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Jay Aspin, Chair

Craig Myles, Director of Education

The January 12, 2021 **Public Session Board Meeting** of the Near North District School Board was held via teleconference.

Trustees Present:

Jay Aspin, Chair
John Cochrane, Vice-Chair
Al Bottomley
Bill Steer
Donna Breault
Harry Fry
Louise Sargent
Nichole King
Rob Learn
Student Trustee M. Paradis

Administrative Staff Present:

Craig Myles, Director of Education
Deb Bartlett, Information/Communication Officer
Gay Smylie, Acting Superintendent
Josh Casey, Information Coordinator
Krista Messenger, Executive Assistant
Lisa Collins, Interim Executive Officer
Liz Therrien, Superintendent of Business
Melanie Gray, Acting Superintendent

Other:

Media and community partners

Trustee Regrets:

Nil

Administrative Regrets:

Tim Graves, Superintendent

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Aspin called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

1.1 Land acknowledgement

Chair Aspin read the declaration aloud.

1.2 Attendance

Attendance indicated that 10 trustees are present for the meeting, including the Student Trustee.

1.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest

NIL

2.0 Approval of the Agenda

Motion: 21-01-01, A. Bottomley/B. Steer.

That the agenda for the Board meeting of January 12, 2021 be approved as presented. - **Carried.**

3.0 Approval of Previous Minutes

3.1 2020 12 15 Annual Organizational Meeting minutes

Motion: 21-01-02, R. Learn/ H. Fry

That the minutes of the Annual Organizational Board meeting held on December 15, 2020, be approved. - **Carried**

3.2 2020 12 15 Regular Meeting minutes

Motion: 21-01-03, R. Learn/ H. Fry

That the minutes of the Regular Board meeting held on December 15, 2020, be approved. - **Carried**

4.0 Communication to the Board

4.1 Information Items

4.1.1 Monthly Tender Report

Trustees referred to the report contained in the package. No questions arose.

4.1.2 Enrollment Report

Trustees referred to the document contained in the package. The Chair invited Director Myles to speak to this item. Highlights of the discussion are noted to be:

- Appreciation expressed to Education Technology Administrator and System Planner, J. Roynon, for his diligence in collating the information contained in the report. J. Roynon is pleased to be in attendance to support detailed questions.
- Point raised that the material in the board package is a high-level summary, and a more detailed report may be requested by trustees by contacting the Director's Executive Assistant.
- Brief outline of the report to note declining enrollment is attributed to three factors: an increased number of students withdrawing to pursue homeschool education, fewer ELK students enrolling, and fewer fifth-year secondary students returning for a "victory lap". COVID-19 is expected to be the underlying influence on each of the three factors.

Chair Aspin opened the floor for questions with the following comments offered:

- Trustee Fry queried if the declining trends are consistent across the province.
 - Response from Director Myles to note his colleagues have confirmed experiencing similar enrollment trends, referred to as the "bookend" phenomenon (fewer students enrolled and fewer graduates returning).
 - J. Roynon echoed the consistent trend, having received the same information from enrollment data group colleagues. Unique to NNDSB is also the lasting effects of the consolidation.
- Question from Trustee Sargent to determine if our conterminous boards are observing this trend.
 - Director Myles and J. Roynon could not speak to this specifically, given they have not reviewed coterminous enrollment data.
 - SBO Therrien invited to comment and noted fellow SBO colleagues have

observed this trend as well.

Final call for questions, with no additional thoughts raised. Chair Aspin thanked Director Myles for presenting this item.

4.2 Director's Update

4.2.1 Board Report

The Chair invited the Director of Education to speak to this item. Director Myles referred trustees to the report contained in the agenda package. Additional items were noted to be:

- Remarks offered to welcome the school community back after the holiday break. Gratitude expressed for the continued spirit of resiliency in our students, their families, our staff, and our union partners as NNDSB continues to navigate education in a pandemic. Thanks expressed to trustees for the confidence to conduct this work.
- Special attention was drawn to the retirement announcement of Liz Therrien. This is a significant portfolio, and we are thankful for her leadership over the last 20 years.

The Chair thanked the Director for his report and commended Director Myles for the leadership he is instilling. Chair Aspin echoed high regards to SBO Therrien for her diligence over the years and best wishes as she begins a new chapter in life.

4.2.2 A Year in Review: 2020 at NNDSB

The Chair invited the Director of Education to speak to this item. Director Myles referred trustees to the presentation contained in the agenda package highlighting some of the major accomplishments of the board throughout the last year. The "Year in Review" points to several achievements that support the objectives for change, such as:

- Increased rigour around the governance and financial development processes that came with implemented recommendations of Ontario Ombudsman's Report, and the Special Advisors' findings through the submission of three reports to the Minister of Education.
- Aggressive submission of grant proposals to enhance the services of the board
- Amalgamation of three North Bay Secondary Schools, coupled with the streamlining of the executive team.
- Initiation of three new schools to be built in North Bay and Parry Sound
- Creation of online professional development modules for teachers
- Creation of innovative online learning and robust resources for students, parents and educators

Director Myles noted these are not individual accomplishments. They each represent significant work across the system regarding new ways of working together collaboratively and efficiently. A sincere thank you expressed to all staff assisting with this work and to trustees for supporting us to conduct this work.

4.2.3 Consolidation Update

The Chair invited Director Myles to comment on this item. Trustees referred to the brief contained in the agenda package, noting the administration is committed to bringing forward regular updates on the work of the consolidation process. Progress centers on a clean up and clear out of the Widdifield building, however, the board continues to be mindful of the other aspects of the “phase three” planning, as part of a larger conversation on capital asset management. Chair Aspin opened the floor for questions, with none rose.

4.3 Chair’s Remarks

The Chair shared remarks regarding board engagement initiatives. Remarks opened with an expression of thanks to Director Myles for a first-class summary of our accomplishments. Without a doubt, our Board has come a long way this past year resulting from our diligent work and the Director’s strong, effective leadership in guidance of his dedicated team. It is particularly noteworthy that these advances have been accomplished fully within the course of a disruptive pandemic which has certainly one been of the most serious societal challenges ever experienced.

He indicated our Director has provided clear evidence of our accomplishments for the past year and wanted to take a moment to project our major challenges for the year ahead. They can be summarized in six major areas:

- Multi-Year Strategic Plan
- Student Achievement & Wellbeing
- Two New School builds – Fricker Elementary and Parry Sound K-12
- Board Resources Reorganization
- North Bay Capital Property Assets Utilization
- High School Athletic Facilities

These challenges can be broadly summarized in terms of our most significant challenge – the completion of a Multi-Year Strategic Plan which was initiated in the fall of 2020 and we intend to complete by the end of this school year in June. This document will provide the direction we operate and thus provide a compass and guard rails for our Board for the 5 years ahead - 2021 to 2026.

Closely aligned with this challenge is the continual responsibility of student achievement and well-being improvement. This is the major function of our school system. Within our MYSP context we have the challenge of two new school builds – Fricker Elementary and K-12 Parry Sound School. Fricker is moving forward and we will soon appoint an architect for Parry Sound.

He stressed that the board has much work to complete regarding board resources reorganization as we are committed to having the right people in the right place to obtain the right results. Within a relatively short period, the Board will have three empty schools in North Bay thus need to review the utilization of North Bay Capital Property Assets to ensure we are continually responding to challenges of declining enrollment and fiscal stewardship. Also, within this context it is necessary to put the finishing touches on our successful high school consolidation with possible Phase III enhancements resulting from an important review of High School Athletic Facilities to ensure they align with our

physical education goals.

The Chair closed with remarks to encourage trustees to take advantage of the rich professional development opportunities available, noting that this represents an important commitment made in response to the Special Advisor's work. The Board received the Chair's Report with thanks.

4.3 OPSBA Report

The Chair invited Trustee Steer to lead the Board through this item. Trustee Steer referred Board members to the report shared in preparation for the meeting this evening. Trustees are encouraged to register for the OPSBA Provincial Education Symposium (PES) occurring on January 28, 2021. This annual event will be conducted virtually this year, with many rich professional development opportunities to take in. The theme of the 2021 PES event is "Equity". The Chair thanked Trustee Steer for his report.

4.4 Student Trustee's Update

The Chair invited Student Trustee Paradis to speak to this item. Verbal report presented centering on:

- Positive feedback shared by secondary students for the pivot to remote learning, while recognizing that reliable internet access is a barrier for some students.
- Educators are coming up with many creative ways to support their students and these efforts are well received.
- Student food drives raised over 1400 pounds of food donated to local food banks. Additionally, West Ferris Secondary School raised money for the Santa fund that supports local families to ensure all children have gifts under the tree.
- Many holiday celebrations received a virtual twist. The creative artwork made for door decorating contests can be seen by visiting school social media pages. shared, please see the school's social medias pages to view the artwork online. Student creativity speaks to their resiliency.
- Appreciation expressed for the continued interest in the work of the student senate.

The Chair thanked M. Paradis for her report.

5.0 Items for Decision

5.1 Report from In-Camera

The Board acknowledged participating in an in-camera session immediately prior to the public board meeting to discuss business in accordance with subject matter outlined in the Education Act, section 207, item 2- closure of committee meetings.

Motion: 21-01-04, J. Cochrane/ D. Breault

That the Board authorize the Director of Education to engage in a review of North Bay property assets to recommend to the Board potential viable options which could re-align and/or dispose of capital assets in the most appropriate manner to respond to the continuing challenges of declining enrollment and fiscal stewardship. – **Carried.**

Motion: 21-01-05, J. Cochrane/ D. Breault

That the Board receive and approve the ratification of OSSTF District 4 Bargaining Unit

(OSSTF) Memorandum of Settlement as presented on January 12, 2021. – **Carried.**

5.2 OPSBA Public Education Symposium Attendance

As discussed during the OPSBA Report and Chair’s Remarks, trustee professional development is essential to good governance, and the PES event is rich with learning opportunities. Chair Aspin invited trustees to express interest in attending.

Motion: 21-01-6, J. Cochrane/ H. Fry

Motion: That the Board designates the following trustee(s) to virtually attend the OPSBA Public Education Symposium scheduled on January 28, 2021:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| - Chair Aspin | - Trustee Sargent |
| - Vice-Chair Cochrane | - Trustee King |
| - Trustee Fry | - Trustee Steer |

Carried.

5.3 Osgoode Hall “Intensive Human Rights Program for School Board Leaders” professional development opportunity

Chair Aspin noted the Minister of Education extended an invitation to all trustees of all Boards of Education to attend this opportunity offered by Osgoode Professional Development. The session will provide an overview of equity principles and the Ontario Human Rights Code, with a specific focus on anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism. Chair Aspin invited trustees to express interest in attending.

Motion: 21-01-7, B. Steer/ N. King

Motion: That the Board designates the following trustee(s) to attend the Osgoode Hall “Intensive Human Rights Program for School Board Leaders” professional development opportunity to be held via videoconference at specified dates, as strongly recommended in correspondence from Minister Leece:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| - Chair Aspin | - Trustee Breault |
| - Vice-Chair Cochrane | - Trustee Steer |
| - Trustee Fry | - Trustee King |
| - Trustee Sargent | |

Carried.

5.4 Committee Membership Allocation

Trustees referred to the document contained in the agenda package. As advised during the organizational meeting in December, this document has been drafted based on the current committee membership structure and includes the intended Trustees who will serve on the Equity Advisory Circle. Chair Aspin open the floor for questions and committee participation requests:

- Trustee Fry queried the meeting schedule of the First Nations Advisory Committee. Trustee King confirmed the FNAC Committee convenes mid-morning.
- Trustee Fry queried the meeting schedule of the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC). Acting Superintendent Gray was invited to respond, noting that regular meetings with trustees generally occur over the lunch hour. Meetings with extended community representatives occur in the evening.
- Trustee Sargent put forward a recommendation to amend the Transportation Appeals Committee membership to delineate “three Trustees preferred, but two

required". Board consensus to adopt this change for ease of business flow.

- Trustee Fry noted the value in advising all trustees on upcoming committee meetings to allow participation in committees for information purposes. A schedule of meetings is located in the NNDSB website.

Motion: 21-01-8, A. Bottomley/ L. Sargent

Motion: That the Board approve the 2021 committee membership as amended, with the amendments noted to be:

- Trustee Fry appointed as a member of the FNAC Committee
- Trustee Fry appointed as a member of the PIC Committee
- Transportation Appeals Committee membership to state, "All trustees to be available. Three trustees preferred, but two required."

- Carried.

Chair Aspin noted with the approval of the committee membership for 2021, the first orders of business for all committees will be to establish a Committee Chair (or Co-Chairs) and to draft a Terms of Reference document to bring forward to the Board for approval.

5.5 International Education Agreement

The Chair invited Director Myles to speak to this item. Trustees referred to the brief contained in the agenda package. Highlights of the information presented are noted to be:

- It is noted that school boards are required by the Ministry of Education to submit a readiness plan, if the school board intends to welcome international students
- NNDSB is not in a position currently to proceed but wanted to ensure the opportunity was available once travel restrictions have been lifted. The health and safety of our school community remains a top priority
- Cultivating an environment to welcome international students, and enriching student body diversity support tenants in the Board's new strategic plan

The Chair opened the floor for questions, with the following brought forward:

- Trustee Fry queried how many international students the board welcomed over the previous two years. The Director invited the Principal of Student Success and Specialized Programs, S. Ruddy to respond to this question. S. Ruddy noted he could not speak to previous trends; however, the board currently has 13 conditional letters awaiting approval for now until June 2021.

Motion: 21-01-9, H. Fry/ R. Learn

That the Board approve the International Education Agreement as presented and approve its submission to the Ministry of Education. – **Carried.**

6.0 Committee Reports

Standing Committees

6.1.1 Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) Committee Report

Committee Co-Chair Steer invited to lead this item for the Board. It is noted that the

minutes of the MYSP Committee meeting of December 10, 2020, are included for information purposes. Trustees referred to the report contained in the agenda package. Highlights are noted to be:

- In keeping with the Board's previous direction to the MYSP committee to provide monthly updates, a report is included in the package for review.
- Director Myles noted the MYSP will continue to guide our work moving forward to ensure all aspects of all board business are captured.
- Comment from the Chair to note the committee continues to meet monthly and looks forward to sharing our progress and maintaining community involvement.
- Looking for the Board to support the MYSP Committee's recommendation to post the monthly report presented to the Board together with the roadmap that outlines the progress on the MYSP section of the website, once the reports have been approved and presented to the board. Support expressed from trustees to adopt this approach.

Chair Aspin thanked Trustee Steer for providing this update.

6.2 Ad Hoc Committees

6.2.1 Parry Sound Architectural Selection Committee Report

Chair Aspin invited Committee Chair King to lead this item. A verbal report was provided centering on:

- Committee members reviewed all the proposals submitted over the holidays.
- Individual scores were submitted and collated to develop a shortlist of six firms.
- Next step will be to interview the firms, which is expected to occur very soon in anticipation of the successful firm being selected shortly to hit the ground running.

The floor was opened for questions, with none rose. Chair Aspin thanked Committee Chair King for the report.

6.3 Legislated Committees

6.3.1 SEAC- Unofficial minutes dated December 17, 2020

6.3.2 FNAC- Unofficial minutes- December 7, 2020

The Chair referred trustees to the minutes of the legislated committees contained in the agenda package for information purposes.

There being no further business to discuss, the Board moved to adjourn the meeting.

7.0 Motion to Adjourn

Motion: 21-01-10, H. Fry/ N. King

That we do now adjourn at 7:50 pm. – **Carried**



Jay Aspin
Chair



Craig Myles
Director of Education