

Transcription of June 17, 2020 WVCSD Board of Education Special Meeting

Sharon Davis: Let's stand for the Pledge.

All: I pledge Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

Sharon Davis: Should I still go over roll call? I guess so, right Susan?

Sharon Davis: **Dave Eaton.**

Dave Eaton: Here – present.

Sharon Davis: Eilleen Gagliano

Eilleen Gagliano: – I'm here.

John Garcia – Here.

Sharon Davis – Hey John, congratulations.

John Garcia – Thank you very much.

Denise Ginley: Here.

Sharon Davis: Bob Howe. I wasn't sure if Bob was here. I know Denise is here.

Sharon Davis: I don't think we have Bob tonight.

Sharon Davis: Lynn Lillian

Lynn Lillian: Here

Sharon Davis - Dory Masefield

Dory Masefield: Here

Sharon Davis: Keith Parsons

Keith Parsons: Here.

Sharon Davis: Awesome. Okay, we're going to go into Proposition One – the Budget

Sharon Davis: I would like a motion to accept the results of the vote of Proposition One – the school budget. Yes – 3,954 votes. No votes were 2,189.

Lynn Lillian: So moved – Lynn.

Keith Parsons: Second – Keith.

Sharon Davis: Lynn and second Keith.

Sharon Davis: Any discussion? All in favor. Aye: Sharon Davis, David Eaton, Eilleen Gagliano, John Garcia, Denise Ginley, Robert Howe, Lynn Lillian, Dory Masefield, Keith Parsons.

Sharon Davis: Any opposed? The motion is carried.

Sharon Davis: Now we're moving onto the proposition for the two buses.

Sharon Davis: I would like a motion to accept the results of the vote of Proposition Two – buses. 3,474 votes Yes, and 2,632 votes No for the proposition for the school buses.

Dory Masefield: So moved – Dory.

David Eaton: Second – Dave.

Sharon Davis: Dory and that was Dave Eaton who seconded.

Sharon Davis: Any discussion? All in favor. Aye: Sharon Davis, David Eaton, Eilleen Gagliano, John Garcia, Denise Ginley, Robert Howe, Lynn Lillian, Dory Masefield, Keith Parsons.

Sharon Davis: Any opposed? The motion is carried.

Sharon Davis: I would like a motion to accept the results for the vote regarding the election of members of the Board of Education.

Sharon Davis:

Luis Abramson – 2,491 votes

John Garcia – 4,541 votes

Robert Howe – 4,621 votes

Dory Masefield – 4,523 votes

Keith Parsons: So moved – Keith.

Sharon Davis: That was Keith. Do we have a second?

David Eaton: So moved, Dave. Second.

Sharon Davis: Any discussion? All in favor. Aye: Sharon Davis, David Eaton, Eilleen Gagliano, John Garcia, Denise Ginley, Robert Howe, Lynn Lillian, Dory Masefield, Keith Parsons.

Sharon Davis: Any opposed? The motion is carried.

Sharon Davis: And now we're moving onto the Albert Wisner Trustees.

Sharon Davis: I would like a motion to accept the results of the vote regarding the election of the Albert Wisner Library Trustees.

Nora Gurvich had 4,750 votes and Mark Damia had 4,636.

Sharon Davis: May I have a motion?

Eileen Gagliano: So moved – Eileen.

Sharon Davis: Eileen.

Dory Masefield: Second – Dory.

Sharon Davis: Was that Lynn or Denise? Who seconded that?

Dory Masefield: Dory seconded.

Sharon Davis: Okay, thanks Dory.

Sharon Davis: Any discussion? All in favor. Aye: Sharon Davis, David Eaton, Eileen Gagliano, John Garcia, Denise Ginley, Robert Howe, Lynn Lillian, Dory Masefield, Keith Parsons.

Sharon Davis: Any opposed? The motion is carried.

Sharon Davis: Okay, I would like a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Eileen Gagliano: So moved – Eileen.

Keith Parsons: Second – Keith.

Sharon Davis: Keith second.

Sharon Davis: Any discussion? All in favor? Aye: Sharon Davis, David Eaton, Eileen Gagliano, John Garcia, Denise Ginley, Robert Howe, Lynn Lillian, Dory Masefield, Keith Parsons.

Sharon Davis: Any opposed? The motion is carried. Thanks everyone.

Dr. Leach: Sharon, I see that Bob joined us as well. I just wanted to reiterate what I stated before in an email. That is, what a phenomenal job folks did back here with this process. It was overwhelming to see the thousands and thousands of ballots come in day after day. Susan and Jennifer, in particular, really took it to a whole other level – frequent consultation with our attorneys, significant safeguards, knowledge of the law, knowledge of the procedures recommended by our lawyers and our auditors.

Our auditors were there last night in attendance. Not too many schools took it to that level, but we felt that that oversight would be helpful and they were just so impressed how Susan and Jennifer organized this event and the leadership that they showed. It was quite extraordinary, and I just wanted to acknowledge their hard work.

And then we had folks, many folks who were here last night, and we'll make sure we get letters out thanking them for their participation in this process. I didn't want that to go without notice – I know we have so much planning to do for the restart of schools, and the culmination of this year, that I may forget. But it was extraordinary, and it wasn't uncommon for them to come in on the weekends. It wasn't uncommon for them to be here at 6 o'clock at night or emailing at night asking questions.

So, I always felt that we were really in great shape. And then Tim's office and the planning that was done well in advance. I mean, we were not one of the many districts that were waiting for ballots. We were not one of the many districts mailing their ballots out two days before the election. We did not need the governor to extend his order for another week -- we didn't need it.

We had over 6,000 ballots, or pretty close to it. And that was all due to their planning and hard work. I wanted to acknowledge that because the word unprecedented is becoming sort of overplayed maybe or used so often but these were some really unique times. I wanted to just say thank you.

Sharon Davis: Thank you. Someone's got some wild stuff going on at their house.

David Eaton: David, were there many ballots that were invalid?

Dr. Leach: Umm. I think all districts had a good number of ballots that either weren't signed or sealed. I don't have a number off the top of my head. But we certainly had the vast, vast majority followed the rules. And so we felt good about that. And we had letters

that went out, emails that went out, videos that we did on how to vote. So, yes, there is certainly more than a handful, though I don't know off the top of my head. And I know that some districts around the region whether it's a Board seat or another proposition where maybe where some of the margins of victory were pretty narrow.

For us, fortunately, you know I think for the board seat in particular, you're talking about a couple of thousand votes just about. So we felt good about that. Short answer, yes, though, yes Dave. There were some that were not signed or sealed, but most people figured it out. Not an ideal way to vote in my opinion -- a very expensive way to vote. But, interestingly representative of our sample that come to vote each year. So we're usually between 60-61% up to 68% in there somewhere. Multiply last year's participants by four or five and we still have that same percentage. It was interesting to see.

David Eaton: So, all in all it worked well.

Sharon Davis: How about across New York State, did most budgets pass?

David Eaton: Ninety-nine percent.

Dory Masefield: That's excellent to hear.

Dr. Leach: I read about Board turnover in New York State and I read about Board turnover in our area. So that was a little more common. But, the actual propositions either bus or budget – they seemed to be successful in terms of the predictable outcome, or the outcome we're used to rather.

Sharon Davis: Now that we've wrapped up the budget, now we can wrap up graduation, and most importantly too is opening up schools in the fall.

Dr. Leach: We're excited for the Class of 2020. There's a lot of emotion that all students around the country, particularly those in the northern states that have the

calendar we have. So, anytime we go out with a communication we recognize that and we learn from it and how to make it more clearer or whatever.

Dr. Leach: But what we've done is, so that the Board is aware, we've added another ceremony. So, in addition to what we promised back in May, and the video that I may, which at that time was well received. We've now added another ceremony. We're going to do a presentation of diplomas, we'll let the Board know when those dates and times are if you can come and attend some of them you're certainly welcome. We'll have approximately 40 students and both of their parents -- and two representatives from their family to attend. We'll have our District Communications team there to pose at the photographer. Then we'll do a live presentation of diplomas for the students, with their caps and gowns on, with the friends they select to be with.

So, virtual ceremony next week the 25th. All right. The following days the presentation of live of the diplomas. And then we're hopeful that we'll do something on a larger scale if permissible. We'll have to see what the regulations are on July 31st or August 1st.

So, there was a little bit of confusion and you know we'll work on communicating more clearly on our end. But, we had sent a survey out earlier in the week and we asked them for really two items. Item one was for the end of June what would you prefer – the presentation of diplomas in groups of 45 with a couple of loved ones with you with your friends, or a larger scale within the guidelines or bumper rails of no more than 150. I think we might have said 100 with no parents, live streamed – no family live streamed. About 85% said we'd rather have the presentation with smaller groups. And the second item now asks them would you be available July 31st or August 1st which a high percentage of kids said yes. Not all – about 10% said no. So we used that feedback from the students and their families to make a slight adjustment in our plan to offer just additional ceremonies. I think that when we sent the survey out it may have concerned people that we were changing our plans but our intention was just simply to guarantee that we could strike while the iron's hot to have some type of live presentation.

But, we really don't know what the future holds. We can assume things will be better at the end of July. We can assume that the guidelines and the regulations will be loosened, but we really don't know that at this time. So, that's why we decided to add that ceremony. A lot of work for our administrative team. We're going to do seven of them, but I think it should go well. It will be well received.

Dr. Leach: All right everyone?

Sharon Davis: Yeah. I hope everyone has a good night.

Lynn Lillian: And congratulations to John and Bob and Dory. Well done.

Dr. Leach: We'll be sending out some thank you's. A lot of people are responsible for the large turnout – to encourage people to vote – whether it was teachers or community members. They really worked hard to make sure people were cognizant of the process and encouraged them to exercise their right. And there's no district in our region that have more people exercise their right than Warwick. So we should be proud of that. I think.

Lynn Lillian: Great job, everybody.

