

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1187 Monday, September 13, 2010

Media Center
Wachusett Regional High School

Committee Members Present:

Duncan Leith, Chair	Stacey Jackson
Joseph Sova, Vice-chair	Julianne Kelley
Cynthia Bazinet	Robert Pelczarski
Robert Carter	Norman Plourde
Colleen Cipro	Robert Remillard
William Clute	Michelle Sciabarrasi
Kristine Goodwin	Dawn Torres-Gale
Steven Hammond	Athas Tsongalis
Lance Harris	Margaret Watson
Robert Imber	

Committee Members Absent:

Shirley Conrad

Administration Present:

Thomas G. Pandiscio, Superintendent of Schools
Darryll McCall, Director of Operations
Peter Brennan, Business Manager
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

Student Representatives Present:

Brian Clement

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 7:00 PM.
Chair Leith announced the meeting was being taped and broadcast live.

I. Public Hearing

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

II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of 1186th Regular Meeting Minutes of the Wachusett Regional School District Committee held on August 16, 2010

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held on August 16, 2010

(S. Hammond)
(D. Torres-Gale)

The minutes of the regular meeting of the School Committee held August 16, 2010 were approved, by consensus, with Members Bazinet, Clute, Goodwin, Imber, Sciabarrasi and Tsongalis 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 introduced the District's new Development Director, Suzanne (Suki) Lapin, who made a few remarks, which were followed by a round of applause from the Committee

7:05 PM Ms. Lapin left the meeting.

Chair Leith welcomed Dawson Elementary School Principal Patty Scales who addressed the Committee, telling the many activities that have taken place at Dawson the start of this school year. Mrs. Scales circulated examples of student work, presented "Say No to Bullying" awards, and gave members "friendship bags" put together by Dawson students. At the conclusion of Mrs. Scales' presentation, members were given the opportunity to ask questions.

7:25 PM Principal Scales left the meeting.

Chair Leith announced his appointment of Members Remillard and Torres-Gale to the Business/Finance Subcommittee and that Member Watson will represent the School Committee on the Mountview Building Committee.

- B. Student Representatives (Brian Clement, Katie Carlson, Katie Sands)

Student Representative Brian Clement expressed concerns about class size at the high school, stating there are thirty plus students in his English class and that his other classes also have high enrollments. He went on to note the poor condition and quality of some textbooks provided students at the high school. He is of the opinion that higher level courses seem to have preferential treatment when it comes to the purchase of new textbooks. Mr. Clement commented that the temperature in classrooms at the high school the first three days of school (September 1, 2, 3) was over 90°. The final topic Mr. Clement raised was in reference to attachment 7 of the Superintendent's Report, the five year trends – average ACT scores, commenting on his concern that the results of tests taken in 2010 show Wachusett students tested below the state average.

Superintendent Pandiscio told that there is no systematic textbook inequity between academic levels and said that he was sorry that Mr. Clement had jumped to that conclusion. Upon request, WRHS science teacher Robert Becker, who was in the audience, commented that although he could only speak on what he knows about in the science department, his colleagues have not reported to him that textbooks are unusable. Superintendent Pandiscio added that he has not heard complaints from teachers about the general poor condition of textbooks. Chair Leith suggested that Mr. Clement bring his concerns to Principal Beando and Assistant Principal Weymouth.

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

Chair Leith reported the Management Subcommittee has not met since the last School Committee 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 will meet next on Monday, September 20th, at 7:00 PM in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

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

Subcommittee Chair Sova reported on the August 18th meeting of this subcommittee and told that the next meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, September 29, 2010, at 6:30 PM in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

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

Community Outreach Chair Goodwin reported this subcommittee had met immediately before this regular School Committee meeting and that future meetings will be scheduled for 6:00 PM the dates of the first regular School Committee meeting each month and that on the dates of the second regular School Committee meeting each month at least some members of the subcommittee would be available at 6:30 PM to meet with members of the public.

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

AAB Vice-chair Sova reported the draft auditors' reports should be available soon and the Audit Advisory Board will meet with the auditors on Thursday, October 21st, at 7:00 PM at the Central Office.

- H. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

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

Member Sova reported a final letter to parents has been drafted. Development Director Lapin will be asked for input. Per vote of the School Committee on August 16, 2010 this ad hoc subcommittee will be discharged on October 15, 2010.

- I. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (C. Cipro), Chocksett Middle School (J. Sova), Davis Hill Elementary School (S. Jackson), Dawson Elementary School (R. Carter), 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 Kelley expressed kudos to Darryll McCall, Peter Brennan, Glenwood Principal Anthony Gasbarro and Naquag Principal Dixie Herbst for the smooth transition and move that took place during the summer months,

preparing the two Rutland elementary schools for the grade reconfiguration. Member Kelley also commended Town of Rutland officials for their hard work.

Member Kelley thanked District administration for implementing the reorganization of the special education department, which also took place during the summer.

Member Jackson – The first Davis Hill School Council meeting of this school year was an informal session. The next meeting will be scheduled for mid-October.

Member Jackson – The Special Education Parent Advisory Council open house will be hosted Thursday, September 16th, from 7:00 – 9:00 PM at Davis Hill Elementary School.

Member Jackson – The Early Childhood Center had an uneventful start to the school year.

Member Imber – The Town of Princeton has appointed the Thomas Prince Middle School Enrollment Study Committee to examine the declining enrollment at Thomas Prince School.

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Member Watson referenced attachment 6 of the Superintendent's Report, the September 1, 2010 letter from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and read aloud the language requesting school officials to submit a Special Progress Report by November 1, 2010. Superintendent Pandiscio provided some history, dating back seven years, and explained that he has met with WRHS Principal Beando about this letter, what is being requested for a November 1, 2010 submission, what process Principal Beando has in place to address the concerns of the NEASC.

Member Torres-Gale asked if the Superintendent could include in this Reports copies of grant award paperwork so the Committee could be aware of what grant funds the District receives and what the funds can be used for. The Superintendent agreed to share this documentation in his Reports.

Member Carter expressed concerns about the statistics contained in the "College Readiness Letter" dated July 22, 2010, attachment 7 of the

September 9, 2010 Superintendent's Report. Superintendent Pandiscio shares Member Carter's concerns about recent ACT results, but did explain that the number of Wachusett students taking the ACT has tripled since 2006, but the averages have remained basically flat.

Upon inquiry of Member Carter, Superintendent Pandiscio explained that the 2010-2011 School Improvement Plans include a section about "advanced learning."

Member Carter also expressed his concerns about the tight budget the District has to work with and how such a tight budget is hurting our schools. He is not sure the public is fully aware of what results from such a budget (class size issues, the condition of textbooks, limited funds for teacher professional development).

8:20 PM Member Pelczarski left the table.

When asked about recently received revenue from the Jobs Bill, Superintendent Pandiscio called members' attention to attachment 5 of his September 9, 2010 Report, the major sources of revenue spreadsheet, and pointed out the variance FY11 v FY10 (when adding Chapter 70 + ARRA + Jobs Bill monies) shows FY11 with \$122,284 less than FY10. The Superintendent went on to state that at the end of the day, the District has no "surplus" revenue. It is a matter of "funds are cut here/funds are added there." He did point out the increase in school choice revenue in FY11. Superintendent Pandiscio confirmed Jobs Bill money is to be spent on personnel expenses and needs to be spent by the middle of the next fiscal year.

8:23 PM Member Pelczarski returned to the table.

At the request of Member Imber, the Superintendent will provide a copy of the most recent Wachusett students' SAT results.

When the Superintendent was asked for an update on the MET tower proposal and pending litigation, Member Kelley made a point of order that this matter should be discussed in executive session.

Member Watson asked what the District is doing to address regulations about idling of school buses. Business Manager Brennan reported that the District has been aware of regulations governing the idling of school buses on school property and he will discuss this matter with representatives of the bus company when they meet in the next few weeks.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

1. To approve the appropriation of Massachusetts School Building Authority funds in the amount of \$527,990 to the Town of Rutland for reimbursement for Central Tree Middle School

Motion: To approve the appropriation of School Building Authority funds in the amount of \$527,990 to the Town of Rutland for reimbursement for Central Tree Middle School

(J. Kelley)

(A. Tsongalis)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Joseph Sova
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
William Clute
Kristine Goodwin
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Michelle Sciabarrasi
Dawn Torres-Gale
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

2. To approve the appropriation of School Building Authority funds in the amount of \$338,045 to the Town of Paxton for reimbursement for Paxton Center School

Motion: To approve the appropriation of School Building Authority funds in the amount of \$338,045 to the Town of Paxton for reimbursement for Paxton Center School
(J. Sova)
(A. Tsongalis)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Joseph Sova
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
William Clute
Kristine Goodwin
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Michelle Sciabarrasi
Dawn Torres-Gale
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

3. To approve MSBA Green Program Statements of Interest

For the record, Chair Leith read aloud the motion pertaining to Paxton Center School's submission of a Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority and explained the language for the motions pertaining to the Thomas Prince School and the Naquag Elementary School is the same, with the exception of the referenced school.

To approve the Submission of a Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority with Regard to the **Paxton Center School.**

Motion: Having convened in an open meeting on September 13, 2010, the Wachusett Regional District School Committee in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest under the Green Repair Program dated on or above September 22, 2010 for the **Paxton Center School** located at 19 West Street, Paxton, Massachusetts which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority categories for which Wachusett Regional School District may be invited to apply to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future

- Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility.

and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Wachusett Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

(R. Imber)
(S. Hammond)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Joseph Sova
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
William Clute
Kristine Goodwin
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber

Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Michelle Sciabarrasi
Dawn Torres-Gale
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

To Approve the Submission of a Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority with Regard to the **Thomas Prince School**

Motion: Having convened in an open meeting on September 13, 2010, the Wachusett Regional District School Committee in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest under the Green Repair Program dated on or before September 22, 2010 for the **Thomas Prince School** located at 170 Sterling Road, Princeton, Massachusetts which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority categories for which Wachusett Regional School District may be invited to apply to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future

- Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility.

and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Wachusett Regional School District to

filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts
School Building Authority.

(M. Watson)
(J. Kelley)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Joseph Sova
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
William Clute
Kristine Goodwin
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Michelle Sciabarrasi
Dawn Torres-Gale
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

To Approve the Submission of a Statement of Interest to the
Massachusetts School Building Authority with Regard to the
Naquag Elementary School

Motion: Having convened in an open meeting on September
13, 2010, the Wachusett Regional District School Committee
in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has
voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the
Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of
Interest under the Green Repair Program dated on or before
September 22, 2010 for the **Naquag Elementary School**
located at 285 Main Street, Rutland, Massachusetts which
describes and explains the following deficiencies and the

priority categories for which Wachusett Regional School District may be invited to apply to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future

- Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility.

and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Wachusett Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

(M. Watson)

(R. Imber)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Joseph Sova
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
William Clute
Kristine Goodwin
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Michelle Sciabarrasi
Dawn Torres-Gale
Athas Tsongalis
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 Carter asked the status of the report District administration had been asked to prepare about kindergarten achievement statistics. The Superintendent assured the Committee this report is being worked on.

VIII. New Business

Member Torres-Gale wanted to publicly thank Member Sova for joining her to represent the School Committee at this year's Holden Days, August 28, 2010.

IX. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn to executive session to discuss pending litigation, not to return to public session.

(J. Sova)

(J. Kelley)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Joseph Sova
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
William Clute
Kristine Goodwin
Steven Hammond
Lance Harris
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Julianne Kelley
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Robert Remillard
Michelle Sciabarrasi

Dawn Torres-Gale
Athas Tsongalis
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP:rlp