

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE SIR WILFRID LAURIER SCHOOL BOARD HELD ON JUNE 16, 2014

A Regular meeting of the Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board was held in the boardroom of the Administration Centre, 235 Montée Lesage, Rosemère, QC, on Monday, June 16, 2014.

Present Executive Members: Commissioner Edward Turchyniak, Chairman; Steve Mitchell, Vice-Chairman; Georges Benoit, Steve Bletas, Mario Di Domenico, Robert Dixon, Nick Milas and Parent Commissioners Roberto Bomba and Angela Martorana; and Stephanie Vucko, Director General.

Also present were: Eileen Kelly, Assistant Director General; Johanne Brabant, Secretary General; France D’Aoust, Director of Financial Resources; Jérôme Dionne, Director of Material Resources; Commissioners Nazario Facchino, Guy Gagnon, Elio Lattanzio, Peter MacLaurin and William Pollock, and Jocelyne Thompson-Ness, Administrative Assistant.

The Chairman called the meeting to order.

TIME: 19:00 hours

1.0 ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA:

The following addition to the agenda was proposed:

11.0 Varia:

11.1 Genesis E.S. *INFO*

EC-140616-CA-0079

Commissioner Mario Di Domenico MOVED THAT the agenda be approved as amended in document #SWLSB-2014/06/16-CA-001.

Carried unanimously

2.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

EC-140616-CA-0080

Commissioner Georges Benoit MOVED THAT the minutes of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE meeting of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board held on 2014-05-12 having been received by all members prior to this meeting, be approved as presented.

THIS MOTION WAS CARRIED ON THE FOLLOWING DIVISION:	
Commissioners voting YEA:	Steve Bletas, Robert Dixon, Steve Mitchell, Edward Turchyniak
Commissioners ABSTAINING:	Georges Benoit, Mario Di Domenico

3.0 DIRECTOR GENERAL’S REPORT:

The Director General provided the following updates:

- Genesis E.S.: There has been a lot of correspondence concerning the tensions between the parents of the school and the Principal, as well as between parents. It is difficult to find a neutral voice to mediate with the parents as one would be needed for the school community and another for the six parents therefore, discussion on the issues will continue in the fall once a new Governing Board is elected as a consensus cannot be reached at this time.

- Franklin Hill E.S.: the Ville de Repentigny has, again, attempted to get the school board to move the school by threatening expropriation and the school board has, again, asked that it cease pressure tactics. A meeting with the Ministre de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport is scheduled for 2014-06-20 to discuss this situation. The QESBA will be accompanying the school board to the meeting with the Ministre and Chantal Beaulieu, the sous-ministre, will also be brought up to date at that time. The Ville and the Commission scolaire des Affluents will also be meeting with the Ministre. A final brief and a presentation are being prepared for the meeting. The notion of a Ville expropriating from a school board is daunting as it could set a precedent but the impression given by the MELS is that it is not open to this idea. The Principal and Governing Board of the school are working to find additional information to help in this situation.
- ANSC: A meeting of the Arundel Nature & Science Centre (ANSC) Committee is scheduled to take place this week but may have to be re-scheduled due to the preparations for the presentation mentioned above for Franklin Hill E.S. A meeting was held earlier today with a marketing company to discuss options such as using the site to house International Students, mandate required visits to the site by the schools so that growth from within is achieved while exposing students to nature. Summer camps, an English summer school, etc., are also being considered. A market survey is being discussed but it will depend on the cost. The school board owns the buildings on the site but the actual land is owned by a foundation that was established prior to the 1998 amalgamation of school boards.

Commissioner Nick Milas entered the meeting.

TIME: 19:09 hours

- International Students: The Director General and the Chairman have met with someone from outside the school board concerning a partnership to bring in adult students for the carpentry program, computing, etc. A second meeting is scheduled prior to this potential partner returning to their country.
- Vocational Training: Requests to borrow and/or lend Vocational Training cards for various courses within the English sector were withdrawn for various reasons and will be revisited at a later date.

Commissioner Peter MacLaurin entered the meeting.

TIME: 19:14 hours

The Director General advised the Executive Committee that the 2014-2015 budget parameters were received on 2014-06-13 and the news is not positive so it is anticipated that the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board will be adopting a deficit budget, as will most English school boards.

The Director of Financial Resources provided highlights of the budget parameters and how they will impact the basic allocation for organization of services, Educational Activities – Youth sector (support to academic success, at risk population, regional and small schools), and Adult Education.

She went on to note, with the assistance of the Director General, that:

- the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) has made 135 000 000\$ in education cuts province wide;
- the cost of elections has not been considered;
- special needs will be impacted by a parametric cut;
- a conference call with MELS is scheduled for 2014-06-20;
- the 2014-2015 school year will start with a 1/12th budget per month until the actual budget is adopted and accepted by the MELS;
- the tax bills can only be prepared and mailed once the budget and tax rate are approved; and
- interest will be lost on unpaid tax bills but the amount is unknown at this time.

The Executive Committee entered into discussion and the Director General answered questions and concerns as follows:

- the public notice has been made for the adoption of the budget for the 2014-06-25 meeting of Council so it will have to be tabled to a special meeting of Council to be called prior to the vacation period;
- the necessity of being present at tables where funding can be requested is much more important now that the reality of the budget parameters are known;
- vigilance will be needed when it comes to the small schools and small classes;
- Directors will meet to see where more cuts can be made;
- with respect to the situation at Genesis Elementary School, the school board would like to have equal representation among the parent groups for mediation because the six parents do not represent the entire school community, and, at this time, getting a cohesive group is difficult;
- 60% of the Genesis Elementary School population have 2-3 children in the school;
- the school administration stands its ground with parents at times and this has led to some conflicts but there were no complaints until the approval of the 2014-2015 assignment and transfer of in-school administrators;
- with respect to the situation with Franklin Hill Elementary School it appears as though the Ville de Repentigny is prioritizing its parks over the educational needs of students;
- the tax rate for school taxes may only be subject to a slight increase for the 2014-2015 tax year but there are 29 school boards in the province that will see a significant increase due to Bill 25;
- when considering the issues at Genesis Elementary School, the school board has to think about the entire school community not just a certain group. A quantity of similar e-mails were received inferring that the entire school community was supporting the six parents but there were also many others received indicating that they were not of that group and support the school administration; and
- support is being provided to the Genesis Elementary School administration to assist in the rebuilding of relationships.

4.0 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GENERAL'S REPORT:

4.1 Assistant Director General's Report:

The monthly report of the Assistant Director General highlighted:

- school visits;
- graduation ceremonies;
- meetings with parents;
- meetings concerning the final stages of the change of address for the Laval high schools;
- an official appeal to the RSEQ for a 1-year derogation for the Laval high schools;
- professional development;
- time task analysis of the duties of the Assistant Director General; and
- a comparison chart of job expectations of Centre Directors of Adult Education & Vocational Training.

5.0 BUSINESS ARISING:

5.1 Consultation Results – Reorganization of Laval High Schools:

The Director General advised that at the 2014-06-11 meeting of the Corporate Committee it discussed the results of the consultation on the reorganization of the Laval high school schools and supports Model 2 (1 junior and 1 senior high school) and recommends this model to the Executive Committee.

The Chairman noted that all Commissioners were invited to this evening's meeting to discuss the results of the consultation.

The Executive Committee entered into discussion and the Director General, with the assistance of the Directors, answered questions and concerns as follows:

- Model 2 is the option that received the most support in the results of the consultation;
- timetabling has been completed for the four high schools and indicates that there will be enough space in both buildings to house all the classes;
- the Assistant Director General and the Director of Material Resources have met with the four Principals to answer any questions concerning space and allocation of classrooms;
- the average class size will not be available until the results of Summer School are known;
- the preliminary master timetable indicates that the average class size would be a maximum of 30 students;
- ponderations for special needs students are being reviewed;
- students will not be spread out in the buildings just to make use of the space so unused space will be managed by the school board and used for partners that require space, rentals, etc.;
- there are temporary walls in some of the classrooms at the 3200 du Souvenir building that will be removed to make larger classrooms; and
- meetings have been scheduled for the month of August with political representatives to broach the need for a school in the east end of Laval.

EC-140616-CA-0081

Commissioner Steve Bletas MOVED THAT, on the recommendation of the Corporate Committee, the Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board recommends that **Model II: 2 Schools (1 Junior & 1 Senior)** be submitted to the Council of Commissioners for its consideration as the solution for the Reorganization of the Laval High Schools at its 2014-06-25 meeting.

Carried unanimously

5.2 Amendments to By-Law – Day Time & Place of Executive Committee Meetings:

The Chairman advised the Executive Committee that he had concerns over the number of meetings proposed for the committee for the 2014-2015 school year noting that there needs to be some additional meetings. He also expressed some concerns about recalling the powers to the Executive Committee for the summer months.

The Executive Committee entered into discussion and the Director General answered questions and concerns as follows:

- the vision was to align the meetings of the Executive Committee and the Council with the requirements of the Education Act (R.S.Q., Chapter I-13.3);
- the school board already holds more meetings than the four required by law;
- the new Council could open the by-law and add meetings, once elected, if they so choose; and
- the scope of adopting the budget, tax rate, organizational chart and the process of the recruitment and hiring an Assistant Director General are items that should be deliberated and approved by the Council.

Commissioner Steve Mitchell proposed that the by-law be amended by adding the months of July 2014 and March 2015 to the list of meetings. Commissioner Nick Milas accepted the amendment.

EC-140616-CA-0082

Commissioner Nick Milas MOVED THAT the Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board recommend that amended **By-Law #BL2008-CA-15: Date, Time & Place of Executive Committee Meetings** of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier for the 2014-2015 school year be presented to the Council of Commissioners at its 2014-06-25 meeting.

Carried unanimously

5.3 Travel Policy:

The Director of Financial Resources presented and reviewed the final version of the amendments to the travel policy highlighting the authorization section, the addition of hybrid/electric cars and a travel rate for carpooling. She also added in Annex 1 of the policy a link to hotels that provide special government rates.

The Executive Committee entered into a lengthy discussion on various sections of the travel policy, with emphasis on certain areas of the policy that should not necessarily apply to Commissioners, the Director of Financial Resources answered questions and concerns with assistance from the Director General and the Directorate, as follows:

- the number of employees that travel more than 5 000 km per year is less than 10 but more than 5;
- there is ceiling on the rate for the first 5 000 km in order to be exempt from taxation because an employee would be taxed on the difference between the two rates, as would be the same for those that carpool. It is always favourable to be exempt from tax;
- Section 3: Authorization – comments and/or changes proposed:
 - Chairman should not be the only person verifying and signing the expenses of the Director General so the Director of Financial Resources will be the second verification and signature;
 - Identification of meaning of “immediate supervisor” as it relates only to employees of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board;
 - signing authority is given by resolution of Council so the only Commissioners that can sign are “the Chairman, and in his absence or with his knowledge the Vice-Chairman”;
- Section 4: General Rules – comments and/or changes proposed:
 - Sub-section 4.6: Commissioners will be removed as being obligated to use the hybrid/electric cars;

The Chairman turned the chair over to the Vice-Chairman. **TIME: 20:26 hours**

- Section 5: Type of Expenses Eligible for Reimbursement – comments and/or changes proposed:
 - Sub-section 5.1.5: it is not stated in the policy that using the Google Maps tool is an obligation nor was it added to insult anyone or question one’s honesty – it is a tool that can be used when an employee forgets to track their mileage – helps with internal control and the audit – the Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) uses this tool – the Google Maps tool is more for the employees of the school board – it is understood that detours occur and this can be mentioned when submitting expenses to back up one’s mileage expense;

The Chairman resumed the chair. **TIME: 20:28 hours**

- other comments made were:
 - the policy needs to be transparent;
 - need to have trust and if it is compromised then you need to do what is necessary to ensure the honesty of the system;
 - divide the policy into two sections one for Commissioners and the other for employees;

- table the policy to the September meeting so that the Commissioners can re-examine the entire policy in detail;

Commissioner Steve Bletas left the meeting.

TIME: 20:39 hours

- the Director of Financial Resources has researched policies of other school boards and has taken certain elements from them for this policy; and
- the points of view of both the Commissioners and the Administration are understood but there are general practices that need to be followed and that being said, there also has to be room for some flexibility in certain circumstances.

Commissioner Steve Bletas returned to the meeting.

TIME: 20:42 hours

The Chairman reviewed the changes to the Travel Policy to be made prior to it being presented for final approval at the 2014-06-25 meeting of Council.

Commissioner Elio Lattanzio excused himself for the evening.

TIME: 20:45 hours

Commissioner Nick Milas left the meeting.

TIME: 20: 47 hours

EC-140616-FR-0083

Commissioner Robert Dixon MOVED THAT the Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board recommend that the amendments to policy #1999-FR-01: Travel and Representation Expenses Reimbursement be presented to the Council of Commissioners at its 2014-06-25 meeting.

Carried unanimously

Commissioner Nazario Facchino left the meeting.

TIME: 20:52 hours

6.0 DECISION ITEMS:

6.1 *Material Resources*

6.1.1 *Engagement of Contractor – FHES Playground Project:*

The Director of Material Resources advised the Executive Committee that 13 bids were deposited for this project and that the lowest bidder is conformable.

In response to questions, the Director of Material Resources noted that:

- some of the bids received are almost double that of the lowest bid;
- there are no grounds not to accept the lowest bid as it is conformable;
- all the bids are posted on the government web site as it was a public tender;

Commissioner Nick Milas returned to the meeting.

TIME: 20:56 hours

- some contractors bid high because they do not really have time to do a summer project but want to advise the school board that they have an interest in working with us;
- the start date for this project will be decided once a meeting is held with the contractor but it will be done this summer; and

Commissioner Nazario Facchino returned to the meeting.

TIME: 20:58 hours

- the phase to be completed this summer is the soccer field and ground work for an outdoor classroom.

EC-140616-MR-0084

WHEREAS the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board adopted resolution #CC-130626-MR-0192, approving the 2013-2014 capital priorities for its schools and centres which included the playground project at Franklin Hill Elementary School;

WHEREAS the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) has adopted Measure 50530 to assist school boards with the improvement of its schoolyards;

WHEREAS public tenders were called and subsequently opened on 2014-06-05;

WHEREAS the conformability of all bidders has been verified by the Professional;

Commissioner Steve Mitchell MOVED THAT, on the recommendation of the Director of Material Resources, the Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board award the contract for the playground project at Franklin Hill Elementary School to **9205-9674 Québec Inc. FASRS Services Montérégie**, for a total cost of 77 985,00\$, before taxes, (89 663,25\$, all taxes included).

AND THAT the Chairman, and in his absence or with his knowledge the Vice-Chairman, as well as the Director General, and in his absence or with his knowledge the Assistant Director General, be authorized to sign all documentation concerning this rental.

Carried unanimously

6.2 Communications & Corporate Affairs

6.2.1 QESBA Preliminary Membership Fees 2014-2015:

The Executive Committee entered into discussion on the 2014-2015 preliminary membership fees for Quebec School Boards Association (QESBA) and the following was noted:

- the Quebec School Boards Association (QESBA) should also be looking at how to make cuts in its own budget to assist its member school boards who are facing regular budget cuts and parametric cuts from the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS);
- all member school boards should receive a copy of the QESBA budget;
- better representation is required from the QESBA;
- should refuse to pay until QESBA acts on the issue of the taxation imbalance;
- the QESBA does support the English school boards at many levels that are not always visible to its members;
- the QESBA Monday Message provides a weekly schedule of where and what the association will be doing;
- QESBA needs to get itself more media coverage for the purpose of visibility;
- maybe the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board should step away from QESBA;

The Director General noted that Quebec School Boards Association (QESBA) sits at the English Directors General table and cautioned them from stepping away from the association because it is recognized, has a voice and is listened to by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS). The QESBA always stands up for the English community on many issues, it opens doors, and without the support of all the English school boards it would lose a lot of the leverage it currently has at the level of the MELS. The English community also has the advantage of having a sous-ministre sitting at the English Directors General table, a luxury not enjoyed by the French sector.

- the school board should maintain its membership;
- a message needs to be sent but stepping away is not the answer; and
- QESBA is useful but it should also have to tighten up its finances and revise the fees charged to its member boards as a gesture of compassion to what all school boards are facing.

EC-140616-CA-0085

WHEREAS the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board is a member of Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA);

WHEREAS the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) has issued a provisional membership fee statement for the 2014-2013 school year;

WHEREAS the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board asks that the Quebec School Boards Association (QESBA) consider contributing their support to its member boards faced with budgetary cuts by reducing the contribution requested from its member boards;

WHEREAS the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board asks that the Quebec School Boards Association (QESBA) continues to advocate on behalf of its member boards on the issue of the unification of the tax rate between the French and English school boards of Québec;

Parent Commissioner Angela Martorana MOVED THAT, on the recommendation of the Directorate, the Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board approve that the amount of 89 942.51\$ be paid to the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA).

THIS MOTION WAS CARRIED ON THE FOLLOWING DIVISION:	
Commissioners voting YEA:	Georges Benoit, Steve Bletas, Nick Milas, Steve Mitchell, Edward Turchyniak
Commissioners voting NAY:	Mario Di Domenico, Robert Dixon

7.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

7.1 *Parent Commissioners Report:*

The report of the Parent Commissioners highlighted:

- presentations made by the Director of School Organization & Transportation on the availability of transportation information on-line for parents; the Director of Material Resources on catering contracts and snow removal, and a Pedagogical Consultant from Complementary Services on "Parenting in the 21st Century";
- the consultation on phase II of the reorganization of the Laval high schools;
- the launch of the Parents Committee Web site;
- procedures for communication when there is a problem at the school level with the administration;
- an update on EPCA; and
- unpaid school fees and the transfer of students to another Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board school.

Parent Commissioner Roberto Bomba advised the Executive Committee that the Parents Committee is writing to the Ministre de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport to express its concerns regarding special needs students, support for technology, the impact of budget cuts on students, and the setting of goals without the monetary support to reach them. It will also provide the Ministre with an outline of its priorities for the 2014-2015 school year.

In response to a question from Parent Commissioner Angela Martorana, the Chairman indicated that any student who deserves special recognition should be recognized by their respective school and, depending on the distinction, either the Council or the Sir Wilfrid Laurier Foundation.

The Chairman, in his capacity as a member of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier Foundation, advised that the Lobster Gala had gone well can that approximately 25 000\$ was raised.

Commissioner William Pollock excused himself for the evening.

TIME: 21:22 hours

The Director General thanked Voyages Dixon for its generous donation of a travel certificate, which was the grand prize at the Lobster Gala.

7.2 Draft Council Agenda:

The Chairman drew the Executive Committee's attention to the draft agenda.

In response to a request from Commissioner Steve Mitchell, the Director General noted that the item on the Council agenda entitled "Recall of Power to the Executive Committee" was necessary as the 2014-2015 Organizational Chart for Management, budget, tax rate and the completion of the recruitment and hiring of an Assistant Director General will need to be adopted.

7.3 List of Cheques:

The Chairman advised the Executive Committee that the Director of Financial Resources has posted a list of cheques from July 2013 to May 2014 and they are accessible through the portal to himself the Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee and Commissioner Merle Parkinson. Any questions arising from the examination of the cheques will be sent to Commissioner Parkinson for discussion with the Director of Financial Resources and for presentation at the next Executive Committee. The process of the examination of cheques will eventually be opened to the entire Council for input.

The Executive Committee entered into discussion and the following was noted:

- Crystal Report is used to produce the lists of cheques for conversion to PDF because more detail is available through this program than through Excel;
- the examination of the cheques is currently being limited to three people in order to establish a process for when the examination is opened to all Commissioners;
- having the cheques examined is a good exercise as often things are picked up that have been missed or overlooked in error and corrected;

Commissioner Peter MacLaurin excused himself for the evening.

TIME: 21:35 hours

- questions on the cheques will not be responded to until the budget process has been completed as the Director of Financial Resources needs to focus her time on that dossier;
- need to look at how much is being spent with larger suppliers;
- need to have reconciliations on various projects that have taken place over the last number of years to ensure that the promised savings are being realized; and
- a lot can be learned about the school board through the examination of cheques.

7.4 Recall of Delegation to Executive Committee:

This was already addressed under item 5.2.

7.5 Insurance 2014-2015:

The Secretary General advised that an invitational tender was called for insurance for the 2014-2015 school year noting that the tender was for only one year as the school board wishes to do a risk analysis of this dossier to ensure that the proper insurance is being provided.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Secretary General indicated that the insurance for 2013-2014 was a renewal of a contract but for this year an invitational tender had to be called.

7.6 Selection Committee – Bank of Professionals for Capital Projects:

The Director of Material Resources advised that Executive Committee that the last time the school board took part in the exercise of selecting a bank of professionals was almost 10 years ago and that it would be prudent to enter into the exercise again. In order to respect the law a resolution will be drawn up for presentation to Council to establish a Selection Committee to undertake this task and provide a bank for approval at the 2014-09-17 meeting of the Council.

In response to a request from the Chairman, the Director of Material Resources agreed to send the UPAC link to the Commissioners and that he plans to hold a UPAC training session with the new Council, once elected.

8.0 DISCUSSION TOPIC:

8.1 School Elections Promotion on Electric Cars:

In response to an idea presented at the recent meeting of the Corporate Committee, the Director of Material Resources noted that the hybrid/electric cars could be used to encourage people to vote in the upcoming school elections.

In response to several questions concerning the costs concerning placing advertising on the hybrid/electric cars, the Director of Material Resources noted that the costs indicated in the presentation referred to markings on the cars such as striping not to any potential advertising. The advertising on the cars that was included in the presentation was an idea of how it could look if the budget was available.

The Director General indicated that the different types of advertising that could be placed on the hybrid/electric cars and the cost will be figured out and a report provided.

8.2 2014-2015 Budget Parameters:

This was discussed under item 4.0.

The Chairman thanked the Director of Financial Resources for the actual to budget report provided earlier in the meeting.

9.0 QUESTION PERIOD:

There were no questions.

10.0 CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no correspondence.

11.0 VARIA:

11.1 Genesis E.S.:

This was discussed under item 4.0.

12.0 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:

Parent Commissioner Roberto Bomba MOVED the adjournment of the meeting.

Carried unanimously

TIME: 21:52 hours

NEXT MEETING ⇒ REGULAR ⇒ 2014-07-09

Johanne Brabant, Secretary General

Edward Turchyniak, Chairman