The January 14, 2009 meeting of the Williamson Central School District Board of Education opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. Under Announcements, Superintendent Maria Ehresman reviewed a Sunday building use request with the Board.

Under Reports to the Board, Student Representative Jonathan Beiswanger reported that midterms are coming up in two weeks and that the cheerleaders earned first place at the Fairport tournament this weekend. Under Reports from District Administrators, Mrs. Wendy Havens highlighted Mr. Andrew Donovan, second grade teacher, for a recent science lesson that she observed. She noted that there was a high level of student engagement in the science activity and a welcoming learning environment. Miss Anne Ressler reported that the curriculum products that are in use at the elementary level now are very strong and that New York State English Language Arts testing started yesterday. She recognized the many staff members who ensure that all students have an optimal testing situation and the paraprofessionals including the monitors, one to one aides and secretaries who all contribute so much to making the building run. Mrs. Wanda Miller highlighted the 8:1:1 classes at the Middle School for their wonderful winter festival before break and the interest from other districts who would like to send their students to the program. Mr. John Fulmer commented on the fifth grade English Language Arts testing that was completed today and the sixth, seventh and eighth grade testing that will be conducted next week. He also highlighted Mr. Kevin Cavanagh for a recent math lesson that he observed that demonstrated high expectations for the students in a very active lesson and commented on Breakfast with the Stars that was coordinated by Miss Della Ludwig. Students who read independently and completed assignments at home are being recognized at a breakfast. Mr. Doug Lauf commented that students have settled in after a long holiday break and are preparing for midterms. He also reported that Eric Hepler won first place in the district level oratorical competition, the boys’ indoor track team placed third and the girls’ team placed fourteenth at a recent competition and that there was good attendance at a financial planning session for college bound students. He also recognized the cheerleader who came in first place at a recent competition in Fairport. He highlighted Mr. Mark Fiegler who is doing a wonderful job with the new curriculum and software in his DDP classroom. Mr. Mark Schichtel recognized the individuals at the high school who are assisting with planning test schedules and modifications for midterms. He also commented that Wards held a party that Mr. Sherman was invited to attend and the high school received supplies and materials that were being handed out to local area teachers for use in their labs. He also highlighted Mr. Joe Weinschreider and Miss Rosann Barone for their co-taught lesson. He commented on how strong a team they are and how they have worked so hard to positively impact their students. Mr. Gary Barno reported that Excel funding will be coming from the State Education Department in the next few days and that the internal auditors are scheduled to come in and do their annual internal risk assessment. Superintendent Ehresman reported that her recent visit to Albany was interesting and commented on the current budget deficits.

Board Committee Reports included updates from Michael Collins on the Four County School Board By-Laws Committee Meeting and from Superintendent Ehresman on the Master Plan Committee. The results of the recent survey indicated that the small town feel, schools and agriculture were highly ranked in importance to members of the community who completed surveys.

(OVER)
The Board approved a number of CSE cases and reviewed the Treasurer’s Report and Superintendent Ehresman presented an update on the budget. She reviewed elements of the New York State budget that will negatively impact aid to school districts. The Williamson School District receives approximately 52% of its budget from state aid with the rest coming from taxes and other small revenue sources. Last year the District received a 3% increase in base aid while many other districts received much larger increases. This is related in part to the declining enrollment in the District. In the governor’s proposal for next year it appears that the total loss to the District will be $777,291. Traditionally, money is put back in the budget when it is considered by the legislature but there is no guarantee that this will happen. In order to maintain the current level of programming, a 9% increase to the levy would be necessary. Therefore, it will be necessary to cut about $900,000 from the current budget in order to get a reasonable tax rate for the community. Job cuts are likely but it is hopeful that this can occur through attrition. Steps taken to date include: gathering information on dually certified individuals, reviewing class size information, limiting spending to what is absolutely necessary, limiting field trips and conferences, establishing guidelines for grades 7-12 class size to prepare for course registration, not filling vacancies and eliminating the Treasurer’s position. Discussion is occurring about non-mandated programs and services and potential cuts in these areas.

The Board provided direction for the budget planning process. Guidance included keeping K-2 enrollment to 18 or under, cutting items that are the furthest away from students as possible, not running electives with fewer than ten students and work toward a moderate tax rate increase so services for students can be preserved as much as possible.

Stakeholder meetings will be held on the following dates at 6:30 in the District Office: February 25, March 11 and March 25, 2009. Community members are invited to participate in these meetings by signing up at the District Office. In order to register, interested individuals may call 589-9661.

Wendy Havens and Jessica Craft presented the Physical Education Plan to the Board. The plan includes the outline of the Physical Education program requirements and structure and an overview of the athletic program. Under the Consent Agenda, the Board approved the appointments of several substitutes and volunteers, and the following permanent appointments: Amy Burdett, Elementary School Nurse and John Drake, Custodian, Middle School. They also accepted the retirement resignation of Joan Miller, Elementary Teacher, effective June 30, 2009, 33 years of service with regret and best wishes. Mrs. Miller was recognized for her many years of outstanding service to the students in the Williamson Elementary School.

Under Old Business, the Board approved a number of second readings of policies. Under New Business they approved the Williamson Central School District Single Audit Report and the Extra Classroom Activity Funds Audit for the Year Ended June 30, 2008. Mr. Barno recognized Pam Opett, Sheila Stevens and Joanne Greaney for their hard work in enforcing all of the regulations and overseeing the extra classroom activity funds. The Board approved the resolution to rescind the appointment of Kelly Slater as Treasurer and the following appointments:

- Gary Barno, Treasurer
- Maria Ehresman, Purchasing Agent
- Wendy Havens, Records Management Officer
- Kelly Slater, Petty Cash Custodian, Middle School
- Jessica Burggraaff, Petty Cash Custodian, Elementary School

The Board also approved the Williamson French Club Trip to France November 19, 2009 through November 26, 2009 and reviewed upcoming meetings and events.