

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN * PAXTON * PRINCETON * RUTLAND * STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting, Tuesday, October 25, 2005

Executive Session

9:55 PM

Library

Central Tree Middle School, Rutland

Committee Members Present:

Alice Livdahl, Chair

Michael Sherman, Vice-Chair

Cynthia Ahearn

Cynthia Bazinet

Elizabeth Brennan

Robert Carter

Shirley Conrad

Mark James

Mary Catherine Maher

Kelly Maxwell

Phillip Mighdoll

Judith Newton

Norman Plourde

Kathleen Sweeney

Tammy Tod

Margaret Watson

Committee Members Absent:

Charles Capparelli

David Gibbs

John Nunnari

Cheryl Rauh

Also in attendance: Thomas Pandiscio, Superintendent of Schools

Following a vote to enter into executive session not to return to public session, and a brief recess, Chair Livdahl called the executive session to order.

Motion: To extend the meeting for forty-five minutes.

(M. Watson)

(M. James)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
Mark James
Mary Catherine Maher
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
Norman Plourde
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Chair Livdahl explained that in the negotiations leading up to Dr. Pandiscio's contract there had been discussion of paying Dr. Pandiscio for seventy-five accumulated sick days under his old contract, pursuant to the terms of that contract, and allowing him to carry forward 90 of his accumulated sick days into his new contract (without a buy-back option). However, when the new contract was finalized, no vote had been taken concerning the seventy-five days and Dr. Tutela had not compensated Dr. Pandiscio for these days prior to leaving. A letter from Attorney Naomi Stonberg was distributed summarizing the problem. Dr. Pandiscio stated that Dr. Tutela did not make the payment because until the moment Dr. Tutela left, Dr. Pandiscio was still employed as a principal under his previous contract and would not have been entitled to the payment.

Motion: To pay Dr. Pandiscio for seventy-five (75) days of accumulated sick days at the rate of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per day and to authorize the Chair and/or Treasurer to sign the check and any other necessary documentation.

(R. Carter)

(S. Conrad)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
Mark James
Mary Catherine Maher
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
Norman Plourde
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Chair Livdahl recognized Dr. Pandiscio, who updated the Committee on the status of negotiations with the architect for the high school addition/renovation project. He stated that he could not yet provide an accurate number for the cost overruns, but figures would be forthcoming shortly. He stressed that the amount of the overrun should be less than the savings to the towns resulting from the new SBA financing arrangements.

Dr. Pandiscio informed the Committee that the High School Building Committee was torn between continuing to work with the present architectural firm, SHR, or terminating their services and hiring the third

bidder. Neither firm could complete the work for the original bid amount. Hiring a new firm would cost \$1.3 to \$1.8 million more than the original bid and keeping SHR on would cost an estimated \$500,000 to \$600,000 more. While keeping SHR would cost less, there was a risk that they would not be able to stay in business long enough to get the job done. Also there was the problem that we would be paying more to SHR than they were entitled to under the contract, to allow them to rehire Gene Raymond, a principal who had left the firm. Dr. Pandiscio stressed that no final decision had been made. He discussed a possible “barbell” funding approach in which SHR would be paid some of the additional money up front to get them going and the rest of the additional money at the end as an incentive for getting the job done.

Robert Carter asked Dr. Pandiscio if he felt the SHR had the ability to complete the project. Dr. Pandiscio said he thought so.

Phillip Mighdoll pointed out the risk that if we stayed with SHR and they could not complete the job, we would be paying twice for architectural services.

Shirley Conrad asked if we would still have recourse against SHR’s insurance and bond if we continued to do business with them. Dr. Pandiscio replied that we would.

Phillip Mighdoll asked if we went with a new architect could we still sue SHR. Dr. Pandiscio replied that we could, but we might lose SHR as our star witness against the contractor on the fill, ledge and erosion control issues.

Chair Livdahl asked Dr. Pandiscio whether SHR, the architect, or TLT, the contractor, was at fault for the erosion control issues. Dr. Pandiscio answered that it was perhaps 50/50.

Motion: To exit executive session and adjourn.

(R. Carter)

(M. James)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
Mark James
Mary Catherine Maher
Kelly Maxwell
Judith Newton
Norman Plourde
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Phillip Mighdoll

(Motion passed 15-0-1)

Meeting adjourned at 10:45PM

Alice Livdahl
Acting Secretary