

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Monday, February 26, 2007

*Executive Session*

Cafeteria

Davis Hill Elementary School

*Committee Members Present:*

Margaret Watson, Chair	Robert Imber
Cynthia Ahearn	Mark James
Cynthia Bazinet	John Nunnari
Robert Carter	Norman Plourde
Melinda Coyle	Michael Sherman
Steven Hammond	Joseph Sova
	Tammy Tod

*Committee Members Absent:*

Thomas Ackerman	Kelly Maxwell
Shirley Conrad	Judith Newton
David Gibbs	Edward Pescaro
	Kathleen Sweeney

*Administration Present:*

Thomas G. Pandiscio, Superintendent of Schools  
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

Chair Watson called the executive session of the School Committee to order at 8:54 PM.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the Executive Session of the WRSD Committee held on February 12, 2007, not to be released.

(J. Nunnari)  
(M. Sherman)

Roll call vote:

*In favor:*

Margaret Watson  
Cynthia Ahearn  
Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
Melinda Coyle  
Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber  
Mark James

John Nunnari  
Norman Plourde  
Michael Sherman  
Tammy Tod

*Opposed:*  
None

*Abstained:*  
Joseph Sova

(Motion passed 12-0-1)

Chair Watson turned the meeting over to Superintendent Pandiscio who gave an update on the high school project. He reviewed the many obstacles that have been encountered and continue to be discovered, and gave an outline of costs relating to these construction issues. He told the Committee of the need for direction from the School Committee on settling with the contractor (TLT) vs. entering litigation with the contractor. Superintendent Pandiscio explained the financial impact completing the high school project will have on the budget. Upon inquiry, the Superintendent answered that borrowing an additional \$5 million to finish the project, including the modular reimbursement, would be his recommendation. Both Chair Watson and Superintendent Pandiscio reminded the Committee that a two-thirds vote would be required so it is important that members be behind whatever decision is made. Holding off until June, after the upcoming budget season, on borrowing for the high school project was mentioned and discussed. Following discussion, it was agreed that needing to go back to borrow twice, if that were necessary, would not be advisable. From a public relations point, releasing a public statement giving the status of the high school project and explaining what and why additional money is needed would be beneficial. The Superintendent has been in contact with *The Landmark* suggesting that newspaper write an investigative report on the project.

9:12 PM Member Carter left the table.

Further discussion continued. The Superintendent was asked if \$1.9 million to settle with TLT would be final, to which he responded he could not guarantee the contractor will not look for additional amounts should other matters arise.

9:14 PM Member Carter returned to the table.

Motion: To authorize the Superintendent to obtain bids for borrowing \$5 million (\$3.1 million for modular reimbursement, \$1.9 million for legal settlement) relating to the completion of the Wachusett Regional High School building project.

(J. Nunnari)  
(T. Tod)

Roll call vote:  
*In favor:*

Margaret Watson  
Cynthia Ahearn  
Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
Melinda Coyle  
Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber  
Mark James  
John Nunnari  
Norman Plourde  
Michael Sherman  
Joseph Sova  
Tammy Tod

*Opposed:*  
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Member Plourde cautioned that Member Town officials should not be taken by surprise by this vote and informing them of the need for this additional money should be done before it is announced that the School Committee is authorizing this borrowing. The membership was assured that this vote was only a vote to authorize the obtaining of bids.

Upon inquiry, the Superintendent confirmed the projected completion date is August 2007.

Motion: The Superintendent prepare a public relations plan in which he will indicate how the public will be informed of the District's need to borrow additional funds for the high school project.

(R. Carter)  
(M. Sherman)

Discussion continued.

Motion: To move the question.

(M. Sherman)  
(J. Nunnari)

Roll call vote:  
*In favor:*

Cynthia Ahearn  
Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber  
Mark James  
John Nunnari

Norman Plourde  
Michael Sherman  
Joseph Sova  
Tammy Tod

*Opposed:*

Melinda Coyle

*Abstained:*

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 11-1-1)

Roll call vote on main motion:

*In favor:*

Cynthia Ahearn  
Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber  
Mark James  
John Nunnari  
Norman Plourde  
Michael Sherman  
Joseph Sova  
Tammy Tod

*Opposed:*

Melinda Coyle

*Abstained:*

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 11-1-1)

Motion: To adjourn.

(M. Sherman)  
(J. Nunnari)

Roll call vote:

*In favor:*

Margaret Watson  
Cynthia Ahearn  
Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
Melinda Coyle  
Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber

Mark James  
John Nunnari  
Norman Plourde  
Michael Sherman  
Joseph Sova  
Tammy Tod

*Opposed:*  
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The executive session adjourned at 9:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP:rlp