

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Special Meeting

Thursday, August 9, 2012

Media Center
Wachusett Regional High School

Committee Members Present:

Duncan Leith, Chair	Sarah LaMountain
Colleen Cipro, Vice-chair	James Mason
Steven Hammond	Kenneth Mills
Lance Harris	Robert Pelczarski
Robert Imber	Norman Plourde
Stacey Jackson	Robert Remillard
Julianne Kelley	Erik Scheinfeldt
Deidre Kosky	Michelle Sciabarrasi
	Margaret Watson

Committee Members Absent:

Cynthia Bazinet	Athas Tsongalis
William Clute	

Administration Present:

Thomas G. Pandiscio, Superintendent of Schools
Kelley Gangi, Director of Curriculum
Darryll McCall, Director of Operations
Susan Sullivan, Director of Human Resources
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

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

I. Call to Order

Chair Leith called the special meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:00 PM.

II. Public Hearing

Members were provided with copies of the revised meeting agenda (attachment 2). Chair Leith explained that a public hearing was added to this special meeting agenda at the request of School Committee members. Chair Leith read aloud the Guidelines for Public Hearing.

Anthony Renzoni, Holden, addressed the School Committee. (Mr. Renzoni noted he was speaking on his own behalf and not as a Holden Selectboard member.)

Robert Lavigne, Holden, addressed the School Committee. (Mr. Lavigne noted he was speaking on his own behalf and not as a Holden Selectboard member.)

Jason Newton, Holden, read a prepared statement (attachment 3).

Christine Smith, Holden, addressed the School Committee.

III. FY13 Budget

Chair Leith turned the meeting over to Superintendent Pandiscio. Superintendent Pandiscio reported that, following School Committee action at the August 6, 2012 special meeting, District administration had reduced funds available for an audit from \$300,000 to \$50,000 (a \$250,000 savings), and the budgeted FY13 salary for a Business Manager was reduced from \$115,000 to \$80,000 (due to the fact this position will be vacant for at least a portion of the year, until a new Business Manager is hired). Superintendent Pandiscio provided members and those in the audience with a spreadsheet *FY13 Possible Reductions* (attachment 4). Superintendent Pandiscio spoke to the possible reductions listed on the spreadsheet. Discussion ensued, with most members of the Committee participating in the discussion. During the discussion period, Superintendent Pandiscio told the Committee he and District administration need direction on how to proceed. More discussion took place.

Motion: Move that the School Committee review a budget prepared by District administration that presents cuts to include custodial staff, secretarial staff, and the Energy Educator position, but does not include teacher reductions.

(R. Remillard)

(S. Jackson)

Discussion continued.

Per Superintendent Pandiscio, reductions under consideration at this meeting could include those listed on attachment 5 (*FY13 Personnel Reductions*). For the record, Member Watson spoke to the reduction of the Media Specialist – WRHS, strongly suggesting that that vacancy at the high school be temporary, firmly stating that having the high school Media Center staffed by a Media Specialist/MLS is very important for accreditation purposes.

Member Mills made a friendly amendment that the teaching positions that do not affect class size (high school math, two high school English, one physical education) be excluded from protection of teacher reductions in the motion on the floor. This friendly amendment was accepted by the maker and seconder of the motion.

Discussion continued.

Motion: Move that the School Committee review a budget prepared by District administration that presents cuts to include custodial staff, secretarial staff, and the Energy Educator position, but does not include teacher reductions, excluding from protection the teaching positions that do not affect class size (high school math, two high school English, one physical education).

(R. Remillard)
(S. Jackson)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Kenneth Mills
Robert Remillard

Opposed:

Duncan Leith
Colleen Cipro
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Deidre Kosky
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Erik Scheinfeldt
Michelle Sciabarrasi
Margaret Watson

The motion failed 4-13.

Motion: To direct the Superintendent to apply the surplus \$62,383.76 towards a solution to restore teaching personnel and to adopt the budget proposal as presented.

(M. Sciabarrasi)
(R. Imber)

Member Harris made a friendly amendment to re-order the two directives in the motion on the floor. The friendly amendment was accepted by the maker and seconder of the motion.

Motion: To adopt the budget proposal as presented and to direct the Superintendent to apply the surplus \$62,383.76 towards a solution to restore teaching personnel.

(M. Sciabarrasi)
(R. Imber)

Member Mills made a friendly amendment to prioritize restoring a teaching position in Holden. Superintendent Pandiscio and others around the table understood Member Mills' position, but voiced the need to leave some flexibility in the motion. The maker of the motion did not accept the friendly amendment, but did comment she would trust the Superintendent to understand the intent behind Member Mills' friendly amendment.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Colleen Cipro
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Michelle Sciabarrasi
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

Julianne Kelley

Abstained:

Stacey Jackson
Deidre Kosky

The motion passed 14-1-2.

Motion: To reconsider the vote of the School Committee to eliminate the position of the Chocksett Middle School principal.

(E. Scheinfeldt)
(L. Harris)

There was debate if this matter should or should not be a motion to reconsider. Following discussion and debate, Member Scheinfeldt withdrew his motion.

Motion: To reinstate the position of the Chocksett Middle School principal for the 2012-2013 school year, transferring such funds as are necessary.

(E. Scheinfeldt)
(L. Harris)

Member Harris spoke to the motion, and suggested restoring the principal position using funds from the “extraordinary expense” line for this “extraordinary expense.” Chair Leith noted “extraordinary” language is not included in the motion on the floor. Member Harris clarified he is referencing the “extraordinary expense” line, not the E&D line. Discussion ensued. Member Plourde read a prepared statement (attachment 6). Discussion continued. The motion was re-read.

Motion: To reinstate the position of the Chocksett Middle School principal for the 2012-2013 school year, transferring such funds as are necessary.

(E. Scheinfeldt)

(L. Harris)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Lance Harris

Opposed:

Duncan Leith

Colleen Cipro

Steven Hammond

Robert Imber

Stacey Jackson

Julianne Kelley

Deidre Kosky

Sarah LaMountain

James Mason

Kenneth Mills

Robert Pelczarski

Norman Plourde

Robert Remillard

Erik Scheinfeldt

Michelle Sciabarrasi

Margaret Watson

The motion failed 1-16.

- IV. Executive session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining, and to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel related to a budget shortfall

Motion: To enter executive session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining, and to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel related to a budget shortfall, not to return to public session.

(R. Imber)

(M. Watson)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Colleen Cipro
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Deidre Kosky
Sarah LaMountain
James Mason
Kenneth Mills
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Erik Scheinfeldt
Michelle Sciabarrasi
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee adjourned to executive session at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP:rlp