

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1325

Monday, March 25, 2019

7:00 PM

Media Center

Wachusett Regional High School

1401 Main Street, Holden

Wachusett Regional School District Committee

Kenneth Mills, Chair

Christina Smith, Vice-chair

Thomas Curran

Anthony DiFonso

Rachel Dolan

Maleah Gustafson (7:06 PM)

Robert Imber

Matthew Lavoie

Linda Long-Bellil

Amy Michalowski

Benjamin Mitchel

Michael Rivers

Asima Silva

Megan Weeks

Adam Young

Committee Members Absent:

Scott Brown

Michael Dennis

Stephen Godbout

Susan Hitchcock

Sarah LaMountain

Committee Members Participating Remotely:

None

Administration Present:

Darryll McCall, Superintendent

Robert Berlo, Deputy Superintendent

Daniel Deedy, Director of Business and Finance

Jeff Carlson, Director of Human Resources

Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

Student Representatives Present:

Donroy Ferdinand

Rianna Massoni-Nesman

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

Chair Mills called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. He announced the meeting was not streaming live, but is being recorded and will be broadcast on HoldenTV.com.

I. Public Hearing

Heidi Lahey, Holden resident, taxpayer, parent, educator, and WREA President, read a prepared statement (attachments 2 & 3).

7:06 PM Member Gustafson joined the meeting.

II. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Mills took the opportunity to extend thanks and good wishes to Members Hitchcock and Witkes, who have both resigned from the School Committee.

Chair Mills welcomed players and coaches of the Division 3 State Championship hockey team, and expressed congratulations to the team for a job well done. The team was given a round of applause. Hockey Coach Lane approached the podium and spoke about the winning team, the players, and the coaches. Coach Lane introduced Captains Sean Gardner and Kevin Skagerlind, who approached the podium and each said a few words. The team was given another round of applause before exiting the meeting.

Chair Mills asked for volunteers to represent the School Committee at May Annual Town Meetings. The following volunteered:

Holden – Chair Mills
Paxton – Member Mitchel
Princeton – Members Imber and Weeks
Rutland – Member Lavoie
Sterling – Member Rivers

III. Student Representatives' Reports

Student Representative Massoni-Nesman reported on the re-visit of the S.O.S. (Signs of Suicide) program, a program presented to high school freshmen and juniors. She also reported on a corn hole tournament, which raised funds for the local food pantry, and that the 4th quarter will soon be starting. Student Representative Ferdinand spoke about the outstanding March 17th hockey game, which he attended. He also reported on the start of spring athletic competitions and the spring musical, Curtain, will be performed the weekend of March 29, 30, and 31.

IV. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Superintendent McCall began by reporting the Department of Revenue has certified Excess and Deficiency (E & D) in the amount of \$1,285,259.00, and upon that certification, the Member Towns have been informed of the District's intent to use \$250,000 of E & D toward the cost of turf field replacement at the high school.

Superintendent McCall reported on the March 12, 2019 opening of the Safer Schools and Communities-Equipment and Technology Grant opportunity. This grant was discussed at the March 19, 2019 meeting of the Facilities and Security Subcommittee, as well as at past meetings the Superintendent has had with local Police and Fire officials. Superintendent McCall reported the District will be applying for this grant, with the focus of the District's application being on securing funds to update security cameras at the schools. He further reported submission of the application is due April 3, 2019, and he will keep the Committee informed on the outcome of this application.

Member Imber thanked the Superintendent for including updated class size information in his Report, and discussion ensued about high enrollments in some elementary and middle school classrooms.

Chair Mills spoke about vacancies on the Legal Affairs Subcommittee, the Business/Finance Subcommittee, and the Audit Advisory Board, and he asked School Committee members who might be willing to take on another subcommittee membership assignment to let him know.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

1. Motion: To affirm accuracy of Policy 6613.2 **Policy Relating to Pupil Services Athletic Head Injury and Concussion Policy**
(L. Long-Bellil)
(R. Imber)

Vote:

In favor:

Kenneth Mills
Christina Smith
Thomas Curran
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Maleah Gustafson
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Benjamin Mitchel
Michael Rivers
Asima Silva
Megan Weeks
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business brought before the Committee.

VI. Secretary's Report

A. Approval of #1323 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on February 11, 2019

Motion: To approve minutes of the regular meeting of the WRSDC held on February 11, 2019.

(M. Weeks)

(T. Curran)

Vote:

In favor:

Kenneth Mills
Christina Smith
Thomas Curran
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Maleah Gustafson
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Benjamin Mitchel
Michael Rivers
Asima Silva
Megan Weeks
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The minutes were unanimously approved.

B. Approval of #1324 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on March 11, 2019

Note was made that on page 7 of the draft minutes, reference to "Chair Mills" under VII. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements should be corrected to read "Vice-chair Smith" due to Chair Mills absence from that meeting. This typographical correction will be made to the draft minutes.

Motion: To approve minutes of the regular meeting of the WRSDC held on March 11, 2019.

(M. Weeks)

(A. Young)

Vote:

In favor:

Kenneth Mills
Christina Smith
Thomas Curran
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Maleah Gustafson
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Benjamin Mitchel
Michael Rivers
Asima Silva
Megan Weeks
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The minutes were unanimously approved.

VII. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

Chair Mills reminded the Committee that if there were questions regarding the Director of Business and Finance'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.

VIII. Committee Reports

- A. Management Subcommittee (K. Mills, Chair, C. Smith, Vice-chair, T. Curran, M. Dennis, S. Hitchcock, R. Imber, M. Lavoie)

Chair Mills reported this subcommittee has not met since the last School Committee meeting, but likely will meet before the next regular School Committee meeting.

- B. Education Subcommittee (R. Imber, Chair, C. Smith, Vice-chair, A. DiFonso, R. Dolan, S. LaMountain, L. Long-Bellil, A. Silva)

Motion: To approve the second reading of Amended Policy 3240 *Policy Relating to Education School Ceremonies and Observances*, waiving the reading.

(R. Imber)

(C. Smith)

Vote:

In favor:

Kenneth Mills
Christina Smith
Thomas Curran
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Maleah Gustafson
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Benjamin Mitchel
Michael Rivers
Asima Silva
Megan Weeks
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion was unanimously approved.

Motion: To approve the second reading of Draft Policy 6124 **Policy Relating to Pupil Services Educational Opportunities for Military Children**, waiving the reading.

(R. Imber)
(A. DiFonso)

Vote:

In favor:

Kenneth Mills
Christina Smith
Thomas Curran
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Maleah Gustafson
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Benjamin Mitchel
Michael Rivers
Asima Silva
Megan Weeks
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion was unanimously approved.

Motion: To approve the first reading of Draft Policy 6123 *Policy Relating to Pupil Services Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care*, waiving the reading.

(R. Imber)

(A. DiFonso)

Vote:

In favor:

Kenneth Mills
Christina Smith
Thomas Curran
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Maleah Gustafson
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Benjamin Mitchel
Michael Rivers
Asima Silva
Megan Weeks
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion was unanimously approved.

Subcommittee Chair Imber reported on discussions at the meeting of the Education Subcommittee earlier in the evening. Member Michalowski asked Subcommittee Chair Imber if the subcommittee had additional information about Advanced Placement Courses and/or the ACCUPLACER test. Subcommittee Chair Imber reported the subcommittee is continuing to discuss these topics. There was brief discussion about vaping and whether there is a School Committee policy to address this issue.

- C. Business/Finance Subcommittee (M. Dennis, Chair, M. Gustafson, L. Long-Bellil, B. Mitchel)

In Subcommittee Chair Dennis' absence, Member Mitchel reported this subcommittee will meet next on April 1, 2019, and Chair Mills mentioned a Vice-

chair of this subcommittee will need to be elected when the subcommittee meets on April 1st.

- D. Legal Affairs Subcommittee (S. Hitchcock, Chair, S. Brown, Vice-chair, S. Godbout, M. Rivers)

In Subcommittee Chair Hitchcock's absence, Member Rivers reported bargaining with the three unions (clerical, custodial, food service) continues. He also reported the subcommittee is reviewing the WRSDC By-Laws, and has also done a cursory review of the Regional Agreement. This subcommittee will meet next on April 2, 2019. Chair Mills reported he has appointed Member Brown to serve as subcommittee Chair and the subcommittee will need to elect a Vice-chair when the subcommittee meets on April 2, 2019.

- E. Superintendent Goals and Evaluation Subcommittee (M. Lavoie, Chair, A. Michalowski, Vice-chair, K. Mills, M. Weeks)

Subcommittee Chair Lavoie reported this subcommittee met before this full School Committee meeting. He provided an overview of the timeline for the Superintendent's annual evaluation process, anticipating a presentation of the online evaluation tool at the April 8, 2019 School Committee meeting, Superintendent McCall is to provide all members with his evaluation narrative by April 15, 2019, member feedback will be due April 23rd, the subcommittee will meet on April 25th, and the full School Committee will vote on the Superintendent's evaluation at the regular School Committee meeting on April 29, 2019. Subcommittee Chair Lavoie spoke of the importance of this annual evaluation and he is hopeful the 19 members of the School Committee will participate in this evaluation process.

- F. Facilities and Security Subcommittee (T. Curran, Chair, M. Rivers, Vice-chair, A. Young)

Subcommittee Chair Curran reported on the March 19, 2019 meeting of this subcommittee. He mentioned the grant opportunity Superintendent McCall reported on earlier in the meeting. At Member Gustafson's inquiry, Subcommittee Chair Curran and Superintendent McCall spoke about Mayo Elementary School and space for an additional kindergarten classroom.

7:42 PM Student Representative Ferdinand left the meeting.

- G. Audit Advisory Board (B. Mitchel, Chair)

AAB Chair Mitchel reported this Board has not met since the last School Committee meeting, though scheduling a meeting in the near future is anticipated. Chair Mills noted representation on the Audit Advisory Board is needed for the towns of Paxton, Princeton, and Rutland. It was suggested these openings be included on an agenda for Superintendent McCall's monthly meetings with Town Administrators.

H. Ad Hoc Subcommittees

I. Building Committees

1. Mountview Building Committee

No report was made.

J. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (M. Lavoie), Chocksett Middle School (S. Godbout), Davis Hill Elementary School (S. Brown), Dawson Elementary School (A. Young), Glenwood Elementary School (A. DiFonso), Houghton Elementary School (S. Godbout), Mayo Elementary School (T. Curran), Mountview Middle School (K. Mills), Naquag Elementary School, Paxton Center School (B. Mitchel), Thomas Prince School (A. Silva), Wachusett Regional High School (A. Michalowski/C. Smith), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (M. Gustafson), Early Childhood Center

Member Gustafson – SEPAC

Member Michalowski – WRHS SIMCO to meet April 9, 2019

Member Silva – Davis Hill Elementary School

Member Curran – Mayo Elementary School

Member DiFonso – Glenwood Elementary School SIMCO to meet March 27, 2019

Member Young – Dawson Elementary School

Chair Mills – Mountview Middle School

IX. Public Hearing

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

X. New Business

At Student Representative Massoni-Nesman's inquiry, Deputy Superintendent Berlo approached the podium and spoke about how the teaching of history will be impacted by the teaching of civics in grade 8.

XI. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(R. Imber)

(A, Young)

Vote:

In favor:

Kenneth Mills
Christina Smith
Thomas Curran
Anthony DiFonso
Rachel Dolan
Maleah Gustafson
Robert Imber
Matthew Lavoie
Linda Long-Bellil
Amy Michalowski
Benjamin Mitchel
Michael Rivers
Asima Silva
Megan Weeks
Adam Young

Opposed:

None

The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Darryll McCall, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DM:rlp

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Sign-in sheets
- Attachment 2 – Heidi Lahey Public Address
- Attachment 3 – Fund our Future flyer

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting

Monday, March 25, 2019

THIS ATTENDANCE SHEET IS MADE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT WISH TO SPEAK BUT WHO WISH TO BECOME PART OF THE PUBLIC RECORD.

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME AND YOUR TOWN

NAME	TOWN
Linda Woodland	Sterling

Good evening. Heidi Lahey, 166 Bullard Street, Holden. Resident, taxpayer, parent and educator in Wachusett Regional School District, and president of the Wachusett Regional Education Association.

Last Friday, I travelled to Beacon Hill to attend the Massachusetts Legislative Joint Committee on Education hearing on Senate Bill S.238, the PROMISE act.

The beyond capacity crowd in the Gardner Auditorium meant that I spent the morning delivering letters from our WREA members to legislative offices, then I watched the proceedings on the monitors in the Great Hall. I finally managed to get into the auditorium after the crowd starting thinning out at lunchtime.

There was testimony from a wide range of stakeholders, from the New England Patriot players representing their Players Association to parent groups, Mayors, Superintendents, and classroom educators. Those who spoke in support of the PROMISE Act described the significant needs of our children and the changing student demographics. They expressed frustration that the state has not held themselves accountable for fully funding public education, while burdening districts and teachers with multiple measures of accountability. If only the state rated their lack of progress in funding public education with the same rigor that they use to measure everyone else.

Sen. Chang-Diaz is the lead sponsor of the bill, which has 65 other legislators signed on as co-sponsors, including Senators Chandler and Gobi. I spoke with our representative Kim Ferguson at the hearing, as she is the ranking minority member of the committee, and presented her with over 100 letters from our teachers, describing specific needs from our schools.

You have in front of you a draft version of a flyer for a Funding Forum that has been scheduled here in Wachusett on Thursday April 11, sponsored by the Wachusett Regional Education Association. Our forum is one of dozens across the state seeking to raise the voices of parents, voters and educators on the issue of funding for public schools. Tonight the Worcester

Education Association, the Worcester School Committee and the Worcester Education Collaborative are co-sponsoring a similar forum. Our state senators have committed to attending our forum on April 11, providing us with an opportunity to raise our additional concerns as a regional district in regards to transportation funding and circuit breaker costs.

For at least a decade, Wachusett has tried to make ends meet by cost shifting onto employees, scrimping on line items such as textbooks, technology, and maintenance. ~~[Even with a zero percent increase to health care costs this spring, the district proposed employees absorb more health insurance costs. We won't vote for a proposal that reduces the take home wages of our lowest paid employees.]~~ My school can't find new hires for certain positions, and the combination of low wages and higher benefit costs makes the jobs less attractive. WREA members are actively working to get the state funding formulas revised so we get additional funding with ongoing growth that won't be dependent on single year savings to balance the budget.

With the historic level of awareness around educational funding, and the acknowledgement at the state level that changes must be implemented, we cannot lose this chance to make real and lasting funding changes to benefit our students. I am asking this committee tonight if they wish to co-sponsor our event and work with educators to invite the public from our five towns to gain additional insights into these legislative funding bills. Let's get the schools our communities deserve.

What Do Our Schools Need to Thrive?

a Community Conversation

Parents, educators, students and community activists are invited to a forum on school funding

What are the schools our students need and deserve?

What can we do together to win new state funds for our district?

What is the Fund Our Future campaign?

Share ideas and help build a movement for quality education for all.

6 – 7:30 PM

Wachusett Regional High School Auditorium

1401 Main Street | Holden, MA

A light dinner will be provided



**WACHUSETT
REGIONAL
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

The Wachusett Regional Education Association will host a Fund Our Future forum with local legislators on the public education funding our communities deserve. As a regional school district involving five towns, we face clear challenges in supporting the needs of our students and communities. Come for an evening of discussion and community building as we share stories and decide on the actions we should take to support our schools.



**FUND OUR
FUTURE**



INVEST IN THE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES OUR COMMUNITIES DESERVE
FUNDOURFUTUREMA.ORG