**SECONDARY SCHOOLS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

February 12, 2015

**Meeting Location**: Fisher Park School Library, 250 Holland Avenue

**Recorded By**: Elaine Vininsky, Secretary

**ATTENDANCE:**

Elaine Vininsky Glebe Collegiate SSC Secretary

Mark Rollins Nepean School Rep

Lorrie Vidalin Merivale School Council Chair

Caroline Peck Canterbury School Rep

Joanna Gacek Colonel By School Rep

Gisele Durocher Lisgar School Rep

Paula Shaver Sir Robert Borden SSC Vice Chair

Ellen Dickson John McCrae OCASC Rep

Nadine Clarke Canterbury Community Rep

Mike Carson OCDSB Chief Financial Officer

ABSENT WITH REGRETS:

Sue Carswell South Carleton SSC Chair

 **MEETING START**

* Meeting Commenced at 7:04 pm
* Ellen Dickson and Caroline Peck approved agenda
* Nadine Clarke and Gisele Durocher passed minutes from the January 8, 2015, meeting.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

SSC members and the guest speaker introduced themselves.

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**FACILITIES AND PLANNING; BRICKS AND MORTAR UPDATE**

Guest Speaker: Mike Carson, Chief Financial Officer, OCDSB

Carson distributed an Oct 31, 2014, elementary and secondary student enrolment report. He noted the shift in kindergarten enrolment -- now 70 per cent of kindergarten students take French immersion. Accordingly, the low number of core English elementary schools may require the Board to congregate them. Turning to the secondary panel, he says new secondary schools are needed in Barrhaven and Riverside South. Enrollment for 2014-2015 is down 300 students, and this lower trend is reflected across the province. Even though some secondary schools are operating at less than 50 per cent capacity (e.g. Hillcrest, Gloucester, Rideau and Merivale), Carson looks to the longer term when he says “The best physical assets are our high schools...I’m reluctant to enter into a discussion about closure…and I’ve been trying to push back with the province.” He says such a decision would depend on the money the Board receives from the province, and a willingness to shift programs. Carson recalls that the last system-wide review, held in 2004, created uncertainty. Parent Lorrie Vidalin said that rumours of a possible closure of Merivale have led parents to choose other high schools. He said that a planned review should help reassure parents.

Carson shifted his talk from enrollment to bricks and mortars. He says the Board needs at least $30 million to keep things going well. Normally, they only receive $12 million, but a new $30 million grant only allows them to breakeven. He noted that the Board is one of the biggest landlords in the city, responsible for 11 million square feet of property, with a total value of $2 billion. Over $3 million is spent on repairs to the exterior of buildings and $2 million on roofs. The Board is 20 per cent in arrears on repairs and furthest behind on windows.

**ROUND TABLE**

Prom Planning Updates

J.R. of Studio 44 is now willing to offer students the opportunity to purchase either a ticket to the dinner and dance or just the after party. The principal of Sir Robert Borden (SRB) plans to meet with Grade 12 parents. Next year, the prom reps will be part of the SRB student council.

Both Merivale and Canterbury principals are more supportive of prom involvement. The Canterbury principal plans to meet with Grade 11 students in May and supports parent discussion for the fall of 2015.

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NEW BUSINESS

Gisele Durocher suggested that the April 9, 2015, meeting deal with fundraising for proms and international field trips, e.g. Italy. Some parents feel these field trips are very expensive. The standardization template for school councils on the Web is a possible topic for the May meeting.

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:10 PM**