

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1245 Monday, November 25, 2013

Media Center
Wachusett Regional High School

Committee Members Present:

Lance Harris, Chair	Matthew Lindberg
Robert Pelczarski, Vice-chair	James Mason
Scott Brown	Robert McCarthy
Lisa Call	Kenneth Mills
William Clute (7:28 PM)	Robert Remillard
Thomas Curran	Erik Scheinfeldt
Robert Imber	Christina Smith (7:05 PM)
Deidre Kosky	Margaret Watson
Sarah LaMountain	Charles Witkes

Committee Members Absent:

Matthew Ehrenworth	Julianne Kelley
Stacey Jackson	Tiffany Ralli

Administration Present:

Anthony Gasbarro, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Jeffrey Carlson, Director of Human Resources
Darryll McCall, Deputy Superintendent
Joseph Scanlon, Director of Business and Finance
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

Student Representatives Present:

Nate Birnbaum

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

Chair Harris called the meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:02 PM. Chair Harris announced the meeting was not being taped live.

I. Public Hearing

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

II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of 1244th Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on November 12, 2013

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the School Committee held on November 12, 2013.

(K. Mills)
(S. Brown)

The minutes of the regular meeting of the School Committee held November 12, 2013 were approved, by consensus, with Members Kosky and Pelczarski abstaining.

B. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on November 12, 2013

Motion: To approve the Executive Session Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on November 12, 2013, not to be released.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Scott Brown
Thomas Curran
Robert Imber
Sarah LaMountain
Matthew Lindberg
James Mason
Robert McCarthy
Kenneth Mills
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Margaret Watson
Charles Witkes

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Lance Harris
Robert Pelczarski
Lisa Call
Deidre Kosky

Motion passed 12-0-4.

7:05 PM Member Smith joined the meeting.

III. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

Chair Harris 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 Harris introduced Glenwood Elementary School Principal Siobhan Dennis. Principal Dennis introduced Glenwood Assistant Principal Karen Cappucci and Glenwood teachers Paula Atlas and Michael Lague. Principal Dennis' presentation to the School Committee focused on Math and the Common Core (attachment 2).

7:28 PM Member Clute joined the meeting.

At the conclusion of Principal Dennis' presentation, members were given the opportunity ask questions. At the conclusion of the question and answer session, Chair Harris thanked Principal Dennis and the other Glenwood staff members for attending the meeting.

B. Student Representatives

Student Representative Nate Birnbaum reported the talent show presented by WRHS students on November 22nd was a huge success. He further reported that the cost and size of school lunches has been brought to his attention. He explained he has discussed these concerns with the high school's Food Service Manager, who has explained school lunches are regulated by the state. Mr. Birnbaum told that he has received an email about the high school mascot holding a gun and that he and Student Representative Jon O'Brian plan to follow-up on the concern expressed in the email.

C. Management Subcommittee (L. Harris, Chair, R. Pelczarski, Vice-chair, R. Imber, S. Jackson, J. Mason, K. Mills, E. Scheinfeldt, M. Watson)

Management Subcommittee Chair Harris reported this subcommittee has not met since the last School Committee meeting, but he plans to schedule a brief meeting on Tuesday, December 3, 2013, either before or after the special School Committee meeting that evening.

D. Education Subcommittee (R. Imber, Chair, M. Watson, Vice-chair, L. Call, R. Remillard, C. Smith)

Education Subcommittee Chair Imber reported on the meeting of this subcommittee that took place just before this regular School Committee meeting.

- E. Business/Finance Subcommittee (E. Scheinfeldt, Chair, W. Clute, Vice-chair, J. Kelley, S. LaMountain, J. Mason, R. McCarthy, T. Ralli, C. Smith, C. Witkes)

Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair Scheinfeldt reported on the November 25th meeting of this subcommittee. The next meeting of this subcommittee is posted for Monday, December 9th, at which time the subcommittee will finalized the evaluation of District Treasurer James Dunbar. At Member Kelley's questioning transportation numbers, Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair Scheinfeldt asked Chair Harris to allow Director of Business and Finance Scanlon to address the questions posed by Member Kelley. Subcommittee Chair Scheinfeldt distributed a sheet titled "Refund \$20MM State Qualified," explaining to the Committee that a recommendation to refinance the \$20 million high school bond may be on the agenda for the next regular School Committee meeting (attachment 3).

1. WRSD Educational Foundation Trust

- F. Legal Affair Subcommittee (K. Mills, Chair, M. Lindberg, Vice-chair, S. Brown, M. Ehrenworth, J. Kelley)

Legal Affairs Subcommittee Chair Mills reported this subcommittee has not met since the last School Committee meeting, but is scheduled to meet on December 16th at 7:00 PM.

- G. Facilities & Security Subcommittee (J. Mason, Chair, M. Ehrenworth, Vice-chair, W. Clute, D. Kosky, M. Lindberg, R. McCarthy, R. Remillard)

Facilities & Security Subcommittee Chair Mason reported on the November 18th meeting of this subcommittee. He reported that a walk through of the former Holden Police Station on Main Street is scheduled for 5:45 PM on Tuesday, December 3rd, and invited all interested members to attend. Chair Harris reminded the Committee that after the walk through, any discussions in connection with this real estate would be in executive session.

- H. Audit Advisory Board (J. Kelley, T. Ralli)

Audit Advisory Board Chair Kelley and Member Ralli were both absent.

Motion: To approve the second reading of Amended Policy – AP4713.1 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Audit Advisory Board**, waiving the reading.

(K Mills)

(C. Witkes)

Member Watson voiced concern about #6 listed on page one of the amended policy, under "membership qualifications," suggesting that the sentence should be listed as a requirement of anyone who serves on the Audit Advisory

Board. During discussion, Member Curran questioned the first sentence of paragraph 2 (“Each member must be independent of the financial management and reporting system of the District and should possess a reasonable level of financial literacy.”) After discussion, it was agreed that in Member Kelley’s and Member Ralli’s absence, addressing these concerns is difficult at this meeting.

Motion: To lay on the table the second reading of Amended Policy – AP4713.1 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Audit Advisory Board.**

(C. Smith)

(T. Curran)

Vote:

In favor:

Lance Harris
Robert Pelczarski
Lisa Call
William Clute
Scott Brown
Thomas Curran
Robert Imber
Deidre Kosky
Sarah LaMountain
Matthew Lindberg
James Mason
Robert McCarthy
Kenneth Mills
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Christina Smith
Margaret Watson
Charles Witkes

Opposed:

None

Motion passed unanimously.

I. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

1. Superintendent Screening Subcommittee

Chair Harris announced that finalist Anne McKenzie has withdrawn her application. Chair Harris read a prepared statement explaining the schedule of events/visits planned in preparation for the vote at the regular School Committee meeting on December 9, 2013 (attachment 4). Chair Harris noted that the Superintendent Screening Subcommittee will need to meet one more time in order to approve minutes.

J. Building Committees

1. Mountview Building Committee (M. Watson)

8:04 PM Member Mason left the table.

Member Watson reported on the November 20th meeting of the Mountview Building Committee. She reported April 2014 is the projected start date for the project.

8:07 PM Member Mason returned to the table.

The next meeting of the Mountview Building Committee is December 11th at 7:00 PM.

2. Green Repair School Building Committee

No report was made.

L. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (J. Kelley), Chocksett Middle School (S. LaMountain), Davis Hill Elementary School (C. Smith), Dawson Elementary School (TBD), Glenwood Elementary School (R. Remillard), Houghton Elementary School (L. Call), Mayo Elementary School (T. Curran), Mountview Middle School (M. Watson), Naquag Elementary School (M. Ehrenworth), Paxton Center School (W. Clute), Thomas Prince School (R. Imber/M. Lindberg), Wachusett Regional High School (K. Mills), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (S. Jackson), Early Childhood Center (TBD)

Member LaMountain – Chocksett Middle School

8:09 PM Student Representative Birnbaum left the meeting.

Member Smith – Davis Hill School

The Early Childhood Center SIMCO is still in need of a School Committee liaison, as well as Dawson Elementary School.

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Member Mills asked for an explanation of the differences between a “freeze” and a “reduction” of principals’ budgets. Interim Superintendent Gasbarro explained that funds are “frozen” at this point in time, and that depending on

winter weather, lower reimbursement for transportation, or other unforeseen factors, funds may or may not be able to be “unfrozen.” Discussion ensued.

Member Mason read that five School Committee members have not yet signed onto their District provided email accounts (www.wrsd.net) and he asked how this will be addressed. Chair Harris explained that starting with the first meeting in February 2014 only Google Drive will be used to provide the School Committee with the Superintendent’s Report and meeting materials. Supervisor of Information Services Barry Sclar will be invited to attend the January 13, 2014 School Committee meeting to assist any members who have questions.

Director of Business and Finance Scanlon approached the podium to provide additional explanation about transportation reimbursement numbers. Chair Harris then asked Director Scanlon to walk the Committee through the process and the anticipated next steps in connection with the Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing by Atlantic Express.

Member Watson noted concern that the Treasurer’s Report and reconciliation, included with the November 21st Superintendent’s Report, are for August 2013. Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair Scheinfeldt addressed the Committee, explaining how the Business/Finance Subcommittee will evaluate the District Treasurer this year. Director Scanlon has prepared a DRAFT evaluation narrative, which he has shared with the Business/Finance Subcommittee. The Business/Finance Subcommittee will act on the District Treasurer’s evaluation at a meeting on December 9, 2013 at 6:00 PM.

Interim Superintendent Gasbarro reported that after discussions with building principals, the District will have students who are participating in PARCC field testing to also take MCAS tests.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

There were no recommendations requiring School Committee action.

VI. Public Hearing

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

VII. Unfinished Business

Motion: To approve the FY14 appropriation staff authorization and expenditures by category, dated August 8, 2013.

Director of Business and Finance Scanlon spoke to the motion on the floor, and made a recommendation that the Committee not act on the motion at this time.

Motion: To postpone action on the motion to approve the FY14 appropriation staff authorization and expenditures by category, dated August 8, 2013, to a time certain, December 9, 2013.

(R. Imber)
(T. Curran)

Member Mills strongly suggested action on this motion be delayed until the January 13, 2014 regular School Committee meeting.

Vote:

In favor:

Lance Harris
Robert Pelczarski
Lisa Call
Scott Brown
William Clute
Thomas Curran
Robert Imber
Deidre Kosky
Sarah LaMountain
Matthew Lindberg
James Mason
Robert McCarthy
Kenneth Mills
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Christina Smith
Margaret Watson
Charles Witkes

Opposed:

None

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: The Wachusett Regional School District shall not participate in school choice for the 2014-2015 school year.

No action was taken on this motion.

VIII. New Business

Former Holden Police Station (M. Watson)

8:30 PM Member Kosky left the meeting.

Interim Superintendent Gasbarro will acknowledge the email he received from Holden Town Manager Jacquelyn Kelly about the availability of the former Holden Police Station.

IX. Executive Session

Chair Harris announced the Committee will enter executive session for two purposes: to discuss pending litigation; and to discuss contract negotiations with non-union personnel, Interim Superintendent, not to return to public session

Motion: To enter executive session to discuss pending litigation; and to discuss contract negotiations with non-union personnel, Interim Superintendent, not to return to public session

(R. Imber)
(M. Watson)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Lance Harris
Robert Pelczarski
Lisa Call
Scott Brown
William Clute
Thomas Curran
Robert Imber
Sarah LaMountain
Matthew Lindberg
James Mason
Robert McCarthy
Kenneth Mills
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Christina Smith
Margaret Watson
Charles Witkes

Opposed:

None

Motion passed unanimously.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned to executive session at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony A. Gasbarro

Interim Superintendent

AAG:rlp