



Respectful, Responsible, Safe & Prepared

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES March 6, 2025 Regular Meeting

Pursuant to the regulations, the regular Board meeting was held on the above date in the Waupaca High School Community Room and live streamed via YouTube. The meeting was also broadcast on TV Channel 991.

The purpose of the Board Meeting Minutes is to capture the essence of discussions through the actions voted on. These minutes should not be interpreted to represent a transcription of the meeting. To watch a recording of this meeting, please click [here](#).

President's Comments and Pledge of Allegiance:

Ron Brooks welcomed everyone and asked Bob Adams to lead the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by President Ron Brooks at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present in the WHS Community Room: Ron Brooks, Steve Klismet, Molly McDonald, Betty Manion, Dale Feldt, Bob Adams, and Lori Verhalen.

Also Present:

Present in the WHS Community Room: Craig Gerlach, Sandy Lucas, Mark Flaten, Austin Moore, Laurie Schmidt, Jenifer Erb, Kyle Scherwinski, John Erspamer, Jody Pankratz, and Alec Olson.

Approval of Agenda:

A motion was made by Dale Feldt and seconded by Betty Manion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Magic Minute:

The Board members as well as the Student Representative shared a positive comment or event.

Public Comment:

None.

Review of Board Meeting Norms:

Board member Lori Verhalen commented that she respects the Norms and emphasized that all Board members need to abide by them at all times as they help them function as a Board. The Board then reviewed their collective commitments.

Approval of New District Administrator Contract:

Board President Ron Brooks read a statement regarding the hiring process and final decision that was made for the District Administrator position. He advised that hiring a new District Administrator has been an incredibly difficult and exhaustive process and thanked everyone who participated in the hiring process. It was a difficult decision with 12 exceptional candidates and it was not made hastily. Mr. Brooks announced that Dr. Mark Flaten will be the next District Administrator for the School District of Waupaca. He is a proven commodity, has rare leadership skills, is committed to

continuous growth and improvement, and will lead, encourage, and collaborate with all. Mr. Brooks thanked the School Board, staff, and community for their input.

A motion was made by Dale Feldt and seconded by Lori Verhalen to approve the District Administrator Contract for Dr. Mark Flaten. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Board Reports:

Student Representative Report:

Alec Olson advised of the Student Council's activities, and that there were 35 participants in the recent blood drive. Academic Honors Night is on March 24 and Mr. Dale Feldt is the featured speaker. He added that winter sports have concluded.

Approval of Minutes:

February 10, 2025 Special Board Meeting
February 11, 2025 Regular Board Meeting
February 17, 2025 Contract Negotiations Committee Meeting
February 18, 2025 Instructional Committee Meeting
February 18, 2025 Personnel Committee Meeting

A motion was made by Betty Manion and seconded by Bob Adams to approve the Minutes of the five meetings listed above as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Upcoming Meetings and Other Activities:

Board President Brooks commented that Ms. Knutson is looking for readers on March 20th. Board members Ron Brooks and Lori Verhalen along with Dr. Flaten will be participating.

The Board was reminded of the following upcoming meetings and other activities:

April 1, 2025 - Election Day
April 7, 2025 - Election Canvass - 8 a.m.
April 8, 2025 - Regular Board Meeting - 5:30 p.m.
April 28, 2025 - Special Board Organizational Meeting - 5:30 p.m.

Completion of Board Member Availability Calendar:

The Board members were asked to complete their availability calendars through April.

WASB State Education Convention Reports:

Board President Ron Brooks as well as Board members Betty Manion and Lori Verhalen attended the annual WASB State Education Convention. Mr. Brooks pointed out that the artist who was one of the keynote speakers was on the cover of the *School News* magazine. He noted that Madison is being seen as a center of AI innovation. He learned a lot and encouraged everyone to attend next year.

Board member Lori Verhalen advised that she attended many classes including a seminar regarding the reporting data for district reports as well as the AI class. She also participated in the MSLE Stem Center tour. She commented that the convention provided a lot of very good information and appreciated the opportunity to attend.

Board member Betty Manion advised that she also attended several classes and particularly enjoyed the classes relating to the arts. She also advised that as the WASB representative for the District, she attended the Delegate Assembly where they discussed proposed resolutions. She noted that there was not much contention on the resolutions because most of them related to funding for school districts so they all passed. She was grateful for the opportunity to attend.

Interim District Administrator Craig Gerlach advised that he, Betty Manion, and Sandy Robinson sat on a panel regarding the drafting of the CEC Charter School contract and shared the process that was

used. The School District of Waupaca is being used as a model. Mr. Gerlach shared that this was his 26th year attending the convention and it is always an outstanding conference.

School Visits or Other Board Reports:

Board members Dale Feldt, Betty Manion, and Ron Brooks attended the Wisconsin Chili Lunch Day at the CEC which was provided by the Hub and focused on farm to table. Mrs. Manion also helped to prepare the meal. Mr. Brooks shared that he also attended the Character Matters presentation.

Board member Molly McDonald expressed her gratitude to Cassie Glodowski for creating the beautiful wood board collages using photos of the senior pictures.

Board member Bob Adams complimented the WHS staff who deal with difficult student situations. They were very professional, respectful, and proactive.

Mr. Feldt advised that he is concerned with the parking issues at WLC and requested that drivers slow down.

CEC Liaison Report:

CEC Liaison Betty Manion advised that there was no report because the monthly Governance Council meeting is scheduled for tomorrow.

Instructional Committee Meeting:

Chairperson Molly McDonald advised that the Instructional Committee met on February 18, 2025, to discuss the WI Act 60 requirement that all Wisconsin high school graduates successfully complete a Personal Financial Literacy (PFL) course. WHS will be transitioning to this in a phased approach, with it being required beginning with the class of 2028.

A motion was made by Molly McDonald, per Committee recommendation, to approve phasing in the new Personal Financial Literacy Course and adjust the WHS graduation requirements starting with the Class of 2028 to meet the requirements of WI Act 60 as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Personnel Committee Meeting:

Chairperson Betty Manion advised that the Personnel Committee met on February 18, 2025, to discuss two agenda items. The first being to review a revised job description for the Food Service Administrative Assistant position because that position has taken on additional duties, along with moving it to the Food Service classification level.

A motion was made by Betty Manion, per Committee recommendation, to approve the new Food Service Administrative Assistant job description and move this position to the Food Service staffing classification as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

The second item discussed was a request by Director of Student Services Laurie Schmidt for an additional 1.0 FTE Special Education Teacher at WMS for the 2025-2026 school year due to increased required needs.

A motion was made by Betty Manion, per Committee recommendation, to approve the addition of a 1.0 FTE Special Education Certified Teacher at WMS for the 2025-2026 school year as presented. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Consent Agenda:

A motion was made by Dale Feldt and seconded by Molly McDonald to approve the items of the consent agenda as presented. Mr. Feldt also recognized the retirement of Kelly Baumgart who has been with the District for many years.

Financial Reports:

Accounts Payable for February

Staffing Changes for the 2025-2026 School Year

Retirements - End of the 2024-2025 School Year:

Kelly Baumgart - WLC Speech Language Pathologist

Resignations:

Debbie Haman - WMS Food Service Class 3

Hires – 2024-2025 School Year:

Carrie Webster - WLC 4K Ed. Asst.

Laurie Lutz - WHS Custodian

Ryan Hayes - Technology Help Desk Assistant

Hires – 2025-2026 School Year:

Jeremy Albright - WHS Auto/Transportation Technology Education Teacher

Extra Curricular Coaches and Advisors – 2024-2025 School Year:

WHS Volunteer Coaching Positions:

Nolan Lamers - Baseball

Erin Montgomery - Girls Track

The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Communications:

Recognitions:

Board President Brooks advised that this week is National School Social Worker Recognition Week as well as National School Breakfast Week.

Monitoring:

College and Career Readiness-Waupaca ACP/CTE:

High School Associate Principal and CTE Coordinator Jenifer Erb provided an update on Academic Career Planning (ACP) and Career and Technical Education (CTE). She pointed out that the District has dedicated leaders in the buildings who do a great job to provide career and academic education on all levels.

She advised that ACP refers to the process of setting goals and creating a roadmap for a student's education and professional development in a specific field of study, with the goal being to help students make informed decisions about their education and career paths. This is offered throughout grades K-12 and is another measurement of the success of our students. She shared the graduates' plans for the past two years as well as this year's highlights, indicating that the number of youth apprenticeship and work experience students continues to increase. She encouraged everyone to view the 2023-2024 Signing Day slideshow.

She pointed out that there is 100% conferencing by our counselors with every 9th-12th grade student. Board member Molly McDonald added that WHS does a great job with the junior counselor meetings and they are personalized to the student. Ms. Erb advised that a new goal this year is that every 11th grade student complete a job shadow. In addition, the District has spent funds for robotics education kits, coding, and other programs. She also advised what the classroom school counseling lessons consist of and focus on at each grade level. She added that sometimes former Comet graduates come back and give presentations.

Ms. Erb also shared the CTE certifications earned by seniors and the many events attended by CTE students. She advised that the CTE Pathway Meetings are held every other year and will continue in the 2025-2026 school year.

She provided photos of some of the presentations, career fairs and trips, as well as students working in some of the apprenticeship programs and classes. She noted that the students in Mr. Christopher Much's Residential Building class built a shed for Tomorrow's Children and Fox Valley Technical College held a competition for the Culinary Arts class.

Technology Updates and Long Term Planning:

Director of Business Services Austin Moore advised that there have been a lot of technology changes and challenges in the last 10 months. The 2024-2025 school year has been a year of rebuild, refresh, and refocus, and included a rebuild of the phone, door access, and camera systems, as well as an uninterruptible power supply.

Mr. Moore shared some of the actions taken to limit vulnerabilities and strengthen the defenses against a cyber attack. This included a cybersecurity grant the District (along with the City of Waupaca) was awarded for a Managed Detection and Response (MDR) system which will be activated in the next few months. The District's staff is doing their part in maintaining security as indicated in the recent phishing report. He also shared the different backup systems that have been put in place, and CESA 5 provided a security and process evaluation. He also advised that one of the areas of growth was improving the network reliability and standardization, which in turn provides a better user experience. Mr. Moore also shared some of the other improvements that have been made as well as what they are continuing to work on.

Some of the challenges ahead include the need to replace all of the District's phones due to them being at end of life, as well as the continuing power issues at WHS, creating the need to expand to a double conversion battery backup system. He is working on a five year plan for technology which is challenging as technology is a constantly moving target.

Mr. Moore specifically expressed his gratitude to Steven Bauman for his many hours in getting and keeping things up and running this past summer, as well as his entire Tech Team during a very challenging year.

In response to several questions from Board members relating to the electricity issues, Mr. Moore advised that there are no power issues at WLC or WMS and some at CEC, but by far WHS has the most. The District does have generators to power the core system. Mr. Moore advised he reached out to a solar provider regarding the solar panels on WHS property and was advised that as the panels age, they do not provide as much electrical power. A few years ago someone did come through the school to see where the District could save energy costs and they replaced all the light bulbs; it may be time to look at it again to see if there could be any additional savings. It was suggested that perhaps the District could check into a program where WHS could be used as an emergency situation shelter.

Administration:

Empowering Staff for Greater Student Success:

Director of Teaching and Learning Mark Flaten shared the many professional development opportunities available to staff and the number of staff who participated during the past 12 months. Many of these are offered to all staff, not just teachers, and the list is sent out annually.

Continuing education through the Making Learning Visible Institute, as well as a reduced cost opportunity to earn a Master's degree in teaching through the District's partnership with UW-Oshkosh (UWO) were also offered. The UWO opportunity encourages and rewards staff to move along the salary schedule. The District has an MOU with UWO for lower credit costs and is currently working on a new MOU with them. However, they want a five year agreement with a minimum of 12 School

District of Waupaca students, which could be difficult to meet. Currently, about 70% of the District's teachers have a Master's degree. A Doctoral program is not offered.

All of this resulted in an approximately \$110,000 investment in our staff, which did not include the salary increase for those teachers who moved on the salary schedule because of earning graduate credits. It provides a return of investment of better education; better education of staff equals better education for students.

Resolution Authorizing the Transfer of Funds, the Establishment of an Escrow Account with Respect to and the Defeasance of Certain of the General Obligation Promissory Notes, dated June 1, 2023:

Mr. Moore reminded everyone that last October we talked about defeasance, which takes advantage of an opportunity the District has this year which is to prepay its loan. However, because it is a bond and people are holding them, there is a process that must be followed. So the next step in that process is to approve a Resolution setting up an escrow account which the escrow agent holds and then processes the payment. By doing the defeasance, the District will save \$287,000 in interest; it all goes into Debt Service Fund 39.

A motion was made by Molly McDonald and seconded by Dale Feldt to adopt a Resolution Authorizing the Transfer of Funds, the Establishment of an Escrow Account with Respect to and the Defeasance of Certain of the General Obligation Promissory Notes, dated June 1, 2023. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote. (A true copy of the Resolution as adopted is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.)

Adjournment Into Closed Session:

A motion was made by Lori Verhalen and seconded by Betty Manion to adjourn into closed session pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 19.85(1)(c), Considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. Specifically to discuss Waupaca Teachers Association (WTA) negotiation parameters on base wages. The motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote at 7:00 p.m.

Reconvene in Open Session to Consider Action on Matters from Closed Session (if necessary):

The Board did not reconvene in open session.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Dale Feldt and seconded by Bob Adams to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Date _____
Ron Brooks, President
Board of Education

Date _____
Betty Manion, Clerk
Board of Education

Resolution No. _____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS,
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ESCROW ACCOUNT WITH RESPECT
TO AND THE DEFEASANCE OF CERTAIN OF THE
GENERAL OBLIGATION PROMISSORY NOTES, DATED JUNE 1, 2023

WHEREAS, the School District of Waupaca, Waupaca, Portage and Waushara Counties, Wisconsin (the "District") has outstanding its General Obligation Promissory Notes, dated June 1, 2023 (the "2023 Notes") which were issued for the purpose of paying the cost of district-wide safety and security upgrades, including point of entry secure entrances and related equipment, building infrastructure improvements and capital maintenance;

WHEREAS, the District has certain debt service funds and other funds on hand (the "Funds") sufficient to defease a portion of the debt service on the 2023 Notes;

WHEREAS, the School Board of the District deems it desirable and in the best interest of the District to transfer and apply such Funds to the defeasance and early redemption of a portion of the 2023 Notes; and

WHEREAS, since the 2023 Notes are not currently callable, it is necessary for the available Funds to be irrevocably deposited into an escrow account, invested in direct obligations of the United States of America, treated as a portion of the debt service fund for the 2023 Notes and applied to pay the principal of and interest on (1) \$110,000 of the 2030 maturity and all of the 2031 maturity of the 2023 Notes on their respective maturity dates and (2) all of the 2032 and 2033 maturities of the 2023 Notes on the March 1, 2031 early redemption date (collectively, the "Defeased Obligations").

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of the District that:

1. Establishment of Escrow Account. The School Board hereby authorizes and directs the officers of the District to enter into an Escrow Agreement with Associated Trust Company, National Association, Green Bay, Wisconsin, as Escrow Agent (the "Escrow Agent"), for the purpose of effecting the provisions of the Resolution.
2. Transfer and Deposit to Escrow Account. The School Board hereby authorizes and approves the transfer and deposit of the Funds into the Escrow Account to be established with the Escrow Agent in an amount sufficient, together with earnings thereon, to provide for the payment of the Defeased Obligations concurrently with the execution of the Escrow Agreement, and the subsequent use, investment and disbursement thereof by the Escrow Agent in the manner provided by the Escrow Agreement.
3. Professional Services. The School Board hereby ratifies and approves the retention of Robert W. Baird & Co. Incorporated ("Baird") to provide general consulting services in connection with this transaction; Quarles & Brady LLP ("Bond Counsel") to provide limited, special counsel legal services in connection with this transaction; and Causey Public Finance, LLC to provide mathematical verification and related services in connection with this transaction.

4. Redemption of the Defeased Obligations, Notice of Defeasance and Redemption. The Defeased Obligations maturing in the years 2032 and 2033 are hereby called for redemption on March 1, 2031. The School Board hereby directs the Escrow Agent pursuant to the Escrow Agreement to provide a notice of the defeasance of the Defeased Obligations and a notice with respect to the redemption of the Defeased Obligations maturing in the years 2032 and 2033 at the times and in the manner set forth in the final Escrow Agreement.

5. Authorization of Officers and Agents. The School Board hereby authorizes the appropriate officers and agents of the District to work with Baird and the Escrow Agent to review and approve the finalized Escrow Agreement including the escrow deposit and other details, to provide the notices of defeasance and redemption and to execute and deliver all documents required by Bond Counsel with respect to this transaction.

Adopted and recorded March 6, 2025.

Ron Brooks
District President

ATTEST:

Betty Manion
District Clerk