

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1152 Tuesday, October 14, 2008

Cafeteria
Davis Hill Elementary School

Committee Members Present:

Margaret Watson, Chair	Robert Imber
John Nunnari, Vice-chair	Stacey Jackson
Cynthia Bazinet	Mark James
Robert Carter	Duncan Leith
Colleen Cipro	Robert Pelczarski
Shirley Conrad	Norman Plourde
Melinda Coyle	Michael Sherman
Steven Hammond	Joseph Sova

Committee Members Absent:

Thomas Ackerman	Marcie Zaharee
Michael Pantos	

Administration Present:

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

Student Representatives Present:

Greg Savageau

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

Chair Watson read Guidelines to the Public Hearing.

Chad Lorion, The Master's Christian Academy, read a prepared statement (attachment 2).

II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of 1151st Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on September 8, 2008

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held September 8, 2008.

(S. Conrad)
(S. Hammond)

The minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held September 8, 2008 were approved by consensus, with Member Sherman abstaining.

- B. Approval of the Executive Session Minutes (Part I) of the Wachusett Regional District School Committee held on September 8, 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, part I, held September 8, 2008.

(J. Sova)
(D. Leith)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Norman Plourde
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Robert Pelczarski
Michael Sherman

(Motion passed 14-0-2)

- C. Approval of the Executive Session Minutes (Part II) of the Wachusett Regional District School Committee held on September 8, 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, part II, held September 8 2008, not to be released.

(D. Leith)

(S. Conrad)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Stacey Jackson
Michael Sherman

(Motion passed 14-0-2)

- D. Approval of the 282nd Special Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional District School Committee held on September 29, 2008

Motion: To approve the minutes of the 282nd Special Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional District School Committee held on September 29, 2008.

(J. Sova)

(M. Coyle)

The minutes of the special School Committee meeting held September 29, 2008 were approved by consensus, with Member Pelczarski abstaining.

E. Approval of the Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional District School Committee held on September 29, 2008

Chair Watson asked members to defer action on approval of these minutes until executive session, at the conclusion of this regular meeting.

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 introduced Carol Sullivan, WRHS Science Department Head and Science Seminar Advisor. Ms. Sullivan spoke of the Joe Berg Science Seminar, which was founded 50 years ago. This milestone will be recognized on January 10, 2009 and Ms. Sullivan extended an invitation to the School Committee to attend the celebration, which will include dinner (attending individuals responsible for cost of dinner), tours and speeches. The keynote speaker will be Nobel Prize winner Craig Mello. Members who are interested in attending can email Ms. Sullivan and she will add their name(s) to the list of attendees.

Chair Watson thanked Ms. Sullivan for addressing the School Committee

Chair Watson has appointed Member Carter as the official delegate to the November 2008 MASC/MASS Joint Conference, with Member Coyle being the alternate. If there are other members interested in attending the Joint Conference, Chair Watson asked they speak with her.

Chair Watson reported on the October 7, 2008 Massachusetts Association of School Committees Advocacy Committee meeting, which she attended with Business Manager Peter Brennan. Chair Watson read a prepared statement (attachment 3).

B. Student Representatives

Greg Savageau reported that the week of October 6th was Homecoming Week at the high school. He reported on the various events and activities that took place during the week, ending with the Homecoming Dance on Saturday, October 11th, which approximately 1,000 students attended. Mr. Savageau reported that the building is beginning to feel complete, to the point where pictures are being hung on the walls, etc. Many new clubs have been formed this year. The upcoming election is a hot topic among students and staff. On Saturday, October 18th, PSATs will be administered at WRHS. Mr. Savageau concluded his report with the comment that the newly instituted travel policy has been implemented.

C. Management Subcommittee (M. Watson, Chair, J. Nunnari, Vice-chair, C. Bazinet, M. Coyle, R. Imber, D. Leith, M. Pantos, N. Plourde, M. Sherman)

Chair Watson reported on the Management Subcommittee meeting of September 22nd. She called the Committee's attention to Attachments 10 and 11 of the October 9th Superintendent's Report (Superintendent's Evaluation instrument and Policy 1312). She informed the Committee that the Superintendent's Evaluation instrument will be on the agenda for the October 27, 2008 School Committee, so she asked all School Committee members to review the document in advance of October 27th and to contact her or a member of the Management Subcommittee with comments and/or concerns.

D. Education Subcommittee (C. Bazinet, Chair, S. Hammond, Vice-chair, R. Imber, S. Jackson, J. Nunnari, R. Pelczarski, M. Zaharee)

Subcommittee Chair Bazinet informed the Committee that quorum was not achieved for the September 17th Education Subcommittee meeting. The Subcommittee will meet next on October 22nd.

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

Business/Finance Vice-chair Conrad reported on the September 11th meeting of the Business/Finance Subcommittee. At that meeting, the Business/Finance Subcommittee approved the reduction of debt assessment to the Member Towns, and approved goals submitted by Business Manager Peter Brennan. Both items to be acted on by the full Committee later in this meeting. The Business/Finance Subcommittee will meet on October 22nd.

F. Community Outreach Subcommittee (C. Cipro, Chair, R. Pelczarski, Vice-chair, R. Carter, N. Plourde)

The Community Outreach Subcommittee has not met since the last School Committee meeting. Community Outreach Subcommittee Chair Cipro reported that subcommittee members have attended/will attend meetings of the Member Town Selectboards. She also noted that an article in *The Landmark* mentioned that Community Outreach “office hours” would be monthly, when in fact these “office hours” will be held semi-annually. The next meeting of the subcommittee is October 27th, immediately before the School Committee meeting.

G. Audit Advisory Board (S. Conrad, J. Sova)

Audit Advisory Board Chair Conrad reported that the AAB has not met since the last School Committee meeting, but will schedule a meeting upon receipt of the report from the auditors.

H. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

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

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Hammond reported on the meeting held October 6th and announced the next meeting is scheduled for October 20th. He informed the Committee that it is still the intent of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to complete their charge in time for the December 8th meeting of the full School Committee.

2. Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Negotiate the Superintendent’s Contract (C. Bazinet, Chair, T. Ackerman, D. Leith, J. Nunnari, N. Plourde)

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Bazinet deferred reporting until executive session.

I. Building Committee

1. High School

High School Building Committee Chair Leith spoke of the September 21st Ribbon Cutting ceremony at the high school. He reported on a recent odor problem being dealt with at the high school, on the hillside rip rap issues still being addressed. Building Committee Chair Leith updated the Committee on progress being made on the construction of baseball and softball dugouts. The Building Committee will meet on October 29th.

For the record, Building Committee Chair wished to publicly thank members of the High School Building Committee for the many hours of time and attention given this project:

Jack Brennan, Rutland
Catherine Collins, Sterling
Kelly Maxwell, Holden
Maria Millett, Princeton
Ralph Rondinone, Sterling
Emerson Wheeler, Paxton
David White, Holden

Superintendent Pandiscio will give a litigation update in executive session. He added additional details to Building Committee Chair Leith's report, commenting on the failed rip rap. He told the Committee of a drainage problem, the status of the security doors. Superintendent let the Committee know he feels work on the punchlist is progressing very well. Members were given the opportunity to ask questions about the status of the project, but no questions were asked.

J. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (M. Pantos), Chocksett Middle School (J. Sova), Davis Hill Elementary School (R. Carter), Dawson Elementary School (M. James), Glenwood Elementary School (J. Nunnari), Houghton Elementary School (S. Conrad), Mayo Elementary School (S. Hammond), Mountview Middle School (C. Bazinet), Naquag Elementary School (C. Cipro), Paxton Center School (R. Pelczarski), Thomas Prince School (R. Imber), Wachusett Regional High School (D. Leith), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (S. Jackson)

Chair Watson called the Committee's attention to Attachment 15 of the Superintendent's Report - *Nutrition and Wellness Policy* (P6618). Chair Watson asked School Council liaisons to bring this policy to the attention of their School Council and to remind the School Councils that School Committee policies need to be followed.

School Council reports were given by:

Member Carter – Davis Hill
Member Hammond – Mayo
Member Jackson – SEPAC

Member Leith reported the WRHS School Council meeting conflicted with this School Committee meeting, but he will plan to attend the November School Council meeting.

Member Pelczarski reported the Paxton Center School School Council meeting is scheduled for October 15th.

Member Cipro - Naquag

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Member Carter wanted to point out his opinion that Superintendent Pandiscio has been transparent when dealing with/discussing the District's budget with Member Towns.

General discussion of the Superintendent's Report ensued.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

1. To approve the FY09 Amended Appropriation

Motion: To approve the FY09 Proposed Appropriation, dated 10/14/08, as presented (attachment 4).

(M. Sherman)

(M. Coyle)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

2. To approve the Maintenance Agreement with the Town of Sterling, as presented.

Motion: To approve the Maintenance Agreement with the Town of Sterling, as presented.

(N. Plourde)

(J. Sova)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

3. To authorize Deputy Superintendent John Locke be compensated for accrued sick leave for the buyback under his Principal's contract.

Motion: That Mr. John Locke be compensated for accrued sick leave in the amount of \$5,625 (75 days@ \$75/day) to be paid in a lump sum for the buyback under his Principal's contract.

(R. Imber)

(M. Coyle)

Superintendent Pandiscio explained to the Committee that all buyback language has been removed from current contracts, **with the exception of** Mr. Locke's current contract as Deputy Superintendent, which does include sick leave buyback language. Superintendent Pandiscio brought this to the Committee's attention because in the future, when Mr. Locke does retire, he will be entitled to receive sick leave buyback under his Deputy Superintendent's contract. The motion on the

floor is to compensate Mr. Locke for accrued sick leave under his former Principal's contract.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

4. To approve the request of Master's Christian Academy to operate a private school in Princeton

Motion: To approve the operation of The Master's Christian Academy, a private school operating in the Town of Princeton.

(R. Pelczarski)
(J. Sova)

Superintendent Pandiscio spoke to this motion, calling the Committee's attention to Attachment 13 of his October 9th Report, which includes a sheet of *Frequently Asked Questions and Answers*. Discussion around the table ensued.

Motion: To move the question.

(R. Carter)
(N. Plourde)

Chair Watson did not wish to recognize this motion, as discussion of the main motion was still in process. *Robert's Rules of Order* was referenced, because some Members were

of the opinion that the Committee should immediately vote on the motion to move the question. Following discussion, Superintendent Pandiscio offered the compromise to research this meeting rule and report back to the School Committee, but to have the Committee take a vote on the motion to move the question, and then to take a vote on the main motion on the floor.

Roll call vote to move the question:

In favor:

John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

Margaret Watson
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber

Abstained:

Colleen Cipro

(Motion passed 11-4-1)

Vote on main motion:

In favor:

John Nunnari
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
Steven Hammond

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 13-2-1)

8:45 PM Member Pelczarski left the table.

5. To approve the DRAFT 2009 School Committee Meeting Schedule

Upon review of the DRAFT schedule, it was suggested that the July and August 2009 meetings be planned a week later (July 20, 2009 and August 17, 2009). This suggestion was agreed to.

8:47 PM Member Pelczarski returned to the table.

Motion: To approve the 2009 School Committee meeting schedule, as amended.

(S. Conrad)
(J. Sova)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The location of School Committee meetings brought about discussion. The pros and cons of meeting at Davis Hill (or similar school in the District) vs. meeting at Wachusett Regional High School were debated.

Motion: Beginning in January 2009, meetings of the School Committee will be held at the Wachusett Regional High School.

(J. Nunnari)

(S. Conrad)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Nunnari
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Sherman

Opposed:

Margaret Watson
Cynthia Bazinet
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Joseph Sova

(Motion passed 9-7)

6. The approve the Business Manager's Goals 2008 - 2009

Motion: To adopt the 2008-2009 goals of Business Manager Peter Brennan, as presented.

(S. Conrad)

(D. Leith)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet

Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

VI. Public Hearing

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

VII. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business brought before the School Committee.

8:55 PM Student Representative Greg Savageau left the meeting.

VIII. New Business

Member Plourde read a prepared statement (attachment 5).

Motion: That the Wachusett Regional District School Committee oppose Question 1, a ballot initiative that would eliminate the state income tax. Passage of Question 1 would cut the state budget by 40%, cause massive reductions in local aid to cities and towns, and result in drastic reductions in school programs. The Committee urges the residents of Holden, Paxton, Rutland, Princeton and Sterling to vote NO on this ballot question.

(N. Plourde)
(D. Leith)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter

Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

IX. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn to executive session for the purpose of union and non-union negotiations and pending litigation, not to return to public session

(M. James)

(M. Coyle)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP:rlp