, Emilio Migliozi, Nick Milas, Steve Mitchell, Grace Nesi, Merle Parkinson, William Pollock, Edward Turchyniak
Commissioners ABSTAINING:	Robert Dixon, Albina Pace

3.0 QUESTION PERIOD

In response to a question from Elizabeth Kraska, a parent from Mother Teresa Junior High School, the Chairman advised that the option of status quo with zones, as well as many other options, were considered but would not lead to a long term resolution of the registration imbalance in the Laval high schools as rezoning could take place on an annual basis.

4.0 REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN:

4.1 *Chairman's Report:*

The Chairman advised that at the last meeting of the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) Board of Directors lengthy discussions were held on Bill 63, which requires school boards to pay back to their taxpayers, over the next two years, the 100 000 000\$ downloaded to them when the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) cut equalization grants to the school boards.

Commissioner Nancy Rupnik entered the meeting.

TIME: 19:42 hours

Commissioner Nazario Facchino noted that one of the other discussions at this meeting was the participation of the Chateauguay Valley Vocational Training Centre in a Habitat for Humanity building project. This is a great project and other Vocational Training Centres have been assisting so it has become a pseudo provincial project. The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board has two students from its Carpentry Program participating in the building project. Further participation in such projects should be explored.

The Council entered into discussion on Bill 63 and the following was noted:

- the entire situation of the downloading to taxpayers occurred because the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) cut equalization grants in half and the school boards had to find a way to make up the loss of this funding. The school boards only downloaded the amount they would have received in the equalization grant;
- according to the MELS school boards are to operate as per usual without these funds and services to students are not to be compromised;
- the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board will have to payback in the neighbourhood of 3 500 000\$; and
- there is a good chance that the equalization payment will be reduced again when the next budget is announced.

The Chairman advised the Council that Commissioner Mike Pizzola is now recovering at home and extended best wishes to him and his family for a very Happy Holiday.

4.2 *Director General's Report:*

The Coordinator of Communications provided an update on the initiatives being taken to better communicate with the stakeholders of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board noting:

- every month there will be a communications letter e-mailed to students, staff and parents providing information on various issues and activities;
- a snow storm advisory will be sent to all parents when a storm is predicted in order to be proactive should school be cancelled due to inclement weather. School closures will continue to be posted on the Web site and announced on the various radio stations;
- the ARCH (Accepting, Reaching, Caring, Helping) meeting for gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender parents that was covered by Global News. These meetings are open to everyone;
- phase I of the new branding of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board with the tag line "An English Education, A Bilingual Future", which will be used during the upcoming registration period and for promotional purposes; and

- the press conference of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier Foundation to announce the “Viva Las Vegas” Gala on January 23, 2014, and that “Elvis” will be in the house that evening.

The Assistant Director General advised that earlier this evening a reception had been held to unveil the “My Vision of a 21st Century Classroom” wall mural that showcases some of the entries that were received for the 2013-2014 school board wall calendars.

The Coordinator of Communications noted that for the past four years the school board has held an art work contest for its annual wall calendar based on a selected theme. The contest for the 2013-2014 wall calendar received 600 entries, with 12 being selected for the calendar and 38 selected for the wall mural. At the reception earlier this evening each of the students received 100 postcards with their drawing on it to share with family and friends.

The Assistant Director General went on to highlight other activities within the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board community such as:

- Superhero Day at Jules Verne Elementary School whereby the students examined how these characters are portrayed in the media, an activity that aligns with the school’s MESA;
- the promotion of literacy with story time;
- initiatives in the “Week Against Homophobia” that shows that everyone is different and that’s okay; and
- an article in the Laval Families magazine on an up-and-coming gymnast with Olympic aspirations who attends McCaig Elementary School.

The Director General entered the meeting.

TIME: 20:07 hours

The Director of Educational Services provided background information on the initiatives being taken to promote the Arundel Nature & Science Centre (ANSC) and invited one of the Pedagogical Consultants to make his presentation.

The Pedagogical Consultant showed a video that allows for a connection to technology in nature to teaching in the classroom and noted that ANSC is all about outdoor science not just about playing out in nature, although that is a plus, it is tied to in-class curriculum.

In response to questions from Commissioner Steve Kmec, the Assistant Director General indicated that the Arundel Nature & Science Centre (ANSC) is available for use by all of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board schools and centres as well as for rent by outside schools, groups or persons. All the information concerning the use of ANSC by outside schools, groups or persons is available on the corporate web site. Data on the use of the facility is currently being collated by the sub-committee.

5.0 BUSINESS ARISING:

5.1 Balance of 2013-2014 QESBA Membership Fees:

The Director General explained that this resolution is to approve the balance of the school board’s membership fees for the 2013-2014 school year with the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA).

CC-131211-CA-0061

WHEREAS the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board adopted resolution #CC-130619-CA-0172 authorizing the payment of the preliminary Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) membership fee;

WHEREAS the QESBA has submitted an invoice for the balance of the 2013-2014 membership fees;

Commissioner Grace Nesi MOVED THAT the Council of Commissioners the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board approve the payment of the balance of the 2013-2014 Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) membership fee in the amount of 29 980.83\$.

THIS MOTION WAS CARRIED ON THE FOLLOWING DIVISION:	
Commissioners voting YEA:	Georges Benoit, Nazario Facchino, Steve Kmec, Emilio Migliozi, Nick Milas, Grace Nesi, Albina Pace, Merle Parkinson, William Pollock, Nancy Rupnik
Commissioners voting NAY:	Mario Di Domenico, Robert Dixon, Elio Lattanzio, Steve Mitchell, Edward Turchyniak
Commissioners ABSTAINING:	Guy Gagnon

6.0 DECISION ITEMS:

6.1 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

6.1.1 2013-2014 Revised Budget:

The Director General advised that the 2013-2014 revised budget was vetted by both the Corporate Committee and the Executive Committee and the results are positive. There are some concerns with respect to the decision of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) to have school boards pay back the taxes downloaded to its taxpayers as this will create an immediate and very large debt on the school board. Adult Education & Vocational Training is growing quickly, which is of great concern because, if the growth continues at its current rate, the service will incur debt.

CC-131211-FR-0062

Commissioner Merle Parkinson MOVED THAT, on the recommendation of the Corporate Committee and the Executive Committee, the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board approve the **revised budget for 2013-2014**.

Carried unanimously

6.2 MATERIAL RESOURCES

6.2.1 Change Orders – Decontamination & Paving – Crestview ES:

The Director General noted that the decontamination and paving project at Crestview Elementary School has been completed and these will be the final fees for the project, which had to be expanded beyond its original scope.

CC-131211-MR-0063

WHEREAS the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board adopted resolution # CC-130626-MR-0193, awarding the contract for the decontamination and repaving of the school yard at Crestview Elementary School to **Les Paysagistes Damiano Inc.**, for a total cost of 919 389,60\$, before taxes, (1 057 068,19\$, all taxes included);

WHEREAS the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board adopted resolution # CC-131127-MR-0055, approving change orders in the amount of 151 553,23\$, before taxes (174 248,34\$, taxes included), increasing the total cost of the project to 1 070 942,83\$, before taxes (1 231 316,53\$, taxes included);

WHEREAS, during the decontamination and repaving of the school yard, more change orders occurred to address specific issues, amounting to 179 683,49\$, before taxes (206 591,09\$, taxes included);

Commissioner Albina Pace MOVED THAT, on the recommendation of the Interim Assistant Director of Material Resources, the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board approve the change orders in the amount of 179 683,49\$, before taxes (206 591,09\$, taxes included).

AND THAT the total cost of the project, including the change orders, be increased to 1 250 626,32\$, before taxes (1 437 907,62\$, taxes included).

FURTHER THAT, the Chairman, and in his absence or with his knowledge the Vice-Chairman, as well as the Director General, and in her absence or with her knowledge the Assistant Director General, be authorized to sign all documentation concerning these change orders.

Carried unanimously

6.3 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

6.3.1 Purchase of Smart Boards:

The Director of Information Technology provided background information on the purchase of 170 new Smartboards under a Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) measure.

In response to a question from Commissioner Steve Kmec, the Director General advised that when the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) creates a Measure the monies attached can only be used for a specific purpose and cannot be diverted elsewhere.

CC-131211-IT-0064

WHEREAS the Provincial Government has put in place a measure to equip all classrooms of the province with interactive whiteboards within the next three years;

WHEREAS the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) has set an allocation and number of interactive whiteboards for each school board for 2013-2014;

WHEREAS the Sir Wilfrid Laurier school Board was granted funding for 170 interactive whiteboards for 2013-2014 for a total allocation of 546 596.90 \$;

WHEREAS the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) has allowed school boards to use the CCSR (Centre Collégial de Services Regroupés) purchase tender offer for interactive whiteboards;

WHEREAS the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board is a member of the CCSR and part of the global tender for interactive white board equipment;

Commissioner Robert Dixon MOVED THAT, on the recommendation of the Corporate Committee, the Council of Commissioners approve the purchase of 170 SMART Board kits, including projectors and wall mounts, speakers, vga and audio cable, delivery and installation from **Sharps' Audio Visual** at a total cost of 475 405.00\$ before taxes (546 596.90\$ after taxes).

Carried unanimously

7.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

7.1 *SWL Foundation:*

Commissioner Edward Turchyniak provided an update on the activities of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier Foundation noting that the next event will be the gala on January 23, 2014 and that the monies raised at this event will be used to provide extras for the students and their schools. At its next meeting the Foundation will be distributing 25 000\$ to schools that have submitted projects.

7.2 *Parent Commissioners Report*

The report of the Parents Commissioners highlighted discussions at the December 5, 2013 Parents Committee meeting, as follows:

- a development of a Parents Committee website that will be launched in 2014;
- the school board nutrition policy,
- the consultation on the three-year plan and deeds of establishment;
- the upcoming consultation on the Laval high schools;
- a request from the teachers of Math 404 to move up the date of this exam, as they feel that the placement of the exam diminishes the students chance of success;
- the new Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board;
- the ARCH initiative;
- the purchase of 2 tickets to the Sir Wilfrid Laurier Foundation January Gala; and
- safety and security in the schools.

In response to a question from Commissioner Steve Kmec, the Director General noted that the school board does have a nutrition policy and a dietician that oversees the menus of the food services in each school to ensure that healthy options are available.

7.3 *Report of the QESBA:*

This was addressed under item 3.0.

7.4 *Electoral Divisions – Final:*

The Secretary General advised the Council that the electoral divisions proposal adopted in June 2013 has been approved as presented by the Directeur général des élections du Québec (DGE) for the November 2, 2014 school elections.

7.5 *Student Ombudsman Annual Report 2012-2013:*

The Secretary General drew the Council's attention to the annual report of the Student Ombudsman contained in the meeting package.

8.0 QUESTION PERIOD:

The Director General stated that the school board is aware of the concerns of the Hillcrest Academy community and asked that those with questions be respectful of the purpose of question period and to not request information of a personal nature nor refer to persons by name as the school board is obligated to respect the rights of its students and staff.

In response to several questions from Hillcrest Academy parents, the Director General indicated that:

- the letter she had addressed to the Hillcrest Academy parents indicated that what the school board deemed to be inappropriate was the parents taking it upon themselves to hold a public trial for an employee;

- the school board has always made itself available to parents to answer questions to the best of its ability and within certain boundaries;
- it is the job of the school board to protect all of its students and employees when the need arises;
- the response that the parents of Hillcrest Academy are looking for will not be provided and the only thing the school board can say is that the teacher is currently absent;
- if individuals have concerns they wish to express, the Assistant Director General and the Secretary General will be available after this evening's meeting;
- volunteers fill in judicial record forms on an annual basis and those that are checked are those that have not yet been subject to a check by the school board;
- to the school board's knowledge the person in question has not been in the school nor has he volunteered at the school;
- a judicial check is only performed when hiring an employee, as per the law, but the law also states that an employee has the legal responsibility to advise its employer of any changes after the initial check and, if they do not, they can be held liable; and
- the school board is currently working with the police on what would be a reasonable timeline before an additional judicial check is required. This would be integrated into the school board's policy "Criminal Record & Employee Reference Verification", which has been in place for several years.

In response to questions concerning the Laval high schools and the upcoming decision for consultation purposes, the Director General provided the following overview:

- the Council has given a mandate to the Directorate to consult on 2 models to resolve the registration imbalance within the Laval high schools so that forced transfers can be eliminated;
- the consultation is being done in 2 phases with the phase I being to change the deeds of establishment to have Laval Junior High School relocated to 2323 boulevard Daniel-Johnson and Laurier Senior High School to relocate to 3200 boulevard du Souvenir Ouest, a decision which will be accepted or rejected at the December 18, 2013 special meeting of Council;
- consultation for phase II will go out in the spring of 2014 to receive feedback from the all stakeholders, including the students;
- all the feedback will be reviewed and taken into consideration with a final recommendation to be made to the Council in June 2014;
- if approved, phase II will be implemented for the 2015-2016 school year;
- the school board is looking forward to working with the community on this consultation and will provide the information required in the consultation package with respect to programs, curriculum, use of buildings, etc.;
- the school board wishes to respect the existing programs within all of the Laval high schools;
- with respect to special education classes at the high school level the school board is very sensitive to this group therefore Complementary Services will be very involved in how these classes are structured and parents of special needs students will also be included in the conversation. There are also government norms to be respected;
- the proposed changes to the deeds of establishment for the 2014-2015 school year were not taken lightly as a decision is needed to resolve an already precarious where the school board would be forced to hold another lottery in the spring of 2014; and
- until a decision is taken with respect to the deeds of establishment the schools continue to prepare open houses and promotion of their respective programs as always.

9.0 CORRESPONDENCE:

The Chairman drew attention to correspondence in the package.

10.0 VARIA:

There was no varia.

11.0 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:

The Director General wished everyone Happy Holidays and a safe and healthy New Year.

Commissioner Nazario Facchino MOVED adjournment of the meeting.

Carried unanimously

TIME: 21:04 hours

NEXT MEETING ⇨ REGULAR ⇨ 2014-01-29

Johanne Brabant, Secretary General

Nick Milas, Chairman