

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN □ PAXTON □ PRINCETON □ RUTLAND □ STERLING

Minutes

Special Meeting #326

Tuesday, September 29, 2020
6:30 PM

MEETING CONDUCTED REMOTELY, VIA GOOGLE MEET

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Megan Weeks, Chair	Linda Long-Bellil
Michael Dennis, Vice-chair	Kenneth Mills
Nicole Amos	Benjamin Mitchel
Melissa Ayala	Karl Ottmar
Krista Bennett	Deidre Shapiro
Scott Brown	Asima Silva
Maleah Gustafson	Christina Smith
Sherrie Haber	Kelly Williamson
Robert Imber	Linda Woodland
Laura Kirshenbaum	Adam Young
Matthew Lavoie	

Committee Members Absent:

None

Administration Present:

Darryll McCall, Superintendent of Schools
Robert Berlo, Deputy Superintendent
Jeff Carlson, Director of Human Resources
Brendan Keenan, Director of Social Emotional Learning
Christine Smith, Administrator of Special Education
Barry Sclar, Supervisor of Information Technology

Others:

Michael Long, Esq.

Student Representatives Present:

Kenichi Gomi Kathryn Mangus

I. Call to Order

Chair Weeks called the special meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Chair Weeks announced the meeting was being conducted remotely, via Google Meet, was streaming live on HCTV, and the recording of the meeting will be available on the District website. Members of the public could access the meeting via YouTube.

Chair Weeks explained the purpose of the meeting is a single motion, she asked that members keep their cameras on, she explained that members will be given the opportunity to speak which will be limited to two minutes per member. Chair Weeks also explained the evening would begin with this special meeting, at the conclusion of which the regular meeting would convene, at the beginning of the regular meeting the Committee would adjourn to executive session to reconvene in public session for the remainder of the regular WRSDC meeting.

- II. We, the members of the Wachusett Regional School District School Committee, express no confidence in Superintendent McCall's management of the District's return to school plans for FY2021. We call upon the District administration to solicit and hire a competent educational consulting firm, within the next 10 (ten) business days, for the purpose of:
- Assessing the District's current remote educational plans through targeted feedback from parents, teachers, students, and administrators.
 - Providing recommendations for improvements and adjustments that are within the District's reasonable capability and resources.
 - Leveraging District analysis to date and peer district plans, developing a comprehensive return to school plan which is inclusive of but not limited to:
 - Entry criteria for successful return to school models, blending on-site and remote learning, by using specific actions and/or metrics
 - Development of a backlog of actions needed, with associated timelines and resource plan, in order to facilitate successful entry criteria which are within the District's control
 - A plan for moving through different modalities of learning (e.g., fully remote, hybrid or blended, etc.) as environmental and health conditions warrant
 - A communication plan for parents, teachers, students, and School Committee members
 - Regular monitoring of the District's implementation of the plan including feedback and retrospective of parents, teachers, students, administrators, and School Committee members, and recommendations for improvements
 - Weekly reporting to the School Committee, either written or in-person, of the progress, risks, and issues in the development of this plan and regular monitoring.

The selection of the educational consulting company shall be subject to the approval of the School Committee.

(M. Dennis)
(A. Silva)

Chair Weeks gave Vice-chair Dennis, the maker of the motion, the opportunity to address the full Committee.

Motion: To allow the maker of the motion to speak for more than the allotted two minutes, per By-Laws, in order to conclude the address to the Committee.

(M. Lavoie)
(S. Haber)

Chair Weeks invited members to address the Committee on the motion on the floor. Member Young suggested members be allowed to allot their two minutes comment time to

Vice-chair Dennis in order for his remarks to continue. Member Woodland offered her time to Vice-chair Dennis. Vice-chair Dennis continued with his statement. At the conclusion of the additional two minutes, Chair Weeks noted the time, and Vice-chair Dennis appealed the ruling of the Chair.

Motion: To appeal the statement of the Chair terminating, due to time, the address by Vice-chair Dennis to the School Committee.

(M. Dennis)

(S. Haber)

Chair Weeks opened the floor to discussion on the motion on the floor. Chair Weeks noted that a vote by the full Committee was not taken on the initial motion on the floor.

Member Haber and Member Lavoie both stated they would yield their time to Vice-chair Dennis in order for Vice-chair Dennis to conclude his statement. Member Silva also stated she would yield her time to Vice-chair Dennis. Member Smith stated she is not in favor of the motion to appeal.

Attorney Michael Long questioned Chair Weeks, asking if there is a policy about anonymous complaints, which Chair Weeks responded there is no such WRSDC policy.

Before moving to a roll call vote, Chair Weeks explained a majority in favor is needed to pass the motion on the floor.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Michael Dennis
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Matthew Lavoie
Kenneth Mills
Karl Ottmar
Asima Silva
Linda Woodland

Opposed:

Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long Bellil
Benjamin Mitchel
Deidre Shapiro
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Adam Young

Abstained:
Megan Weeks

The motion failed 8-12-1.

Vice-chair Dennis was allowed another two minutes to address the School Committee.

Member Lavoie yielded his time to Vice-chair Dennis, who continued his address to the Committee.

Member Mills addressed the Committee. Member Mills explained the purpose of his making a motion to amend the motion on the floor.

Motion: To strike from the motion on the floor “express no confidence in Superintendent McCall’s management of the District’s return to school plans for FY2021,” and replace with “express concern about the status of the District’s return to school plans for the 20-21 academic year.” To also strike the word “competent” in the second sentence of the original motion.

(K. Mills)
(L. Kirshenbaum)

Chair Weeks re-read the motion to amend. At the request of Member Shapiro, Member Mills posted the amended language in the chat feature of Google Meet.

Discussion ensued, with many members participating.

Motion: To extend the special meeting to 7:30 PM.

(R. Imber)
(L. Long-Bellil)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar

Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:
None

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion continued.

Motion: To call the question

(C. Smith)
(L. Kirshenbaum)

Chair Weeks explained the motion to call the question is not debatable.

Roll call vote to move the question:

In favor:

Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Adam Young

Opposed:
Scott Brown
Linda Woodland

Abstained:
Megan Weeks
Kenneth Mills

The motion passed 17-2-2.

Chair Weeks re-read the motion on the floor to amend.

Roll call vote on motion to amend:

In favor:

Nicole Amos
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Adam Young

Opposed:

Michael Dennis
Melissa Ayala
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Matthew Lavoie
Asima Silva
Linda Woodland

Abstained:

Megan Weeks

The motion passed 13-7-1.

Chair Weeks reported the original motion on the floor is now amended. Members were given the opportunity to speak to the amended motion. Several members shared their comments and concerns.

Motion: To extend the special meeting to 8:00 PM.

(M. Gustafson)
(R. Imber)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala

Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion passed unanimously.

Extensive discussion by many members continued.

Motion: To amend the existing motion by striking “We call upon the District administration to solicit and hire an educational consulting firm, within the next 10 (ten) days, for the purpose of:” and replace with “call on District administration to inform the School Committee within the next 10 (ten) days of the resources required to affect:”

(K. Ottmar)

(K. Williamson)

Members were given the opportunity to comment on the motion to amend. At members’ inquiry, Superintendent McCall confirmed the ten day deadline should be doable.

Motion: To extend the special meeting to 8:30 PM.

(L. Kirshenbaum)

(K. Mills)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson

Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:
None

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Weeks reminded members the current discussion is limited to the motion to amend which is currently on the floor.

Motion: To call the question.

(S. Brown)
(L. Kirshenbaum)

Chair Weeks reminded members the motion to call the question is not debatable.

Roll call vote to move the question:

In favor:

Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil
Benjamin Mitchel
Deidre Shapiro
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Adam Young

Opposed:
Robert Imber

Matthew Lavoie
Kenneth Mills
Asima Silva
Linda Woodland

Abstained:

Megan Weeks
Karl Ottmar

The motion passed 14-5-2.

At Member Mills' request, Chair Weeks confirmed the motion to call the question passed by a two-thirds majority.

Roll call vote on motion to amend:

In favor:

Nicole Amos
Krista Bennett
Laura Kirshenbaum
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Kelly Williamson
Adam Young

Opposed:

Michael Dennis
Melissa Ayala
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Linda Woodland

Abstained:

Megan Weeks

The motion failed 8- 12 -1.

Chair Weeks opened the floor to discussion on the original amended motion. Member Imber asked for clarification from Superintendent McCall and/or Vice-chair Dennis about the cost of implementation of the motion as well as how the bullets in the motion can be

addressed. Both Vice-chair Dennis and Superintendent McCall addressed the Committee, providing some clarification.

Motion to amend: To add the words “and to take the suggestions and feedback of the WRSD Reopening Task Force to assist with organizing the hybrid program.” after “consulting firm” in the second sentence of the motion.

(M. Ayala)

The motion died due to a lack of a second.

Motion: To call the question.

(S. Brown)

(L. Kirshenbaum)

Before the vote to call the question, Member Young had a point of order pointing out the language in the main motion on the floor references “consulting firm” and he would offer an amendment to replace “consulting firm” with “consultant” in the main motion on the floor.

Motion: To replace “consulting firm” with “consultant” in the second sentence of the main motion on the floor.

(A. Young)

(R. Imber)

Roll call vote on amendment:

In favor:

Michael Dennis
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:

Nicole Amos
Scott Brown
Linda Long-Bellil
Asima Silva

Abstained:

Megan Weeks

The motion passed 16-4-1.

The motion to move the question was not voted on.

Discussion took place, clarifying the motion to be voted upon by the Committee, as amended.

Motion: To extend the special meeting to 9:00 PM.

(S. Haber)

(L. Long-Bellil)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:

Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie

The motion passed 18-2.

8:30 PM Member Imber returned to the meeting.

Member Young presented the motion on the floor for members and the public to view.
Chair Weeks read the entire motion aloud for the record.

Motion: To amend the motion by striking "The selection of the educational consultant shall be subject to the approval of the School Committee."

(D. Shapiro)
(L. Long-Bellil)

Member Shapiro spoke to the motion to amend.

Member Mitchel made a point of order that Member Brown's previous motion to move the question was not voted on.

Motion: To overrule the Chair's ruling on the motion to amend and to call the question.

(M. Lavoie)
(B. Mitchel)

Member Brown, maker of the motion to call the question, withdrew his motion.

Discussion of Member Shapiro's motion to amend ensued.

Roll call vote on motion to amend:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Sherrie Haber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil
Benjamin Mitchel
Deidre Shapiro
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Adam Young

Opposed:

Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Maleah Gustafson
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Kenneth Mills
Karl Ottmar
Asima Silva
Linda Woodland

The motion passed 11-10.

Motion: To amend language in the third bullet of the motion on the floor, striking "developing a" and replacing with "to inform a."

(L. Long-Bellil)
(R. Imber)

Member Long-Bellil spoke to her amendment.

Roll call vote on motion to amend:

In favor:

Michael Dennis
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Linda Long-Bellil
Benjamin Mitchel
Deidre Shapiro
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Adam Young

Opposed:

Megan Weeks
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Matthew Lavoie
Kenneth Mills
Karl Ottmar
Asima Silva
Linda Woodland

The motion passed 11-10.

Motion: To call the question.

(B. Mitchel)
(K. Mills)

Roll call vote to move the question:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum

Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:
None

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Weeks called members' attention to the motion before the Committee, which was projected on the screen.

Amended Motion: We, the members of the Wachusett Regional School District School Committee, express concern about the status of the District's return to school plans for the 20-21 academic year. We call upon the District administration to solicit and hire an educational consultant, within the next 10 (ten) business days, for the purpose of:

- Assessing the District's current remote educational plans through targeted feedback from parents, teachers, students, and administrators.
- Providing recommendations for improvements and adjustments that are within the District's reasonable capability and resources.
- Leveraging District analysis to date and peer district plans, to inform a comprehensive return to school plan which is inclusive of but not limited to:
 - Entry criteria for successful return to school models, blending on-site and remote learning, by using specific actions and/or metrics
 - Development of a backlog of actions needed, with associated timelines and resource plan, in order to facilitate successful entry criteria which are within the District's control
 - A plan for moving through different modalities of learning (e.g., fully remote, hybrid or blended, etc.) as environmental and health conditions warrant
 - A communication plan for parents, teachers, students, and School Committee members
 - Regular monitoring of the District's implementation of the plan including feedback and retrospective of parents, teachers, students, administrators, and School Committee members, and recommendations for improvements
 - Weekly reporting to the School Committee, either written or in-person, of the progress, risks, and issues in the development of this plan and regular monitoring.

Roll call vote:

In favor:
Michael Dennis

Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:

Nicole Amos
Laura Kirshenbaum
Benjamin Mitchel
Christina Smith

Abstained:

Megan Weeks

The motion passed 16-4-1.

III. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(K. Mills)
(A. Young)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Megan Weeks
Michael Dennis
Nicole Amos
Melissa Ayala
Krista Bennett
Scott Brown
Maleah Gustafson
Sherrie Haber
Robert Imber
Laura Kirshenbaum
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Kenneth Mills
Benjamin Mitchel

Karl Ottmar
Deidre Shapiro
Asima Silva
Christina Smith
Kelly Williamson
Linda Woodland
Adam Young

Opposed:
None

The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DM:rlp