

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Special Meeting #284 Thursday, May 7, 2009

Media Center
Wachusett Regional High School

Committee Members Present:

Margaret Watson, Chair	Robert Imber
John Nunnari, Vice-chair	Mark James
Thomas Ackerman	Duncan Leith
Cynthia Bazinet	Michael Pantos
Robert Carter	Robert Pelczarski
Colleen Cipro	Norman Plourde
Shirley Conrad	Michael Sherman
Steven Hammond	Joseph Sova

Committee Members Absent:

Melinda Coyle	Stacey Jackson
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Administration Present:

Thomas G. Pandiscio, Superintendent of Schools
John Locke, Deputy Superintendent
Darryll McCall, Director of Operations
Susan Sullivan, Director of Human Resources
Peter Brennan, Business Manager
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

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

Chair Watson called the special meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:03 PM. She welcomed Senator Stephen Brewer, Senator Jennifer Flanagan, Representative Lewis Evangelidis, Member Town officials and members of the public. Chair Watson explained the meeting format: area legislators would speak, to be followed by a question and answer period; Superintendent Pandiscio would speak, to be followed by a question and answer period; Member Town officials would be invited to speak, to be followed by a question and answer period.

Senator Brewer distributed a diagram titled FALLING REVENUES (attachment 2). He encouraged all to go online to view a recently released report prepared by the Special Commission on Municipal Relief May 2009. He spoke of the grim state of the economy and how he sees it unfolding.

Representative Evangelidis followed Senator Brewer, giving his version of the current economic state. He too stressed the dire fiscal conditions being experienced.

Senator Flanagan next spoke, sharing Senator Brewer's and Representative Evangelidis' opinions and views on the financial crisis.

The legislators' presentations concluded at 7:30 PM and members of the School Committee were given the opportunity to ask questions, which they did. At 7:46 PM Chair Watson thanked Senators Brewer and Flanagan and Representative Evangelidis for attending the meeting in an effort to keep the lines of communication open. Chair Watson said that she was told Senator Chandler was on her way and should be arriving in Holden shortly. When Senator Chandler arrives she would have the opportunity to address the School Committee.

7:48 PM Senators Brewer and Flanagan and Representative Evangelidis left the meeting.

Chair Watson next gave Superintendent Pandiscio the floor. Superintendent Pandiscio distributed *FY10 Proposed Appropriation 05.07.09 Applying Revised ARRA/SFSF* (Expenditures), *FY10 Proposed Assessments* (Revenues), Amendments from Local Aid (attachments 3, 4 & 5). Superintendent Pandiscio started to explain the data in the attachments.

7:52 PM Senator Chandler joined the meeting.

Chair Watson welcomed Senator Chandler and invited her to the podium. For the School Committee's information, Senator Chandler had made copies of *The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Education Funding for Massachusetts May 6, 2009* (attachment 6). Senator Chandler echoed the sentiments of her colleagues who spoke earlier in the evening. Following Senator Chandler's presentation, the Committee was offered the chance to ask questions.

8:15 PM Senator Chandler left the meeting.

Chair Watson once again turned the meeting over to Superintendent Pandiscio. Superintendent Pandiscio continued his explanation of the budget documents he distributed. Members of the Committee were given the opportunity to ask questions of the Superintendent.

At 8:27 PM Chair Watson recognized Member Town officials and invited them to the microphone.

8:28 PM Member Sherman left the table.

Following Member Town officials' addresses, the School Committee members were welcomed to engage in dialogue.

8:32 PM Member Sherman returned to the table.

Discussion continued. Questions were asked about the motion made, and then tabled, at the April 27, 2009 School Committee meeting. To address the April 27, 2009 motion, a motion would need to be made at this meeting to take the motion from the table.

Motion: To take from the table the motion that was made and tabled on April 27, 2009.
(M. James)
(S. Conrad)

Discussion continued. The Committee was reminded of the April 27, 2009 motion language: To table the motion on the floor (to increase Member Town assessments by \$1,008,512) to a time certain, Thursday, May 7, 2009, at 7:00 PM. It was explained that a vote in favor of the motion now on the floor would open discussion of the April 27, 2009 motion; a vote opposed would keep the April 27, 2009 motion tabled.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

None

Opposed:

John Nunnari
Thomas Ackerman
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(The motion failed 15-0-1)

Motion: To accept the proposed *FY10 Appropriation* as presented, which increases the appropriation by \$179,082.

(D. Leith)
(M. Pantos)

Discussion of the motion ensued. Questions were raised about Annual Town Meeting protocol and if warrant articles can be changed on Town Meeting floor. Holden Town Manager Brian Bullock spoke to clarify town meeting protocol and the fact that a warrant

article cannot be changed on Holden Town Meeting floor. Representatives from Paxton and Sterling confirmed protocol in their towns were the same.

Upon hearing from Member Town officials, the motion on the floor was withdrawn by the maker of the motion, agreed to by the seconder.

Discussion continued.

Motion: The Superintendent of Schools, School Committee representatives and the District executive staff will schedule discussions with representatives from Member Towns Holden, Paxton and Sterling to address the procedure as to how the towns will fund an increase to the state mandated MLC figure as shown on the *Proposed FY10 Assessments* dated 5/7/09

(M. Pantos)
(M. Sherman)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Thomas Ackerman
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

(The motion passed unanimously.)

Motion: To adjourn.

(M. Sherman)
(M. Pantos)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari

Thomas Ackerman
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:
None

(The motion passed unanimously.)

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP:rlp