

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1175 Monday, January 11, 2010

Media Center  
Wachusett Regional High School

*Committee Members Present:*

Margaret Watson, Chair	Duncan Leith
John Nunnari, Vice-chair	Michael Pantos
Cynthia Bazinet	Robert Pelczarski
Robert Carter	Norman Plourde
William Clute	Michelle Sciabarrasi
Sherry Conrad (7:15 PM)	Joseph Sova
Steven Hammond	Kori Stuart
Robert Imber	Dawn Torres-Gale (7:25 PM)
Stacey Jackson	

*Committee Members Absent:*

Colleen Cipro	Julianne Kelley
Kristine Goodwin	

*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

*Student Representatives Present:*

None

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

Chair Watson called the regular meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:05 PM. She informed the Committee that the meeting is not being taped this evening.

I. Public Hearing

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

II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of 1174<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRDSC held on December 14, 2009

Chair Watson noted that on page 5, the last paragraph, District Counsel McCabe's last name was missing.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held December 14, 2009, as corrected.

(S. Hammond)  
(M. Pantos)

The minutes of the regular meeting of the School Committee held December 14, 2009 were approved, by consensus, with Members Clute and Sova abstaining.

III. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

Chair Watson reminded the Committee that if there were questions regarding the Business Manager'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.

IV. Committee Reports

- A. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Watson reported that because of illness Treasurer Dunbar was unable to attend this School Committee meeting. Mr. Dunbar will attend a future meeting.

Chair Watson provided members with pocket-sized copies of a Chart of Parliamentary Motions recently obtained from MASC (attachment 2). Members who need a copy of *Roberts Rules* were asked to call the Central Office to request a copy.

Chair Watson thanked all who contacted the Governor's office seeking reversal of recent 9C cuts. This action apparently helped bring around the reversal of these cuts.

Chair Watson spoke of a meeting on December 17<sup>th</sup> when the Holden Selectboard and Holden School Committee representatives sat to discuss FY11 budgets. Holden Selectboard members plan to bring information gathered at that meeting to the Massachusetts Municipal Association 2010 annual meeting.

Chair Watson called the Committee's attention to attachment 13 of the January 7, 2010 Superintendent's Report, *MASC Legislative Bulletin*. Chair

Watson explained this bulletin summarized the MASC meeting she attended on December 12, 2009.

7:15 PM Member Conrad joined the meeting.

B. Student Representatives (Greg Savageau, Leanne Becker, Katie Carlson)

Because the Student Representatives were attending the National Honor Society Induction Ceremony they were not in attendance at this meeting.

C. Management Subcommittee (M. Watson, Chair, J. Nunnari, Vice-chair, C. Bazinet, R. Imber, J. Kelley, D. Leith, N. Plourde, K. Stuart)

Chair Watson reported the next meeting of the Management Subcommittee is posted for Monday, February 1<sup>st</sup>. There are policies that require updating and these policies will be discussed and reviewed at the February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

D. Education Subcommittee (C. Bazinet, Chair, S. Hammond, Vice-chair, R. Imber, S. Jackson, J. Nunnari, R. Pelczarski, N. Plourde, D. Torres-Gale)

Subcommittee Chair Bazinet reported on the January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Education Subcommittee. The Superintendent's December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting with the West Boylston Task Force was discussed by the Education Subcommittee. Following consideration and discussion at the Education meeting, it was concluded that a possible option might be this district's interest in having West Boylston high school students attend Wachusett Regional High School in order to experience a larger high school setting. Superintendent Pandiscio will contact the West Boylston Task Force spokesperson to ascertain the level of interest West Boylston might have in such a limited option.

Subcommittee Chair Bazinet reported that the Education Subcommittee also discussed the January 6<sup>th</sup> meeting in Rutland regarding the proposed elementary school reconfiguration. The Education Subcommittee also reviewed Deputy Superintendent Locke's report on gifted education, a copy of which will be included in the January 21, 2010 Superintendent's Report and will be discussed at the January 25<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting.

The date for the next meeting has not yet been determined.

7:25 PM Member Torres-Gale joined the meeting.

At the conclusion of Subcommittee Chair Bazinet's report, the topic of West Boylston's interest in possibly joining this district was discussed further. Superintendent Pandiscio had the thought that if Wachusett provided a certain number of seats at WRHS for West Boylston high school students seeking a larger high school experience, West Boylston could reciprocate and provide a certain number of seats at West Boylston High School for Wachusett high

school students seeking a smaller high school experience, although he is not convinced this is something that will happen.

- E. Business/Finance Subcommittee (D. Leith, Chair, S. Conrad, Vice-chair, R. Carter, W. Clute, M. Pantos, M. Sciabarrasi, J. Sova)

Business/Finance Chair Leith reported the next meeting of this subcommittee will be posted shortly. Subcommittee Chair Leith went on to report that Holden residents Hal Lane and George Balko have set up a 501c3 corporation and have expressed interest in working with the School Committee in this Charitable Foundation. Mr. Lane, Mr. Balko, WRHS teacher Carol Sullivan and others will be meeting on January 12, 2010, after which they will contact Subcommittee Chair Leith to schedule a time that group can meet with the Business/Finance Subcommittee to discuss a possible collaboration of efforts.

7:30 PM Superintendent Pandiscio left the meeting to make an appearance at the NHS Induction Ceremony.

Chair Watson added that Messrs. Lane and Balko have posed the suggestion that a WRDSC member serve as a director on that board.

- F. Community Outreach Subcommittee (C. Cipro, Chair, R. Pelczarski, Vice-chair, R. Carter, K. Goodwin, M. Sciabarrasi, K. Stuart, D. Torres-Gale)

In Subcommittee Chair Cipro's absence, Vice-chair Pelczarski gave a report on the December 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of this subcommittee. He called the Committee's attention to attachment 8 of the Superintendent's January 7<sup>th</sup> Report, a letter drafted by Chair Watson to go to Paxton, Princeton, Rutland and Sterling Selectboards encouraging them to meet with their town's School Committee representatives to discuss the upcoming budget season, similar to the meeting held in Holden mid-December.

Motion: To direct the Chair of the School Committee to send letters to the Paxton, Princeton, Rutland and Sterling Selectboards encouraging them to meet with School Committee representatives from their towns to discuss FY11 budgets.

Vote:

*In favor:*

Margaret Watson  
John Nunnari  
Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
William Clute  
Shirley Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber  
Stacey Jackson

Duncan Leith  
Michael Pantos  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Michelle Sciabarrasi  
Joseph Sova  
Kori Stuart  
Dawn Torres-Gale

*Opposed:*  
None

(The motion passed unanimously.)

G. Audit Advisory Board (S. Conrad, J. Sova)

AAB Chair Conrad reported the Audit Advisory Board has not met since the last School Committee meeting.

H. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

1. Ad Hoc Subcommittee for Supplemental Revenue FY11 (M. Sciabarrasi, J. Sova)

Co-chairs Sciabarrasi and Sova reported a letter seeking donations had gone home to parents before the end of the year and some donations have been received. Member Carter asked the amount received to date, which Business Manager Brennan reported was \$1,725. Business Manager Brennan will have a complete report on receipts in his next report to the School Committee. Chair Watson commended *The Landmark* on the coverage given to C.A.R.E. (Champion Alternative Revenue for Education). The next meeting of this ad hoc subcommittee is posted for Wednesday, February 3, 2010.

I. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (M. Pantos), Chocksett Middle School (J. Sova), Davis Hill Elementary School (R. Carter), Dawson Elementary School (D. Torres-Gale), Glenwood Elementary School (J. Kelley), Houghton Elementary School (S. Conrad/N. Plourde), Mayo Elementary School (S. Hammond), Mountview Middle School (K. Goodwin), Naquag Elementary School (C. Cipro), Paxton Center School (W. Clute), Thomas Prince School (R. Imber/M. Sciabarrasi), Wachusett Regional High School (D. Leith), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (S. Jackson), Early Childhood Center (S. Jackson)

Stacey Jackson reported that the ECC open house held on January 5, 2010 was very successful and very well attended. She also reported that ECC has full enrollment for September 2010.

The Superintendent was still at the NHS Induction Ceremony and had not yet returned to the meeting.

Motion: To modify the School Committee meeting agenda and move the Superintendent's Report to the last item on the agenda.

(M. Pantos)

(S. Conrad)

Chair Watson explained this vote must be by roll call and a 2/3 majority in favor is needed to pass.

Roll call vote:

*In favor:*

Margaret Watson  
John Nunnari  
Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
William Clute  
Shirley Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber  
Stacey Jackson  
Duncan Leith  
Michael Pantos  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Michelle Sciabarrasi  
Joseph Sova  
Kori Stuart  
Dawn Torres-Gale

*Opposed:*

None

(The motion passed unanimously.)

V. Public Hearing

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

VI. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business brought before the Committee

VII. New Business

Motion: To accept the gift of stage lighting at Glenwood Elementary School, donated by Mr. and Mrs. David Sachs of Rutland.

(M. Pantos)  
(S. Hammond)

Vote:

*In favor:*

Margaret Watson  
John Nunnari  
Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
William Clute  
Shirley Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber  
Stacey Jackson  
Duncan Leith  
Michael Pantos  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Michelle Sciabarrasi  
Joseph Sova  
Kori Stuart  
Dawn Torres-Gale

*Opposed:*

None

(The motion passed unanimously.)

7:45 PM Superintendent Pandiscio returned to the table.

Member Leith spoke of the January 5, 2010 dedication ceremony of the Black Box Theater in honor of the late Doug Ingalls.

Chair Watson reported the Committee will be asked to adjourn to executive session at the conclusion of the regular meeting, not to return to public session.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Superintendent Pandiscio called the Committee's attention to attachment 2 of his January 7<sup>th</sup> Report and discussion of the *Race to the Top* grant (RTTT) ensued. The question was asked what role the School Committee would play should the District receive the grant. Superintendent Pandiscio explained that

the Memorandum of Understanding, due to the state by January 13<sup>th</sup>, must be signed by the School Committee Chair, as well as by the teachers' union (WREA) president and the Superintendent of Schools. He further explained that the Committee would need to be involved if implementation of the goals and objectives of the grant affect the collectively bargained agreement between the District and the WREA. The Superintendent has attended meetings about this grant and has read much about this grant, but details are still somewhat vague. He told the Committee he believes it makes sense for Wachusett to sign the Memorandum of Understanding by the deadline, further explaining the District can withdraw at a future date, if so desired. It is clear that if a school/district does not sign the MoU by January 13, 2010, that school/district cannot sign on at a later date.

Member Stuart raised a question about wind power/the installation of a turbine on WRHS property. She asked how the Superintendent perceives to move forward in these difficult financial times. Superintendent Pandiscio explained there are state grant programs available for a feasibility study, as well as for actual construction/implementation. An estimated expense of \$20,000-\$40,000 would cover the costs of installation of equipment for a 12 month wind survey. Superintendent Pandiscio and Business Manager Brennan will be meeting with HMLD Manager Jim Robinson on January 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss this matter. They have also met with representatives from the Massachusetts Renewal Energy Trust about alternative energy.

Member Pelczarski returned to the topic of the RTTT grant and advised that the District should not sign the Memorandum of Understanding "just to sign." The state wants schools/districts that are sincerely interested in participating to sign on. Member Pantos asked if the WREA is on board, to which the Superintendent answered in the affirmative. Superintendent Pandiscio and WREA President Becker attended a RTTT informational meeting at Worcester State College on January 6, 2010.

8:19 PM Member Pantos left the table.

Discussion of the RTTT grant continued. The Superintendent again stated that the District can opt-out in the future, if so desired. He went on to explain that a point system will be used to determine which states will be eligible for this grant.

8:22 PM Member Pantos returned to the table.

Member Carter asked questions about professional development at WRHS, referencing Deputy Superintendent Locke's report. Deputy Superintendent Locke explained differentiated instruction and how such is put into practice.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee



Motion: To endorse the signing of the *Race to the Top* grant Memorandum of Understanding.

(R. Imber)  
(C. Bazinet)

Member Conrad made a friendly amendment that the Committee should direct the School Committee Chair and the Superintendent of Schools to sign the RTTT grant Memorandum of Understanding. This friendly amendment was accepted by the maker and seconder of the motion.

Motion: To direct the Chair of the School Committee and the Superintendent of Schools to sign the *Race to the Top* grant Memorandum of Understanding, as a sign of support of these initial steps in the grant application process.

(R. Imber)  
(C. Bazinet)

Roll call vote:

*In favor:*

Margaret Watson  
John Nunnari  
Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
William Clute  
Shirley Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber  
Stacey Jackson  
Duncan Leith  
Michael Pantos  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Michelle Sciabarrasi  
Joseph Sova  
Kori Stuart  
Dawn Torres-Gale

*Opposed:*

None

(The motion passed unanimously.)

IX. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn to executive session for the purpose of contract negotiations, not to return to public session.

(M. Pantos)  
(J. Nunnari)

Roll call vote:

*In favor:*

Margaret Watson  
John Nunnari  
Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
William Clute  
Shirley Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber  
Stacey Jackson  
Duncan Leith  
Michael Pantos  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Michelle Sciabarrasi  
Joseph Sova  
Kori Stuart  
Dawn Torres-Gale

*Opposed:*

None

(The motion passed unanimously.)

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP:rlp