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Jay Aspin, Chair

Craig Myles, Director of Education

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The November 16, 2020 **Public Session Board Meeting** of the Near North District School Board was held via teleconference.

**Trustees Present:**

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

**Administrative Staff Present:**

Craig Myles, Director of Education  
Liz Therrien, Superintendent of Business  
Tim Graves, Superintendent  
Gay Smylie, Acting Superintendent  
Mel Gray, Acting Superintendent  
Krista Messenger, Executive Assistant  
Maureen Egan, Recording Secretary  
Sarah Spence, Principal  
James Bennett, Communications Officer  
Josh Casey, Information Coordinator

**Trustee Regrets:**

Al Bottomley  
Rob Learn

**Other:**

media

**1.1 Call to Order**

Chair Aspin called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**1.2 Attendance**

Attendance indicated that eight trustees including the Student Trustee were present for the meeting.

**1.3 Declaration of Conflict of Interest NIL**

**1.4 Approval of Agenda**

Motion: 20-11-01, B. Steer/L. Sargent.

That the agenda for the Board meeting of November 16, 2020 be approved as presented- **Carried.**

**1.5 Approval of Previous Minutes**

Motion: 20-11-02, J. Cochrane/ N.King

That the minutes of the Board meetings held October 13, 2020 be approved. - **Carried**

## **2.0 Communication to the Board**

### 2.1 Information Items

#### 2.1.1 Monthly Tender Report

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

#### 2.1.2 Message from the Chair for the Director's Annual Report

The Chair referred Board members to the statement contained in the agenda package, with the intention of speaking to it as part of the Chair's Remarks.

### 2.2 Director's Update

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:

- Heartfelt appreciation expressed for the work of all staff and union partners as NNDSB continues to navigate the pandemic. Staff have risen to the occasion to ensure the health and safety of students and their families.
- NNDSB continues to move forward with establishing a new multi-year strategic plan. Through the information collected by Nanos Research from staff, students, and community partners, NNDSB will be using a data-informed approach to identify gaps and respond to the issues identified.
- Thanks expressed to the trustees for their leadership in developing a Multi-Year-Strategic Planning (MYSP) Committee to ensure this important work has a concerted focus. The value of this plan cannot be understated and represents a critical step on the journey back to restoring public confidence.
- Highlights were provided on the virtual engagement process with Michael Ramsay with thanks expressed to the Superintendent team for setting aside their priorities to engage in this important work.
- NNDSB is proud to recognize Treaty Week. Highlights in the report on all the ways the Board recognized this event, during the week and throughout the year. This week has special meaning to the Board given the three Metis Councils within our geography, North Bay, Mattawa and Moon River, along with many Metis students in our schools.
- Progress continues with regard to the website update towards the goal of creating a user-friendly space for students, staff and community partners.
- On November 11, 2020, we paused with our community to express solemn gratitude for those who have given their lives for Canada and for peace.

The Chair thanked the Director for his report and commended Director Myles for the leadership he is instilling. The point on learning resiliency from our students is well made.

### 2.3 Chair's Remarks

The Chair shared remarks regarding strategic board engagement initiatives. Highlights of the verbal report were noted to be:

- Welcome to the Director's Executive Assistant, K. Messenger. It is noted that this competition represented a commitment from NNDSB on skill-based hiring to support the Board's mandate to re-establish leadership and governance

- structures. K. Messenger will be mentored by M. Egan in the weeks ahead to ensure a seamless knowledge transfer.
- Trustees referred to the report provided for information regarding the Director's Annual Report. Recognition expressed for the dedication of trustees during this tumultuous time.
  - In the past year, the Board of Trustees has hired a Director of Education updated and approved comprehensive Governance and ByLaws, consolidated two high schools and advanced the process for building two additional schools all in the face of a disruptive pandemic. The impact of these decisions cannot be understated and will direct the course of NNDSB for years to come
  - Update provided on the status of the Widdifield Secondary School building, noting members of the community have begun to approach trustees about future plans. Direction has been provided to Director Myles to bring forward a process proposal in January 2021 for consideration. Confirmation that the process will be open and transparent, with the best future of NNDSB in mind.
  - In December 2020 trustees will engage in the annual reorganization process, in addition to convening for the monthly business meeting. Out of respect for schedules, it is felt that one meeting should be scheduled to encompass all business. Floor opened for questions:
    - Comment from Vice-Chair Cochrane to express support for this approach.
    - Question raised by Trustee Sargent on the prospective impact to electing the OBSPA representative. Trustee Steer commented to share he did not expect this to have an impact. Staff to take this back for confirmation.

Motion: 20-11-03, J. Cochrane/ D. Breault

That the Board combine the regular December meeting and the Annual Organizational meeting to occur together, as agreed by consensus.- **Carried.**

2.4 OPSBA Report

The Chair invited Trustee Steer to lead the Board through this item. Trustee Steer referred Board members to the report contained in the agenda package. Highlights to note:

- Monthly OPSBA meetings have centered on pandemic impacts unique to northern Ontario, and mitigation strategies.
- OPSBA submitted a document to the Ministry of Education outlining northern region priorities identified as increasing indigenous education and relationships, special education and resources, experiential learning pathways, and mental health supports for students.

Chair Aspin noted he is pleased to see the OPSBA northern region being so proactive. Floor opening for comments:

- Trustee Sargent queried if the Compass Committee intends to reconvene. Response from Trustee Steer to note this is on hold. Trustee Fry advised that since this pause, he has taken on commitments that preclude him from participating. Trustee Steer confirmed he will volunteer to represent NNDSB when the committee resumes.

- Comments from Director Myles to share he has participated in meetings periodically and is impressed with the level of organization and decorum. The Board of Trustees can be comfortable with the leadership and stewardship of OPSBA. With no further questions, Chair Aspin thanked Trustee Steer for this report.

### 2.5 Student Trustee Update

The Chair invited Student Trustee Madelaine Paradis to lead this item. Student Trustee Paradis provided a verbal report, with the following highlights to note:

- Schools are embracing the new normal in creative ways such as by designing school face masks which are being sold by student councils.
- Breakfast programs are adapting to COVID-19 guidelines. A variety of healthy snacks are provided every morning in a plastic bin to every class, ensuring students still have access to the nutrition program many have come to rely on.
- All high schools participated in Purple Shirt Day with trivia, educating students, and raising awareness about our community's responsibility to look after our children and youth and share about their right to safety and well-being.
- Northern Secondary School is also meeting weekly with their Safe Schools Committee to discuss anti-bullying and came up with a plan to digitize their annual anti-bullying pledge.
- In an attempt to keep morale high as we shift into our third octomester of the year, schools have been hosting a variety of spirit days in hopes of encouraging student engagement and excitement.
- In partnership with the health unit, the Student Senate is working on a mental health/wellbeing project which is made by students for students. On top of that, they are running an anti-stigma campaign regarding Learning Disabilities the common misconceptions surrounding them.

Chair Aspin thanked M. Paradis for her thorough report.

## **3.0 Items for Decision**

### 3.1 Levying Education Taxes Bylaw 2021

Trustees were directed to the information contained in the agenda package. Floor opened for questions, with Director Myles and SBO Therrien pleased to respond. None rose.

Motion: 20-11-04, J. Cochrane/ D. Breault.

Whereas subsection 257.7(1) of the Education Act requires the Board to levy the tax rates prescribed under section 257.12 of the Act;

And whereas Ontario Regulation 400/98 prescribes the tax rates under subsection 257.12 of the Act;

Now therefore the Board enacts as follows:

The rates set out in Ontario Regulation 400/98 for 2021 are hereby levied in localities within the area of jurisdiction of the Board on the property indicated in section 257.7 of the Act. – **Carried.**

### 3.2 Trustee Honoraria 2020

Trustees were directed to the information contained in the agenda package. Floor opened for questions, with Director Myles and SBO Therrien pleased to respond:

- Question raised by Trustee Fry to ascertain if cell phone, home phone, and internet expenses are eligible trustee expenses, noting connectivity challenges in rural areas. Response from Director Myles to advise he will provide a report back to confirm this item.

With no opposition, consensus to approve as presented.

#### Motion: 20-11-05, H. Fry/ D. Breault

That the Board approve the trustee honoraria for December 18, 2020, and beyond as follows:

- a) annual honorarium for trustee (excluding Chair/Vice-Chair) \$7,763.84;
  - b) Chair \$13,263.84 and Vice-Chair \$10,513.84;
  - c) \$50 distance allowance per board meeting for each member eligible.
- **Carried**

## **4.0 Committee Reports**

### 4.1 Standing Committees

#### 4.1.1 Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) Committee Report

The unofficial minutes of the November 9, 2020, MYSP Committee meeting are contained in the agenda package for information purposes. On behalf of the MYSP Committee, Chair Aspin led this report. Highlights presented are noted to be:

- As stated earlier, this represents one of the most important activities for a board. The MYSP will shape every facet of Board activity.
- Trustees referred to the board reports contained in the agenda package.
- The MYSP Committee partnered with Ramsay Consultants to distill the data provided by Nanos Research into meaningful priorities aimed at future growth for students, staff, and relationships with community partners.
- Much work has gone into the draft public-facing MYSP framework. The document contained in the agenda package represents a high-level summary that will provide the foundation for the Multi-Year Strategic Plan
- Congratulations expressed to MYSP Committee co-chairs Trustee Learn and Trustee Steer for their work. It is noted that the establishment of the MYSP is a priority Trustee Steer identified following his election to the Board.
- With the approval of the Board of Trustees, the MYSP Committee will be hosting community information sessions across each district across NNDSB to present the framework. This strategy supports the recommendations from Nanos Research on the importance of repeated communication.

Chair Aspin opened the floor for questions:

- Trustee Fry raised a semantic suggestion to the “Seven Grandfather Teachings”. Clarification confirmed by Trustee King. Staff to ensure this reference is cited appropriately.
- Vice-Chair Cochrane commended the MYSP Committee on their report and process, citing significant previous experience in this space. The process was very informative and insightful.

- Review of the timeline noting the final plan will come forward to the Board of Trustees in June 2021, with a goal of September 2021 implementation.

#### **4.1.2 Finance Committee Report**

Vice-Chair Cochrane was invited to lead the trustees through this item. A verbal report was presented to summarize the meeting on November 13, 2020. Highlights are noted to be:

- 2019-2020 Financial Update – Year Ending August 31, 2020 / 2019-2020 School Year: Final quarterly report on operations for the year ended August 31, 2020 presented.
- The 2019-2020 fiscal year has now undergone the audit process but is still subject to final review of Audited Financial Statements between management and external auditors which is scheduled for Friday, November 23, 2020. Presentation to Audit Committee scheduled for November 24, 2020, and recommendation for approval to Board for Board approval.
- The current pandemic which caused the system to shut down on March 12, 2020 combined with labour sanctions experienced early in the fiscal year are primary factors contributing to substantial surplus for the year ending August 31, 2020
- Although many additional and unplanned expenditures, savings due to labour sanctions and COVID enabled the Board to offset unplanned expenditures. This also included covering off expenses related to 3:2 school consolidation
- Accumulated Surplus and Deferred Revenue Balances: Updated figures were provided for Accumulated Surplus, Operating Deferred Revenue accounts, Deferred Revenue balances for School Renewal, Rural and Northern Education Fund and Proceeds of Disposition
- It was further communicated that given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry has legislated use of Accumulated Surplus up to 2% of Operating GSN Allocations (approximately \$2.8 million) to incur in-year deficits for 2020-2021
- With regard to unspent School Renewal monies it was communicated that from these monies must also come expenditures related to legal committed projects that have been awarded, 3:2 Phase 2 capital costs and previously Board approved projects
- Finance will bring back to the Board a summary of projects that have been approved but not commenced as of yet
- Trustee Initiative Fund – Year-end balances reported to Finance Committee
- Budget Procedures Manual: Finance will begin updating Budget Procedures Manual for the upcoming 2021-2022 Budget.

## **4.2 Ad Hoc Committees**

### **4.2.1 Parry Sound Architectural Selection Committee Report**

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

- As this is a recently developed committee- Trustee King accepted the nomination of Committee Chair, nominated by Vice-Chair Cochrane.
- An appreciation to staff for the thorough resource binder developed to lead the Committee through the process of selecting an architectural firm.
- Overview of the process, timelines and commitment to a competitive and transparent process.
- Chair Aspin provided insight on updating the reference to “edu-pods” in the unofficial Committee minutes. Staff to coordinate this amendment as requested.

The floor was opened for questions with none rose. The Chair thanked Trustee King for her report.

**4.3 Legislated Committees**

- 4.3.1 SEAC- Unofficial minutes dated October 15, 2020
- 4.3.2 FNAC- Unofficial minutes dated October 26, 2020
- 4.3.3 Audit Committee- Unofficial minutes dated September 17, 2020

Chair Aspin referred trustees to the unofficial minutes of the legislated committees contained in the agenda package for information purposes. Floor opened for questions, with none rose.

**5.0 Motion to Adjourn**

Motion: 20-10-06, J. Cochrane/ H. Fry  
That we do now adjourn at 7:33 pm. – **Carried**

**Jay Aspin**  
Chair

**Craig Myles**  
Director of Education