

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1229 Monday, January 14, 2013

Media Center
Wachusett Regional High School

Committee Members Present:

Duncan Leith, Chair	Sarah LaMountain
Cynthia Bazinet	James Mason
William Clute	Kenneth Mills
Steven Hammond	Robert Pelczarski
Lance Harris	Norman Plourde
Robert Imber	Robert Remillard
Stacey Jackson	Erik Scheinfeldt
Julianne Kelley	Athas Tsongalis
Deidre Kosky	Margaret Watson

Committee Members Absent:

Colleen Cipro, Vice-chair	Michelle Sciabarrasi
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Administration Present:

Anthony Gasbarro, Interim Superintendent
Kelley Gangi, Director of Curriculum
Darryll McCall, Director of Operations
Joseph Scanlon, Director of Business and Finance
Susan Sullivan, Director of Human Resources
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

Student Representatives Present:

Emily Tomczyk

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

Chair Leith called the meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:10 PM. Chair Leith welcomed Interim Superintendent Gasbarro to the table. Chair Leith welcomed Director of Business and Finance Scanlon to the meeting. Chair Leith asked that Member Hammond serve as Vice-chair in Vice-chair Cipro's absence. Chair Leith has been approached by some viewers who have expressed complaints that at times it is difficult to hear discussions at School Committee meetings when watching the meeting on cable networks. Chair Leith asked members to speak loudly and clearly.

I. Public Hearing

There were no members of the public who wished to address the School Committee.

II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of 1228th Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on December 10, 2012

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the School Committee held on December 10, 2012.

(E. Scheinfeldt)
(R. Imber)

The minutes of the regular meeting of the School Committee held December 10, 2012 were approved, by consensus, with Members Harris, LaMountain, and Tsongalis abstaining.

- B. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on December 10, 2012

Motion: To approve the minutes of the executive session held on December 10, 2012.

(K. Mills)
(S. Hammond)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Cynthia Bazinet
William Clute
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Deidre Kosky
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Lance Harris
Sarah LaMountain
Athas Tsongalis

Motion passed 15-0-3.

III. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

Chair Leith reminded the Committee that if there are questions regarding the report of the Director of Business and Finance, members should contact the Interim Superintendent; if there are questions regarding the Treasurer's Report, members should contact the Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Leith thanked members for their hard work during the past few very busy months. Chair Leith asked for members to "live by the golden rule" – members of the School Committee can disagree, but should always be respectful of one another and work in a collegial manner.

B. Student Representatives

Emily Tomczyk briefly reported that high school students will be taking finals January 22 – 25. She took a moment to express gratitude to the WRHS Guidance Department for all the support that is provided seniors during their last year as high school students.

C. Management Subcommittee (D. Leith, Chair, C. Cipro, Vice-chair, C. Bazinet, S. Hammond, R. Imber, N. Plourde, R. Remillard, M. Sciabarrasi, M. Watson)

Chair Leith expects to schedule a meeting of the Management Subcommittee within the next two weeks.

Motion: To approve the second reading of DP5271 **Policy Relating to Personnel Management Health Insurance – Surviving Spouse.**

(N. Plourde)

(M. Watson)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet
William Clute
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Deidre Kosky

Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

Abstained:
Duncan Leith

Motion passed 17-0-1.

- D. Education Subcommittee (S. Hammond, Chair, N. Plourde, Vice-chair, C. Bazinet, L. Harris, R. Imber, K. Mills, R. Pelczarski, M. Watson)

Subcommittee Chair Hammond reported the Education Subcommittee had not met since the last School Committee meeting, but has a meeting posted for February 4, 2013.

- E. Business/Finance Subcommittee (R. Remillard, Chair, E. Scheinfeldt, Vice-chair, W. Clute, L. Harris, J. Kelley, S. LaMountain, D. Leith, J. Mason, M. Sciabarrasi)

Subcommittee Chair Remillard reported this subcommittee had convened just before this School Committee meeting and three school principals addressed the subcommittee and showed PowerPoint presentations (attachments 2, 3, 4, 5). Presentations were made by Anthony Cipro, Houghton Elementary School/Chocksett Middle School; Kathleen McCollum, Paxton Center School; William Beando, Wachusett Regional High School. Subcommittee Chair Remillard reported on the January 7, 2013 meeting of this subcommittee. Subcommittee Chair Remillard reported that a motion is being brought forward from the Business/Finance Subcommittee to the full School Committee. He further reported that the Business/Finance Subcommittee's action on the motion that will be brought forward passed by a 5-1 vote.

Motion: To suspend the development of the RFP for Forensic Audit Services and to recommend the full School Committee not pursue a forensic audit at this time.

(J. Mason)
(A. Tsongalis)

Much discussion ensued, with many members of the School Committee participating in the discussions.

7:44 PM Municipal Representative Robert Lavigne joined the meeting.

Member Remillard read a prepared statement (attachment 6). Member Harris read a prepared statement (attachment 7).

More discussion took place.

Interim Superintendent Gasbarro informed the School Committee that MUNIS documents requested by the Holden Selectboard had been downloaded onto a flash drive and were delivered to the Holden Town Hall following the January 7, 2013 meeting of the Business/Finance Subcommittee. Member Imber asked that Director of Business and Finance do some investigation into circumstances that lead to the fiscal problem the District finds itself in and for Director Scanlon to provide a report to the School Committee by the February 11, 2013 regular meeting. Lengthy discussion continued.

Chair Leith re-read the motion on the floor.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Cynthia Bazinet
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Erik Scheinfeldt
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

William Clute
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Deidre Kosky
Kenneth Mills
Robert Remillard

Motion passed 12-6.

Member Harris reported that the Business/Finance Subcommittee had taken a vote at the January 7, 2013 meeting to authorize the Superintendent to release one electronic copy of the MUNIS documentation for fiscal year 2012 to the Holden Selectboard and/or other Member Town Selectboards upon request. Member Harris' question was if action by the full School Committee is needed on this matter. Discussion ensued. Chair Leith suggested possible language for a future motion (*to support the Interim Superintendent providing to the Holden Selectboard the requested MUNIS documents, on a flash drive, and to provide the other Member Towns the same documentation on a flash drive, upon request*). Discussion continued.

Motion: To support the Superintendent in his release of one electronic copy of MUNIS documentation for FY12 to the Holden Board of Selectmen and/or to other Member Town Selectboards upon request.

(L. Harris)

(E. Scheinfeldt)

8:15 PM Student Representative Emily Tomczyk left the meeting.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Cynthia Bazinet
William Clute
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Deidre Kosky
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

Motion passed unanimously.

- F. Community Outreach Subcommittee (S. Jackson, Chair, M. Sciabarrasi, Vice-chair, L. Harris, J. Kelley, J. Mason, K. Mills, A. Tsongalis, M. Watson)

Community Outreach Subcommittee Chair Jackson reported this subcommittee will meet next on January 16th, in the Chocksett Middle School library in Sterling.

- G. Audit Advisory Board (J. Mason, R. Remillard)

No report was made.

8:18 PM Member Scheinfeldt left the table.

- H. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

1. Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement (J. Kelley, Chair, W. Clute, S. Hammond, R. Imber, N. Plourde)

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Kelley reported that two public hearings have been held, in Sterling and in Holden, and she and Member Imber had attended a “pre-public hearing” meeting in Princeton on this date to answer questions the Princeton Selectboard had. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Kelley reported that Holden census numbers are increasing, which will result in the need to increase the size of the School Committee. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Kelley reported that notice should be sent from the Chair to the Member Towns notifying the towns of the need to increase the membership of the School Committee.

8:20 PM Member Scheinfeldt returned to the table.

Discussion ensued.

8:22 PM Member LaMountain left the table.

Chair Leith recommended getting a legal opinion to keep the size of the WRSDC at 20 for the coming year, with weighted voting for one year. Member Hammond, who is a member of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement, spoke to the census issue. Chair Leith will contact District Counsel to seek a legal opinion, which will be included in the Superintendent’s Report upon receipt.

8:25 PM Member LaMountain returned to the table.

2. Ad Hoc Subcommittee – Superintendent Search (S. Hammond, Chair, N. Plourde, Vice-chair, C. Bazinet, C. Cipro, R. Imber, D. Leith, R. Pelczarski, R. Remillard, M. Sciabarrasi, M. Watson)

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Hammond gave a status report on the Superintendent Search. The next meeting of this ad hoc subcommittee will be scheduled in the near future.

8:27 PM Member Clute left the table.

I. Building Committees

1. Mountview Building Committee (M. Watson)

Member Watson reported on the January 8, 2013 meeting of the Mountview Building Committee. Interim Superintendent Gasbarro has been officially appointed to the Mountview Building Committee.

2. Green Repair School Building Committee (D. Leith)

Chair Leith had nothing to report at this time.

J. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (A. Tsongalis), Chocksett Middle School (S. LaMountain), Davis Hill Elementary School (S. Jackson, K. Mills), Dawson Elementary School (D. Kosky), Glenwood Elementary School (J. Kelley), Houghton Elementary School (L. Harris/N. Plourde), Mayo Elementary School (M. Watson), Mountview Middle School (S. Hammond/E. Scheinfeldt), Naquag Elementary School (C. Cipro), Paxton Center School (W. Clute/R. Pelczarski), Thomas Prince School (R. Imber/M. Sciabarrasi), Wachusett Regional High School (C. Bazinet/M. Sciabarrasi/A. Tsongalis), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (S. Jackson), Early Childhood Center (J. Mason)

Member Jackson – SEPAC workshop, *Getting Organized*, to be held January 17, 2013 at Davis Hill Elementary School

Members Jackson and Mills – Davis Hill Elementary School, January 9, 2013

Member Harris – Houghton Elementary School, January 8, 2013

Member LaMountain – Chocksett Middle School, December 18, 2012 and January 22, 2013

Member Pelczarski – Paxton Center School

Member Kosky – Dawson Elementary School, December 11, 2012

8:35 PM Member Clute returned to the table.

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Upon inquiry, Director of Curriculum Gangi explained the offerings of the middle school Math Academy.

8:37 PM Member Harris left the table.

At Member Kelley's inquiry, Director Gangi spoke about the WREA Curriculum team, which will hold its first meeting of this school year on January 23rd.

8:40 PM Member Harris returned to the table.

Attorney McCabe's opinion about charging student fees for academic or elective courses for credit had been included in the January 11, 2013 Superintendent's Report. There was discussion about charging such fees.

Motion: Discontinue charging fees for required or elective courses for credit.
(J. Kelley)
(M. Watson)

A friendly amendment was made by Member Imber, accepted by the maker and seconder of the motion, that discontinuing charging fees begin with the start of the second semester.

Motion: Starting with the second semester of the 2012-2013 school year, discontinue charging fees for required or elective courses for credit.
(J. Kelley)
(M. Watson)

Member Watson asked that District administration investigate and report back to the School Committee when and how charging fees for academic courses came to be. Member Watson suggests that restitution be made to those parents and students who have paid these fees. Member Watson also suggested this matter be referred to the Education Subcommittee for policy development. Following discussion about refunding of fees, it was decided that District administration would investigate this matter and Interim Superintendent Gasbarro would report back to the School Committee the results of the investigation. Education Subcommittee Chair Hammond questioned the need for a School Committee policy when there is current state law about charging fees for courses.

The motion was re-read.

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Cynthia Bazinet
William Clute
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Deidre Kosky
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

Motion passed unanimously.

Member Harris asked what, if anything, had been decided/determined at a recent Staff meeting about proposed 9C cuts. Interim Superintendent Gasbarro confirmed these proposed cuts had been discussed, the District will be impacted, but to what degree is not yet known. The District will hold off any action until more specifics are known.

8:50 PM Member Kosky left the meeting.

General discussion about other items in the Superintendent's Report took place.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

Motion: To approve the School Calendar for School Year 2013-2014
(S. Hammond)
(C. Bazinet)

Member Harris reported he has been approached by Sterling residents about the possibility of having schools closed on state and/or local election days due

to some schools in the District being used as polling locations. Interim Superintendent Gasbarro's opinion would be to ramp up security when schools are used for local and state elections, rather than closing schools in May, when Member Town elections take place. Since four of the five Member Towns hold local elections on one date, and the fifth Member Town holds local elections on a different date, two "no school days" would be required to cover this request. The number of professional development half days was discussed, with some members voicing their wish to have less than eight half days for professional development. Discussion ensued.

Motion: To table action on voting acceptance of the 2013-2014 school calendar, to a time certain (January 28, 2013 School Committee meeting), and to direct the Interim Superintendent to investigate other possible options (i.e. reducing the number of professional development half days, school closings on May local election days, and other options District administration may offer).

(L. Harris)
(A. Tsongalis)

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Cynthia Bazinet
William Clute
Lance Harris
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

Steven Hammond
Robert Imber

Motion passed 15-2.

Motion: To approve the appropriation of Massachusetts School Building Authority funds in the amount of \$1,034,230 to the Town of Sterling for reimbursement for Houghton Elementary and Chocksett Middle Schools

(L. Harris)

(S. Hammond)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Cynthia Bazinet
William Clute
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: To approve the appropriation of Massachusetts School Building Authority funds in the amount of \$112,112 to the Town of Holden for reimbursement for Mountview Middle School

(M. Watson)

(S. Hammond)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Cynthia Bazinet
William Clute
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde

Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: To appoint Anthony Gasbarro, Interim Superintendent of Schools, to serve on the FLLAC Educational Collaborative Board of Directors

(J. Mason)
(A. Tsongalis)

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Cynthia Bazinet
William Clute
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

Motion passed unanimously.

9:25 PM Member Tsongalis left the table.

VI. Public Hearing

Lisa Call, Sterling, addressed the School Committee.

Robert Lavigne, Holden, addressed the School Committee as a Holden resident, not as a member of the Holden Selectboard.

9:35 PM Member Tsongalis returned to the table.

VII. Unfinished business

There was no unfinished business brought before the School Committee.

VIII. New Business

Motion: That a paper version of a student's report card shall be sent home with each student each quarter. The exception will be for those students that a parent and teacher conference is held, such as grade one and kindergarten (first quarter).

This motion was withdrawn by Member Pelczarski.

At Member Watson's inquiry, Interim Superintendent Gasbarro reported on recent repairs to the Davis Hill Elementary School roof and that replacement exterior lighting has been ordered for Davis Hill Elementary School.

Member Kelley asked that WRHS Principal Beando's revenue producing suggestion, included in his PowerPoint to the Business/Finance Subcommittee (investigation/implementation of an evening adult education program), be referred to the Education Subcommittee, and that WRHS Principal Beando's suggestion to investigate an external alternative education program be referred to the Business/Finance Subcommittee.

Member Harris asked that the following motion be included on the agenda for the January 28, 2013 School Committee meeting: Each school principal shall perform a safety audit and report the findings to the School Committee by February 25, 2013.

Members were informed the Annual School Committee Retreat will be held Saturday, February 9, 2013, from 9:00 – 12 noon, in the Media Center at Wachusett Regional High School.

IX. Executive Session

Motion: To adjourn to executive session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with union personnel and negotiations with non-union personnel, not to return to public session.

(R. Imber)
(J. Mason)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith

Cynthia Bazinet
William Clute
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

Motion passed unanimously.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony A. Gasbarro
Interim Superintendent