

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1145 Monday, April 14, 2008

Cafeteria
Davis Hill Elementary School

Committee Members Present:

Margaret Watson, Chair	Julianne Kelley
Robert Carter	Duncan Leith
Colleen Cipro	Judith Newton
Melinda Coyle	John Nunnari
Steven Hammond	Norman Plourde
Robert Imber	Michael Sherman
Mark James	Kathleen Sweeney

Committee Members Absent:

Cynthia Bazinet, Vice-chair	Shirley Conrad
Thomas Ackerman	Joseph Sova
Cynthia Ahearn	Marcie Zaharee

Administration Present:

Thomas G. Pandiscio, Superintendent of Schools
Jack Locke, Deputy Superintendent
Darryll McCall, Interim Director of Operations
Susan Sullivan, Director of Human Resources
Peter Brennan, Business Manager
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

Student Representatives Present:

Hillary Blakeney
Sean Lane
Steven Palombo

Others present, who desired to be recorded as present (see attached Attendance Sheet – attachment 1).

Chair Watson called the regular meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:03 PM.

I. Public Hearing

No members of the public wished to address the School Committee.

II. Secretary's Report

A. Approval of the Annual Budget Hearing Minutes of March 24, 2008

Motion: To approve the minutes of the Annual Budget Hearing held on March 24, 2008.

(J. Nunnari)
(D. Leith)

The minutes of the Annual Budget Hearing held on March 24, 2008 were approved by consensus.

B. Approval of 1144th Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on March 24, 2008

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held March 24, 2008.

(M. Sherman)
(D. Leith)

The minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held March 24, 2008 were approved by consensus.

C. Approval of minutes of the executive session held on March 24, 2008

Chair Watson asked members to review the minutes and if no corrections of substance were noted, these minutes could be approved in public session. If substantive corrections are noted, the minutes would be approved in executive session.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the executive session held March 24, 2008.

(M. Sherman)
(D. Leith)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman

Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

III. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

Chair Watson reminded the Committee that if there were questions regarding the Business Manager's report that Members should contact the Superintendent; if there were questions regarding the Treasurer's Report, Members should contact the Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Watson reminded members that the next meeting, scheduled for Monday, April 28, 2008, will begin with a 6:00 PM tour of the high school facility, to be followed by the regular meeting of the School Committee at 7:00 PM in the Media Center at Wachusett Regional High School.

B. Student Representatives (Hillary Blakeney, Sean Lane, Stephen Palombo)

Student Representative Stephen Palombo reported on recent activities at the high school, including the drama department production *Into the Woods*. He also noted that spring sports are underway.

Member Carter informed the Committee of the success achieved by the two senior student representatives, Sean Lane and Stephen Palombo, when applying to colleges. The Committee gave all three students a round of applause in thanks for their commendable representation of Wachusett students as they sat with the School Committee this year.

C. Management Subcommittee (M. Watson, Chair, D. Leith, Vice-chair, C. Ahearn, C. Bazinet, R. Carter, R. Imber, J. Nunnari, M. Sherman, J. Sova)

1. Draft Policy – DP1432 **Policy Relating to School Committee Operation Reimbursement for Travel Expenses of School Committee Members** – second reading

Motion: To approve the second reading of draft policy DP1432 **Policy Relating to School Committee Operation Reimbursement for Travel Expenses of School Committee Members**, waiving the reading.

(R. Imber)

(M. Coyle)

Vote:

In favor:

Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 13-0-1)

Management Subcommittee Member Nunnari called the Committee's attention to Attachment 14 in the April 10, 2008 Superintendent's Report. This attachment was a proposed revision to School Committee By-Laws. Member Nunnari explained this revision could not be acted upon at this meeting, but could be acted upon at the April 28, 2008 School Committee meeting, as by that time the required 14 day advance notice would be met. Chair Watson pointed out that the proposed revision also refers to the Vice-Chair seat.

- D. Education Subcommittee (C. Bazinet, Chair, S. Hammond, Vice-chair, C. Ahearn, J. Kelley, J. Nunnari, N. Plourde, K. Sweeney, M. Zaharee)

In Education Subcommittee Chair Bazinet's absence, Vice-chair Hammond reported that the subcommittee has not met since the March 24th School Committee meeting and it is not expected to meet again until the new School Committee convenes in May.

- E. Business/Finance Subcommittee (M. Sherman, Chair, S. Conrad, Vice-chair, T. Ackerman, M. Coyle, M. James, J. Newton, J. Sova)

Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair Sherman reported on the April 10th meeting of the Business/Finance Subcommittee, at which time the Superintendent's evaluation was addressed.

Subcommittee Chair Sherman then gave a report on the April 10th meeting of the Business/Finance Subcommittee with the Budget Advisory Task Force. He informed the Committee that it is hoped a compromise can be reached with the Member Towns by reducing Member Town assessments, but not reducing the budget.

Superintendent Pandiscio distributed budget information sheets (Preliminary Municipal Revenue Growth Factors, FY2009, FY09 Proposed Assessments Revenues, Detail for District Revenue, FY09 Proposed Appropriation Expenditures) and gave a detailed explanation of the data (attachments 2, 3, 4, 5). Following the Superintendent's presentation, School Committee members were given the opportunity to ask questions.

Motion: To accept the Superintendent's report on the FY09 budget, as presented.

(D. Leith)
(M. James)

Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair Sherman informed the School Committee that the Business/Finance Subcommittee took no voted position on the \$1 million assessment reduction, but had in fact asked the Superintendent to gather additional information to bring forward. Before the School Committee takes a vote on this assessment reduction, it is hoped the District will hear from the Member Towns that this proposal would be supported by the towns. Chair Watson explained to the Committee that if the motion on the table is approved, she will send letters to the Member Towns seeking their support. It is hoped all five Member Towns will respond by the April 28, 2008 School Committee meeting. Subcommittee Chair Sherman explained the District will be looking for a response, by letter or by email, from the Member Town Finance Committees/Advisory Board of the town's voted position.

Chair Watson publicly congratulated the Superintendent and the Business Manager for all they have done to work with the towns in an attempt to reach a compromise.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson

Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Subcommittee Chair Sherman reminded the members of the full Committee that at least 14 votes in favor will be needed on April 28th to pass an amended appropriation.

8:02 PM Member Coyle left the table.

- F. Community Outreach Subcommittee (K. Sweeney, Chair, N. Plourde, Vice-chair, C. Cipro, M. Coyle, M. James)

Subcommittee Chair Sweeney gave a brief review of the subcommittee's last meeting.

1. Amended Policy – AP8211 **Policy Relating to Communication/Public Relations Organization and Function of School Councils** – first reading

8:04 PM Member Coyle returned to the table.

Motion: To approve the first reading of amended policy AP8211 **Communication/Public Relations Organization and Function of School Councils**, waiving the reading.

(R. Imber)
(M. Coyle)

Subcommittee Chair Sweeney explained the one recommended amendment to the policy.

Vote:
In favor:

Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:
None

Abstained:
Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 13-0-1)

Subcommittee Chair Sweeney announced the next scheduled meeting is April 17th, but would consider rescheduling/canceling as that is the same evening as the meeting of the Regional Selectboard and there may be members who would be attending that meeting. She will poll Community Outreach members and will post a meeting, if warranted.

H. Audit Advisory Board (S. Conrad, Chair, J. Newton, Vice-chair, School Committee Representatives)

In AAB Chair Conrad's absence, Vice-chair Newton reported on the April 10, 2008 meeting of the Audit Advisory Board.

1. To accept the End-of-Year Report, for the Year Ended June 30, 2007, prepared by District Auditors Powers & Sullivan

Motion: To accept the End-of-Year Report, for the Year Ended June 30, 2007, prepared by District Auditors Powers & Sullivan.

(J. Newton)

(M. Sherman)

Vote:

In favor:

Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber

Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:
None

Abstained:
Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 13-0-1)

I. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

1. Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Study Possible Academic Disparity Among the Schools in the Wachusett District (S. Hammond, Chair, R. Imber, Vice-chair, M. Coyle, M. James, J. Nunnari, K. Sweeney)

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Hammond gave an overview of what information the subcommittee has gathered and reviewed to date. He went on to explain that the members of that subcommittee do not feel they have completed the charge and will not be ready to give a final report to the full School Committee by the April 28, 2008 School Committee meeting.

Motion: To extend the April 28, 2008 deadline for the final report to the School Committee by the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Study Possible Academic Disparity Among the Schools in the Wachusett District and to recommend to the 2008-2009 School Committee that the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Study Possible Academic Disparity Among the Schools in the Wachusett District be reconstituted in order to continue the work of this ad hoc subcommittee.

(S. Hammond)
(M. Coyle)

Vote:

In favor:

Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber

Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:
None

Abstained:
Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 13-0-1)

Chair Watson thanked the members of the ad hoc subcommittee for the effort expended on this mission.

J. Building Committee

1. High School

High School Building Committee Chair Leith made note of parents of members of the high school baseball team who were sitting in the audience and spoke to a letter received from one of the parents with regard to the condition of the baseball field. Member Leith acknowledged the field is not complete at this time, but did note that much progress has been made in the past week. He also acknowledged it is unlikely the dugouts will be ready for this season. Member Leith was sympathetic to the baseball team, and pointed out that many sports teams have been displaced by the high school construction project. When asked about project notes prepared by Huntress Associates, dated April 1, 2008, Member Leith offered to forward a copy to the Central Office for inclusion in the next Superintendent's Report. Superintendent Pandiscio also reported on recent construction activities at the high school.

J. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (J. Nunnari), Chocksett Middle School (J. Sova), Davis Hill Elementary School (C. Bazinet), Dawson Elementary School (M. James), Glenwood Elementary School (J. Kelley), Houghton Elementary School (N. Plourde), Mayo Elementary School (S. Hammond), Mountview Middle School (M. Sherman), Naquag Elementary School (C. Cipro), Paxton Center School (C. Ahearn), Thomas Prince School (R. Imber/K. Sweeney), Wachusett

Regional High School (D. Leith), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (M. Zaharee)

Member Nunnari reported on the April 9, 2008 meeting of the Central Tree Middle School School Council.

8:30 PM Superintendent Pandiscio left the table.

8:35 PM Member Sweeney left the table.

8:36 PM Superintendent Pandiscio returned to the table.

VI. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

School Committee members had questions about matters referred to in Deputy Superintendent Jack Locke's report and Interim Director of Operations Darryll McCall's report. Questions were answered satisfactorily.

8:38 PM Member Sweeney returned to the table.

Member Imber asked the status of the Model U.N. program at the high school. Mr. Locke reported this program is back in action, with one more trip, to New York, being contemplated for this year.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

1. Approval to extend the contract with Strekalovsky Hoit Raymond, dated December 30, 2002 and revised September 20, 2006, April 26, 2007 and June 22, 2007, for services to be rendered in connection with the High School Addition and Renovation Project, to be paid on an hourly basis at SHR's normal, billable rate.

Motion: To extend the contract with Strekalovsky Hoit Raymond, dated December 30, 2002 and revised September 20, 2006, April 26, 2007 and June 22, 2007, for services to be rendered in connection with the High School Addition and Renovation Project, to be paid on an hourly basis at SHR's normal, billable rate.

(D. Leith)
(M. Coyle)

Superintendent Pandiscio explained to the Committee this vote is similar to the vote taken at the March 24, 2008 School Committee meeting extending the contract of URS. When

asked for the background of this architectural firm, Superintendent Pandiscio gave history of the firm and also reported on current services being provided for the high school project.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

VII. Public Hearing

Chair Watson read Guidelines to the Public Hearing.

Maureen Floryan, Holden, addressed the School Committee, commending the high school drama department and all involved in the recent production *Into the Woods*, which she described as “spectacular.”

VIII. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business brought before the Committee.

IX. New Business

There was no new business brought before the Committee.

X. Executive Session for the Purpose of Union Negotiations, Not to Return to Public Session

Motion: To adjourn to executive session for the purpose of union negotiations, not to return to public session.

(M. Coyle)
(J. Nunnari)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

XI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas G. Pandiscio, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools