

LWV OBSERVER REPORT FORM

Board or Commission: West Hartford Board of Education

Date of Meeting: April 15, 2010

Members present: All but Terry Schmitt

Nature of meeting Routine X

Special _____

Called to order (time): 7:03 p.m.

Adjourned (time): 8:44 p.m.

Action taken:

The main items on the agenda were the Mission Framework, the board meeting schedule for 2010-11, first readings of 3 revised board policies, and a motion by Diane Mudge and Lib Spinella regarding budget data.

The board voted unanimously to approve the new Mission Framework for the district. The Framework's core element is the mission statement, "To inspire and prepare all students to realize their potential and enhance our global community." It is elaborated visually as a tree and may be viewed at <http://www.whps.org/board/agenda-documents/20100415/new%20mission2010%20final1.pdf>.

The board voted unanimously to table the proposed meeting schedule for 2010-11 due to dissatisfaction with its handling of the budget process. The proposed calendar would place the 3rd and final budget workshop on the night following the public hearing, rather than on the same night as has been recent practice. Several members took issue with this, and also expressed desires to have the budget process begin earlier and/or end later, closer to the council vote. A revised schedule will be offered at the next board meeting. The proposed calendar is at <http://www.whps.org/board/agenda-documents/20100415/Board%20Meeting%20Dates%202010-11.pdf>.

The board accepted unanimously as a first reading revisions to board policies 5670 – Sports Accident Insurance, 5690 – Suicide Prevention, and 5710 – Questioning and Apprehension. Please see <http://www.whps.org/board/agenda-documents/20100415/4-15-10%20boilerplate,%20policies%205670,5690,5710.pdf> for the proposed new language.

The board approved unanimously a motion by Diane Mudge and Lib Spinella to request modification to the 2010-11 budget data book and future budgets to better reflect the full costs associated with programs that are characterized as "self-funded." The motion asks the administration to immediately replicate the format used in the Preschool Budget Worksheet on page 26 of the 2010-11 Budget Supplement (see <http://www.whps.org/budget/1011/Program%20Budget%202010-2011.pdf>) for Nutrition Services, Continuing and Adult Education and Summer School. Beginning next year, the motion further requires the budgets of all self-funded programs to include all costs associated with their operation, such as staff, instructional materials, equipment, transportation, and support services. The stated purpose of the motion was to provide a more accurate understanding of whether these programs are truly self-supporting. The full text of the motion is available at <http://www.whps.org/budget/1011/Program%20Budget%202010-2011.pdf>.

In her Superintendent's Report, Karen List noted that several school spring break trips were being affected by flight cancellations as a result of the cloud of ash generated by a volcanic eruption in Iceland. It was uncertain whether some trips would have to be cancelled.

In his Personnel Report, Rick Ledwith provided an update on the search for a new principal at Bugbee to replace Peg Beecher, who is retiring at the end of the school year. The opening has been posted online and has already generated 9 applications. A leadership profile designed to guide the selection process will be developed with input from staff and parents by April 30, and a candidate is expected to be recommended by June 15.

The board approved unanimously the Financial Report for the period ending February 28, which projects a year-end General Fund balance of only \$29,384, the product of extremely tight budgeting this year.

The next board meeting will take place May 4 at 7:00 p.m. in room 314 at Town Hall.

Observer name: Kathy Wilson