

**WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

**HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING**

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1186 Monday, August 16, 2010

Media Center  
Wachusett Regional High School

Committee Members Present:

Duncan Leith, Chair	Stacey Jackson
Joseph Sova, Vice-chair	Julianne Kelley
Robert Carter	Robert Pelczarski
Colleen Cipro (7:15 PM)	Norman Plourde
Shirley Conrad	Robert Remillard
Steven Hammond	Dawn Torres-Gale
Lance Harris	Margaret Watson

Committee Members Absent:

Cynthia Bazinet	Robert Imber
William Clute	Michelle Sciabarrasi
Kristine Goodwin	Athas Tsongalis

Administration Present:

Thomas G. Pandiscio, Superintendent of Schools  
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:

Katie Carlson	Brian Clement
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Others present, who desired to be recorded as present (see attached Attendance Sheet - attachment 1).

Chair Leith called the regular meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:03 PM. Chair Leith announced the meeting was being taped, although it was not being shown live.

I. Public Hearing

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

II. Secretary's Report

A. Approval of Minutes of the Executive Session of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on July 19, 2010

Chair Leith asked members to review the minutes and if no corrections of substance were noted, these minutes could be approved in public session. If substantive corrections are noted, the minutes would be approved in executive session.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the executive session of the School Committee held July 19, 2010, not to be released.

(S. Conrad)

(S. Hammond)

Roll call vote:

*In favor:*

Duncan Leith  
Joseph Sova  
Sherry Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Lance Harris  
Stacey Jackson  
Julianne Kelley  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Dawn Torres-Gale

*Opposed:*

None

*Abstained:*

Robert Carter  
Robert Remillard  
Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 10-0-3)

B. Approval of 1185<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on July 19, 2010 – enclosed

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held on July 19, 2010

(J. Sova)

(S. Conrad)

The minutes of the regular meeting of the School Committee held July 19, 2010 were approved, by consensus, with Members Carter, Remillard and Watson abstaining.

III. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

Chair Leith 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 Leith welcomed the newest member of the School Committee representing the Town of Rutland – Robert Remillard, explaining that Member Remillard was appointed by the Rutland Selectboard to fill the vacancy created when Michael Pantos resigned from the School Committee. Member Remillard was appointed to May 2011.

Chair Leith congratulated Member Carter on his being selected to receive a Massachusetts Association of School Committee Lifetime Achievement 2010 Award, which will be presented to Member Carter at the annual MASC/MASS Joint Conference in November.

B. Student Representatives

Chair Leith reported on the brief meeting of the Management Subcommittee, held just before the start of the regular School Committee meeting, to which the three Student Representatives had been invited in order to provide orientation as to the roles and responsibilities of Student Representatives.

The two Student Representatives at the table, Brian Clement and Katie Carlson, expressed appreciation for being able to serve as Student Representatives, Katie Carlson serving a second term. Both students commented that there is not much to report at this time, since school is not yet in session.

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

Chair Leith again noted the Management Subcommittee had met just before the start of this School Committee meeting and also reported that the date for the next Management meeting has not yet been scheduled. The email Chair Leith received from former Student Representative Greg Savageau will be considered at an upcoming Management Subcommittee meeting.

- D. Education Subcommittee (S. Hammond, Chair, S. Jackson, Vice-chair, C. Bazinet, L. Harris, R. Imber, R. Pelczarski, N. Plourde, D. Torres-Gale, M. Watson)

Subcommittee Chair Hammond reported the Education Subcommittee had met on July 27, 2010 and that Member Jackson was elected Vice-chair of the subcommittee. The subcommittee will meet next on Monday, September 20, 2010, at 7:00 PM in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

- E. Business/Finance Subcommittee (J. Sova, Chair, C. Cipro, W. Clute, S. Conrad, D. Leith, M. Sciabarrasi, A. Tsongalis)

Subcommittee Chair Sova reported this subcommittee will meet on Wednesday, August 18, 2010.

- F. Community Outreach Subcommittee (K. Goodwin, Chair, L. Harris, R. Pelczarski, M. Sciabarrasi, A. Tsongalis, M. Watson)

In Community Outreach Chair Goodwin's absence, Chair Leith announced this subcommittee will meet on Monday, September 13, 2010, at 6:00 PM, just before the start of the regular School Committee meeting. The format for Community Outreach Subcommittee meetings will be 6:00 PM call to order to address business on the agenda, followed by a public hearing portion of the meeting from 6:30 – 7:00 PM. The second half hour of the meeting (6:30 – 7:00 PM) is to give members of the public the opportunity to address the Community Outreach Subcommittee.

7:15 PM Member Cipro joined the meeting.

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

AAB Chair Conrad reported that District auditors Powers & Sullivan would be at the Central Office on Monday, August 23, to begin their annual audit. AAB Chair Conrad expects to call a meeting of the Audit Advisory Board sometime mid-September.

- H. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

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

Member Watson provided Chair Leith with a copy of the charge to the Ad Hoc Subcommittee for Supplemental Revenue FY11. Member Sova reported that this subcommittee has not yet finalized its work, but expects to in the near future.

Motion: To extend the appointment of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee for Supplemental Revenue FY11 until October 15, 2010.

(M. Watson)

(S. Conrad)

Vote:

*In favor:*

Duncan Leith  
Joseph Sova  
Robert Carter  
Colleen Cipro  
Sherry Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Lance Harris  
Stacey Jackson  
Julianne Kelley  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Robert Remillard  
Dawn Torres-Gale  
Margaret Watson

*Opposed:*

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

I. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (C. Cipro), Chocksett Middle School (J. Sova), Davis Hill Elementary School (S. Jackson), Dawson Elementary School, Glenwood Elementary School (A. Tsongalis), Houghton Elementary School (N. Plourde), Mayo Elementary School (M. Watson), Mountview Middle School (S. Hammond), Naquag Elementary School (J. Kelley), Paxton Center School (W. Clute), Thomas Prince School (R. Imber/M. Sciabarrasi), Wachusett Regional

High School (M. Sciabarrasi), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (S. Jackson), Early Childhood Center (S. Jackson)

Member Jackson reported SEPAC will hold its fall open house at Davis Hill Elementary School on Thursday, September 16, from 7:00 – 9:00 PM.

Member Carter volunteered to serve on the Dawson Elementary School School Council.

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Upon request, Superintendent Pandiscio gave a brief update of the status of the met tower proposed to be installed on the high school site and the appeal filed by a group of Holden residents. The appeal has been forwarded to District Counsel Leo McCabe for his legal analysis and recommendations. Superintendent Pandiscio did say that based upon Attorney McCabe's legal opinions, a cost analysis will need to be done to determine if it is reasonable, financially, to challenge the appeal. Superintendent Pandiscio said he will provide a more detailed summary in his next Report.

Member Carter asked the Superintendent about information he had recently read about the possibility of the District receiving additional state funds. Member Carter was referring to Medicaid, Jobs Bill, Race to the Top funds, about which Superintendent Pandiscio does not have any definitive information/knowledge. If the Superintendent learns about such additional funding, he will share the information with the School Committee.

Discussion of the possibility of "new found money" continued, with questions being raised if the reinstatement of teaching positions would be a priority. Superintendent Pandiscio stated there is never "extra money" from the state and that he would like to see the budget in September 2010 look like the budget in September 2009, which it does not at this time.

Questions were raised and answered about information contained in the Business Manager's report.

Member Torres-Gale thanked the Superintendent for providing information in his Report about military recruiters visiting the high school to meet with students.

Member Watson called the Committee's attention to attachment 10 of the Superintendent's Report, a memorandum from the Glenwood PTO seeking permission to give "Back to School" gift cards to teachers and

support staff at Glenwood Elementary School. Member Watson referenced Policy 4280 Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Gifts, Grants and Bequests. Discussion ensued.

Motion: To refer to the Business/Finance Subcommittee the memorandum from the Glenwood Elementary School PTO to determine if the request to present gift cards to teachers and support staff conforms to School Committee Policy 4280.

(M. Watson)

(N. Plourde)

Member Conrad asked that Business Manager Brennan speak with District auditors to obtain guidance on staff acceptance of gift cards. Discussion continued. Member Conrad stated she is more concerned about conforming with Massachusetts General Laws and ethics regulations. She would want to be sure that there is a paper trail to track when such gifts are received by District staff. Member Conrad made a friendly amendment, which was accepted by the maker of the motion, that District auditors also be asked to provide their opinion about what steps need to be taken to insure compliance with Massachusetts General Law and ethics regulations when District staff accepts gift cards/gift certificates. Following discussion, Member Conrad withdrew her friendly amendment. The motion was re-read.

Motion: To refer to the Business/Finance Subcommittee the memorandum from the Glenwood Elementary School PTO to determine if the request to present gift cards to teachers and support staff conforms to School Committee Policy 4280.

(M. Watson)

(N. Plourde)

Roll call vote:

*In favor:*

Robert Pelczarski

Norman Plourde

Margaret Watson

*Opposed:*

Joseph Sova

Robert Carter

Colleen Cipro

Sherry Conrad

Steven Hammond

Lance Harris

Stacey Jackson

Julianne Kelley  
Robert Remillard  
Dawn Torres-Gale

*Abstained:*

Duncan Leith

(Motion failed 3-10-1)

Motion: To instruct District administration to collect and maintain receipts from District staff who are the recipients of gift cards/gift certificates given to assist with the purchase of classroom supplies, in order to document that the funds were spent on educational/instructional/classroom supplies.

(S. Hammond)

(R. Carter)

Vote:

*In favor:*

Duncan Leith  
Joseph Sova  
Robert Carter  
Colleen Cipro  
Sherry Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Lance Harris  
Stacey Jackson  
Julianne Kelley  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Robert Remillard  
Dawn Torres-Gale  
Margaret Watson

*Opposed:*

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Motion: To direct the Business/Finance Subcommittee to review Policy 4280, with input from District auditors, to determine the adequacy of current District policy and procedures when gifts in excess of \$49.99 are received by District staff.

(S. Conrad)

(J. Sova)

Vote:

*In favor:*

Duncan Leith  
Joseph Sova  
Robert Carter  
Colleen Cipro  
Sherry Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Lance Harris  
Stacey Jackson  
Julianne Kelley  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Robert Remillard  
Dawn Torres-Gale  
Margaret Watson

*Opposed:*

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

1. To support School Committee Members' Presence at Holden Days on August 28, 2010

Motion: To support School Committee members' presence at Holden Days on August 28, 2010

(R. Carter)

(D. Torres-Gale)

Chair Leith told the Committee that Community Outreach Chair Goodwin had told him that, to date, only two members (Member Sova and Member Torres-Gale) have volunteered to man a WRSDC table at Holden Days on August 28, 2010. Discussion ensued, noting that all School Committee members, not just Holden representatives, were welcome to volunteer to be present at Holden Days and also noted that no School Committee member was obligated to volunteer.

Vote:

*In favor:*

Duncan Leith  
Joseph Sova

Robert Carter  
Colleen Cipro  
Sherry Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Stacey Jackson  
Julianne Kelley  
Robert Pelczarski  
Robert Remillard  
Dawn Torres-Gale  
Margaret Watson

*Opposed:*

Norman Plourde

*Abstained:*

Lance Harris

(Motion passed 12-1-1)

2. To authorize the Business Manager to transfer within the same major FY10 Appropriation categories surplus account balances to deficit account balances.

Motion: To authorize the Business Manager to transfer within the same major FY10 Appropriation categories surplus account balances to deficit account balances

(J. Sova)

(S. Conrad)

Roll call vote:

*In favor:*

Duncan Leith  
Joseph Sova  
Robert Carter  
Colleen Cipro  
Sherry Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Lance Harris  
Stacey Jackson  
Julianne Kelley  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Robert Remillard  
Dawn Torres-Gale  
Margaret Watson

*Opposed:*

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

3. To authorize the Business Manager to transfer from surplus major FY10 Appropriation categories to deficit Appropriation categories.

Motion: To authorize the Business Manager to transfer from surplus major FY10 Appropriation categories to deficit Appropriation categories

(J. Sova)

(S. Conrad)

Roll call vote:

*In favor:*

Duncan Leith

Joseph Sova

Robert Carter

Colleen Cipro

Sherry Conrad

Steven Hammond

Lance Harris

Stacey Jackson

Julianne Kelley

Robert Pelczarski

Norman Plourde

Robert Remillard

Dawn Torres-Gale

Margaret Watson

*Opposed:*

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

## VI. Public Hearing

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

## VII. Unfinished Business

Member Kelley asked the Superintendent the status of the proposal put forward previously about the District hiring a Development Director. Superintendent Pandiscio told the Committee that a final decision about this position had not yet been made, that he would be conducting an interview of a candidate later in the week, and that he would keep the Committee updated about this matter.

Member Torres-Gale asked the status of the District contracting with a grant consultant. Superintendent Pandiscio reported on a meeting with Resource Associates on July 13, 2010, during which a needs assessment and a review of available grants were conducted. He further explained that the District has contracted with this grant consultant and that two grant applications (physical education related and science technology related) have been submitted.

#### VIII. New Business

At Member Pelczarski's inquiry, there was discussion about the full-day kindergarten classrooms and whether money is being lost when kindergarten students who are not enrolled in a full-day class, because of seat limitations, are enrolled in another school district through school choice.

Motion: To formally recognize and congratulate Member Robert Carter for his being selected to receive a MASC Lifetime Achievement 2010 Award.

(M. Watson)

(C. Cipro)

Vote:

*In favor:*

Duncan Leith  
Joseph Sova  
Robert Carter  
Colleen Cipro  
Sherry Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Lance Harris  
Stacey Jackson  
Julianne Kelley  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Robert Remillard  
Dawn Torres-Gale  
Margaret Watson

*Opposed:*

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

IX. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(J. Sova)  
(S. Hammond)

Vote:

*In favor:*

Duncan Leith  
Joseph Sova  
Robert Carter  
Colleen Cipro  
Sherry Conrad  
Steven Hammond  
Lance Harris  
Stacey Jackson  
Julianne Kelley  
Robert Pelczarski  
Norman Plourde  
Robert Remillard  
Dawn Torres-Gale  
Margaret Watson

*Opposed:*

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP:rlp