

Minutes

Policy Committee Meeting  
Waterford Board of Education  
15 Rope Ferry Road  
March 29, 2010

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TOWN CLERK

- Present: Mr. Blevins, Mr. Egan, Mrs. McCarty, Mr. Taglianetti
- Absent: Ms. McLaughlin
- Staff: Dr. Collins, Superintendent; Mr. Powers, Asst. Supt.; Mr. Sousa, Athletic Director; Mr. Macrino, Principal, Waterford High School
- Guests: Mrs. Nazarchyk

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

Mr. Powers began with a review of the advertising policy. The Waterford Education Foundation currently has \$10,000 in funds. Mr. Blevins asked if the monies received were given under the fact that they would receive a public acknowledgement/tax break. Waterford Youth Services Bureau has donated \$3,000 with no strings attached. O& G Industries has donated \$5,000 and Jacunski-Humes Architects has donated \$2,000; both received the letter with reference to product awareness, but expect nothing in return.

Mr. Taglianetti expressed a dislike of the idea of a banner which he felt was too "permanent looking" and would become advertising for a business who might want to contribute. If we start putting banners up, the sponsorship could transcend to advertisement for individual businesses. Instead, acknowledgement could be accomplished by displaying name on sign or small plaque. Banners could also create arguments and the impression of favoritism towards certain businesses.

Mr. Blevins suggested criteria for creation, names, logos, etc. Mr. Powers referenced letter E – Field House Lobby Bulletin Board Thank You / Acknowledgement Notice on the corporate sponsorship levels. Mr. Powers said the school district would control the content. Mr. Blevins cautioned about use of the electronic signs to provide advertising for third parties.

Mrs. Nazarchyk felt the community should be made aware of which companies provided contributions. Dr. Collins suggested a place in the gym since that population segment would be more interested. Mrs. McCarty felt that community members would be donating without the need for solicitation, as a good number of organizations just do it because they believe in the cause.

Dr. Collins agreed with Mrs. McCarty, based on the 3 commitments received so far who expect nothing more than acknowledgement. Mr. Macrino suggested perhaps publishing a list of patrons in The Day. Dr. Collins added that if it were just a list of patrons, without levels, there would be no incentive to give more. Mr. Sousa suggested a board in the lobby with a list of patrons and levels. Mr. Blevins commented that more people would see it when they attend for other events. Mr. Taglianetti asked about the new arrangement of the high school during/after renovations. Mr. Egan felt the lobby would still be an appropriate area. Mr. Blevins suggested that conversation makes it seem like donations

would be needed for more than one year, and he is not committing to that. Mr. Powers commented that if it continues, the lobby would be an appropriate place. He also showed the lobby entrance on the floor plan of the new Waterford High School.

Mrs. McCarty asked members to keep an open mind, even while the economy does seem to be moving forward. Dr. Collins suggested perhaps renaming the concept of "corporate sponsorship". The idea was generated and named rather quickly, and the word "corporate" might discourage a small business or an individual from donating even the smallest of amounts.

Mr. Egan suggested 2 approaches. One would be selling advertisement, and raise as much money as possible. The other option—donations, is a gray area, especially if companies are getting a boon for their donation. He would be more comfortable with asking to give "gifts". He didn't think this would be a good way to keep freshman sports in perpetuity but assumes the administration's recommendation to cut freshman sports was based on strategies to begin with. Also, we haven't eliminated the possibility that the money raised this year through gifting be reconsidered again next year as a viable alternative.

Dr. Collins suggested that the dilemma next year would be in building \$28,000 for freshman sports back in to the budget, along with healthcare, and building furlough days back in, plus the ARRA money would be gone. He felt that the symbolism of building it back in would be a bad move.

Mrs. McCarty said that if we can't continue to do it this way, no one would hold the Board of Education responsible, since we tried for a year and it didn't work. Dr. Collins commented that we may find people step up to the plate on freshman sports this year, while it is fresh in their mind, but next year the funding may drop off. Mr. Sousa felt that something should be given to small businesses in return.

Dr. Collins also mentioned that the Board of Finance might see the money granted and expect that the budget should be cut by that amount. Mrs. McCarty commented that the Waterford Education By-laws were specific in that funds granted could not be supplanting a budget.

Mr. Powers reviewed Policy #1325, 5.C., which allows for football program or school newsletters, but does not allow for fieldhouse, just in lobby. The policy could be amended to allow for that acknowledgment which would be the cleanest way. Mr. Taglianetti agreed this was more recognition and not advertising. Mrs. McCarty felt she would rather have advertising than lose programs.

Mr. Powers opened discussion on the policy which reads "no advertisement material may be posted". If we agree to recognize contributors we need to make that allowance for recognition. In response to a question from Mr. Taglianetti regarding attempts to sell advertisement, Mr. Powers replied no, not this year. Dr. Collins reminded the policy members that that's where we began, shying away from it. Mr. Powers commented that the Education Foundation is better than a booster club and is not just for athletics. Mrs. McCarty inquired about a strategy. Mr. Powers reported that Dr. Collins had some people in mind and Mr. Sousa heard from some business owners, but we need to have rules in place. Mrs. McCarty asked about means to let the community know. Mr. Sousa suggested Channel 22 and newsletter. Mr. Powers added that parents could help spread the word. Mr. Blevins agreed with Mr. Powers regarding subsection D – School Newsletter Thank You / Acknowledgement Notice, which requires acknowledgement of gifts received and that is not considered advertising under the terms of this policy. Mr. Powers suggested adding one caveat: 3 ways of acknowledging: (1) letter, (2) display in lobby, or (3) program/newsletter. He suggested not using The Day due to costs for ad placement.

Dr. Collins asked about amending the title from corporate to some other description. Mrs. Nazarchyk suggested educational support. Mr. Blevins agreed regarding the need to change corporate. Mrs. Nazarchyk expressed her interest in contacting Mike DiMauro, sports writer for The Day, to see what other school districts do in this regard. Mr. Powers mentioned he would locate an email from CAPSS with information. The consensus was to amend Policy 1325 and add 5.D. which would allow for the recognition of gifts received. The letter will also be revised accordingly and both will be brought to the Board of Education for first reading in April. Dr. Collins suggested the Board might try to adopt the policy in one meeting so as not to lose momentum. Mr. Egan asked about alternatives if the full \$28,000 is not raised. Mr. Taglianetti asked why cut freshman sports horizontally as opposed to a vertical cut of a sport that has been recently added at the high school. Mr. Sousa reminded members of alternative options in sports offered elsewhere in Town and also spoke of how the newer sports were bringing more students into the sports programs. Dr. Collins thought MS/town freshman could get on other teams.

Mr. Blevins closed by saying that the policy would be presented to the Board of Education in April for first reading and possible way to fast-track, pending no surprises at the next scheduled Waterford Education Foundation meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mrs. Kathleen McCarty  
Recording Secretary