

***Watervliet City School District
Watervliet, New York***

BOARD OF EDUCATION

REGULAR MEETING

DATE: January 14, 2025

TYPE OF MEETING: Regular Meeting

MEETING OPENED: 6:00 p.m.

WHERE: Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: President, Mary Beth Whited
Vice President, Brian White
Heather Soroka
Victoria Donnelly
Kyle Daniels

SUPERINTENDENT: Dr. Donald Stevens Jr.

STUDENT COUNCIL REP: Owen Zawistowski

The meeting opened at 6:00 p.m., with President Whited officiating.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/COMMENTS

2023-2024 NYS Testing Data Presentation (3-8 Assessment Data)

Kelly Webster

Watervliet Elementary School Reading Horizons Presentation

**Ryan Groat, Luca Rentz,
Adrienne Todd & Allison Fried**

A. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Stevens shared the following:

- Thank you to the administrators and teachers who presented tonight.
- Last Friday, a member of our district, Edward Upton, passed away. He was an 84 year old man who knocked on our door all summer long, persistent on getting a job with the district. He was a great, hard-working individual who had lots of stories to share. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family. We are all thinking of him at this time. Services are Friday at 11:00 a.m. at Parker Brothers Memorial Funeral Home.
- Upcoming events:
 - Thursday is the Watervliet Elementary School Drama Club performance in the gym.
 - The Spelling Bee is Friday at 9:30 a.m. at WES.
 - Second quarter wraps up next week with Regents exams. There will be no high school classes Tuesday – Friday. Then we will wrap up quarter two and the year will be halfway over.
 - On the agenda, there are some upcoming budget workshops and a timeline for the process. Assembly Member McDonald will be presenting at the March Board meeting.
- Green Island is continuing to move forward with tuitioning their grades 9-12 students in to WCSD. They anticipate a hearing on January 27 and a vote on February 4. We will have an open house later in January where we will have a lot of events going on for them to observe.
- We have been talking a bit about security. We discussed a variety of aspects about safety and explored some new technology. We had a meeting last week with a vendor who is currently installing systems in Schenectady and they are willing to come in and showcase what they have. They will be doing a study of our entrances to see what technology would work for us. Further information will be forthcoming.

Mrs. Donnelly asked if it would be used for school events.

Dr. Stevens responded that it would be used for school events.

Mr. Daniels asked if it would be implemented in both buildings.

Dr. Stevens responded that it will go wherever we decide, but it will most likely be in both buildings and Alternate Education site.

B. STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT

Owen Zawistowski shared the following:

- On behalf of all of the members of the Student Council, Happy New Year.
- The new debate team is currently deciding on the topic for our first debate in February. As previously mentioned, we will be debating each other this year, but hope to compete with other schools next year.
- We will be contacting Ms. DeMento and Mr. Whited to arrange a second meeting of the year to discuss the breakfast and lunch program. We thank both of them for always being willing to meet with us.
- Students are preparing for next week's Regents exams. In preparation, many students have been attending Regents prep classes after school.
- Seniors are in the middle of the college admissions process. Many students have already applied to schools and are waiting to hear back, while others are finishing their essays and submitting their applications now. Thank you to the school counselors, administrators, teachers, and staff members who have written letters of recommendation for us. It is a very exciting time for us and I am pleased to announce that I have been accepted to Clarkson University already.

C. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit Committee

There was nothing new to report.

Policy Committee

There was nothing new to report.

BOARD DISCUSSION

- March 11 @ 6:00 p.m. – State Budget Overview, Assembly Member John McDonald / Budget Presentation at BOE Meeting
- March 25 @ 6:00 p.m. – Community Budget Workshop in WJSHS Conference Room
- April 2 @ 6:00 p.m. – Budget Workshop at PTA Meeting
- April 8 @ 6:00 p.m. – Final Budget Presentation
- April 23 @ 6:00 p.m. – Special BOE Meeting for BOCES Budget Vote
- May 6 @ 6:00 p.m. – Budget Hearing
- May 20 @ 11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. – Budget Vote and BOE Election

ITEMS REQUIRING BOARD ACTION

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board accepted the **resignation of Bailey Durham** from the position of **Library Aide** at the **Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School**, effective January 8, 2025, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board accepted the **resignation of Jeremy Brand** from the positions of **Building Substitute** and **Cooking Club Advisor** at the **Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School**, effective January 8, 2025, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **emergency transfer of Briana Mahoney** from the position of **Substitute Cafeteria Worker**, to the position of **Part-Time Cafeteria Worker**, at the **Watervliet Elementary School**, effective December 1, 2024, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Victoria Donnelly, seconded by Kyle Daniels and accepted 3-0 (Mary Beth Whited and Heather Soroka abstained), the Board approved the **emergency probationary appointment of MaryAnn Veshia** to the position of **Teaching Assistant**, in the tenure area of Teaching Assistant, at the **Watervliet Elementary School**, beginning January 2, 2025, at a **Step 8** salary, plus verified Associate or Bachelor degree stipends, as per contract. The probationary period shall expire on January 2, 2028, contingent upon positive evaluations from his/her direct supervisor throughout his/her probationary period, consistent with the requirements of Education Law Sections 2509, 3012-c, and/or 3012-d. MaryAnn Veshia holds a Level III Teaching Assistant certification, (certificate #954730151).

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **emergency probationary appointment of Davonte Jones** to the position of **Hall Monitor**, at the **Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School**, for a probationary period beginning January 2, 2025 and ending January 2, 2026, at a Step 1 Teacher Aide salary, per contract, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **emergency probationary appointment of Ghulam Naveed** to the position of **Lunch Monitor** at the Watervliet Elementary School, at a rate of **\$17.00/hour**, for a probationary period beginning January 2, 2025 and ending on January 2, 2026, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **emergency provisional appointment of Katherine Negrón** to the position of **Keyboard Specialist**, at the **Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School**, for a one-year probationary period beginning January 3, 2025, at a pro-rated yearly salary of **\$36,000.00**, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White s and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **emergency probationary appointment** of **Malcolm Singleton** to the position of **Part-Time Night Cleaner** for the Watervliet City School District, at a rate of **\$17.00/hour**, effective **December 9, 2024**, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Brian White, seconded by Kyle Daniels and accepted 4-0 (Mary Beth Whited abstained), the Board approved the **appointment** of the following **After-School Detention Monitors** at the Watervliet Elementary School effective January 13, 2025 and continuing for the remainder of the **2024 – 2025** school year, at a rate as per contract, as recommended by the Superintendent:

Michele DeGuire
MaryAnn Veshia

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **appointment** of the following **Intramurals Supervisors** at the Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School for the remainder of the **2024 – 2025** school year, at a rate as per contract, as recommended by the Superintendent:

Kelsey Logan
Marc Fruscio

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the appoint the following **Coaches** for the **2024– 2025** school year, pending fingerprint clearance and fulfillment of NYSED coaching requirements, at a rate as per contract, as recommended by the Superintendent:

WATERVLIET JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Coaching Winter:

Volunteer Wrestling: Cameron Groncki
Volunteer Indoor Track & Field: Alana Carroll

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **appointment** of **Ana Hartley** to the position of **Long-Term Substitute General Science Teacher - Grade 8**, at the **Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School**, effective January 20, 2025, at a rate of \$200.00 per diem, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Kyle Daniels and accepted 4-0 (Mary Beth Whited abstained), the Board approved the **appointment** of **Jessica Senecal** to the position of **Long-Term Substitute Elementary Teacher - Grade 2**, at the **Watervliet Elementary School**, effective March 21, 2025, at a rate of \$200.00 per diem, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **appointment** of **Hannah Brown** to the position of **Long-Term Substitute Elementary Teacher - Grade 2**, at the **Watervliet Elementary School**, effective March 21, 2025, at a rate of \$200.00 per diem, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Substitute Registry** submitted by **BOCES**, as recommended by the Superintendent (packet #8).

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board **accepted the Internal Claims Auditor Report** for the month of **December 2024**, submitted by Michaelleen Backus, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the following **Treasurer's Reports** for the month of **November 2024**, submitted by Keith Heid, Business Manager, as recommended by the Superintendent:

Schedule of Warrants & Payrolls
Revenue Status Report
Cash & Investments
Appropriation Status Report

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Payment for Unused Vacation Leave** in the amount of **\$6,230.16** for **Bridan Sharpe**, upon his resignation from the Watervliet City School District, effective November 29, 2024, per Article VIII of the Employee Benefits Document for Non-Aligned Employees, submitted by Keith Heid, Business Manager, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Payment for Unused Sick Leave** in the amount of **\$3,450.42** to **Lisa Dubrule**, upon her retirement from the Watervliet City School District, effective June 30, 2024, per Article X of the Watervliet Support Staff Association (WSSA) Agreement, submitted by Keith Heid, Business Manager, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Educational Services Agreement** with **Vanderheyden**, for services provided to a student enrolled in the Vanderheyden program, effective January 2, 2025 – June 26, 2025, as outlined in the attached, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Brian White, seconded by Kyle Daniels and accepted 4-0 (Mary Beth Whited abstained), the Board approved the **Revised Employee Benefits Document** for **Cook Manager** of the Watervliet City School District, as outlined in the attached, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Board of Education Minutes** for the meeting held **December 10, 2024**, submitted by Bernadette L. Boardman, Clerk of the Board, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Committee on Special Education's** recommendations for the meetings held **December 6, December 10, December 11, December 12, December 17, December 18, December 19 and December 20, 2024**, submitted by Molly McGrath, Veronica Wilson, Rebecca Haws, and Danielle Tetrault, CSE Chairs, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Committee on Pre-School Special Education's** recommendations for the meetings held **January 2 and January 3, 2025**, submitted by Molly McGrath, CPSE Chair, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **home-schooling** requests of the parents/guardians of the following students, as recommended by the Superintendent:

- Student ID 900010222 – grade 11

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the following **Student Observer/Volunteer** requests at the **Watervliet City School District**, as outlined below, as recommended by the Superintendent:

Name(s)	Role	Cooperating Professional	Dates
Jessica Scensny	Student Teacher	Kelsey Logan, WJSHS	Spring Semester 2025
Kevin Walsh	Student Observer	Ryan Groat, WES & Jessie Williams, WJSHS	January – June 2025

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board accepted, with thanks, the **\$500 donation** from the **Price Chopper/Market 32** to the **Watervliet City School District Food is Fuel Backpack Program**, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board accepted, with thanks the donation of **Several Handmade Blankets** from **Marciella Forget**, to be given to students in need, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Heather Soroka, seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board accepted, with thanks the donation of **Bus Cleaning and Restoration Services** from **Quick Response Restoration, Inc.**, as recommended by the Superintendent.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Kyle Daniels seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board adjourned executive session and adjourned the meeting at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Bernadette L. Boardman
Clerk of the Board*

**NOTE: All district appointments are subject to fingerprint
clearance by the NYS Education
Department and verification of Permanent or
Pending Certification by NYS.**