

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1140 Monday, January 28, 2008

Cafeteria
Davis Hill Elementary School

Committee Members Present:

Margaret Watson, Chair	Julianne Kelley
Cynthia Bazinet, Vice-chair	Duncan Leith
Thomas Ackerman	Judith Newton
Robert Carter	John Nunnari
Colleen Cipro	Norman Plourde
Shirley Conrad	Michael Sherman
Melinda Coyle	Joseph Sova
Steven Hammond	Kathleen Sweeney
Robert Imber	Marcie Zaharee
Mark James	

Committee Members Absent:

Cynthia Ahearn

Administration Present:

Thomas G. Pandiscio, Superintendent of Schools
Jack Locke, Deputy Superintendent
Darryll McCall, Interim Director of Operations
Susan Sullivan, Director of Human Resources (7:30 PM)
Peter Brennan, Business Manager
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

District Counsel Leo McCabe

Student Representatives Present:

Hillary Blakeney
Stephen Palombo

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 7:02 PM. Chair Watson asked for a motion amending the agenda.

Motion: To amend the agenda of the meeting, moving the Recommendation Requiring Action by the School Committee (To accept the final report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement) to follow the Chair's Opening Remarks (IV.A).

(M. Sherman)

(D. Leith)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 18-0-1)

I. Public Hearing

Chair Watson read a Preface to Public Hearing RE: Regional Agreement (attachment 2). Chair Watson welcomed the many members of the public and Representative Lew Evangelidis in attendance at the meeting. Chair Watson read the Guidelines for Public Hearing (attachment 3).

Ann Hassett, Holden, addressed the School Committee
Robin Ganesan, Holden, read a prepared statement (attachment 4)
Heidi Lahey, Holden, read a prepared statement (attachment 5)
Karl Makela, Holden, addressed the School Committee
Stacey Jackson Holden, read a prepared statement (attachment 6)
Jason Joyce, Sterling, addressed the School Committee
Bill Pinkes, Jefferson, addressed the School Committee
Chad Stark, Jefferson, addressed the School Committee
Karen Russo, Jefferson, addressed the School Committee
Maura McCarthy, Holden, addressed the School Committee

Maureen Floryan, Holden, read a prepared statement (attachment 7)
Renee Dozois, Jefferson, addressed the School Committee
Tony DiLorezo, Holden, read a prepared statement (attachment 8)
Glenn Gaudette, Holden, read a prepared statement (attachment 9)
Amy Davis, Sterling, shared a prepared statement (attachment 10)

The public hearing concluded at 7:37.

II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of 1139th Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on January 16, 2008

Two corrections to the minutes were noted: Page 6, third paragraph under Business/Finance Subcommittee, "update" should read "updated" and the first two lines on page 12 are repeated from the bottom of page 11.

The minutes of the regular meeting held January 16, 2008 were approved, as corrected, by consensus, with Members Ackerman and James abstaining.

7:40 PM Member Carter left the table.

- B. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on January 16, 2008

Chair Watson 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 executive session minutes of the WRSD Committee held on January 16, 2008, not to be released.

(D. Leith)

(J. Newton)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
Colleen Cipro
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Julianne Kelley
Marcie Zaharee

(Motion passed 12-0-6)

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 reminded members of the School Committee Retreat scheduled for Saturday, February 2, 2008 from 9:00 AM – 12:00 noon, in the Media Center of the WRHS. Chair Watson asked members to let her know if they would not be able to attend the Retreat.

7:44 PM Member Carter returned to the table.

Chair Watson informed the Committee that Brian Quinlivan of Rutland has agreed to serve on the Audit Advisory Board, which will meet on Tuesday, February 5th, at 6:00 PM. Chair Watson is optimistic the Audit Advisory Board will be at full membership in the near future, as she has been in contact with a Holden resident who may be interested in serving on the AAB.

Chair Watson reminded subcommittee chairs that all subcommittees will need to meet in the next six weeks to address the evaluation of the Superintendent.

Chair Watson thanked the public for attending this evening's meeting and encouraged all to attend future meetings of the School Committee.

Chair Watson turned the meeting over to Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement Chair Nunnari. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Nunnari called the Committee's attention to attachment #5 which appeared in

the January 10, 2008 Superintendent's Report (attachment 11). He explained that many of the changes being recommended are language (grammar, typographical) changes and are not substantive.

7:46 PM Superintendent Pandiscio left the table.

7:47 PM Member Sweeney left the table.

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Nunnari detailed the intent of Motion #1 (attachment 12).

Motion: Based upon the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement as set forth in Attachment #5 of the January 10, 2008 Superintendent's Report, I move that the WRSDC accept and recommend to the Member Towns for final adoption at the next annual or special town meeting, the following non-substantive, language changes in the areas and sections lists: The opening paragraph and Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13,14,17,18,19, signature section and waive the reading.

(J. Nunnari)

(S. Hammond)

7:50 PM Member Sweeney returned to the table.

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 18-0-1)

Chair Watson reminded members that at least eleven votes in favor are needed to pass these motions.

7:52 PM Superintendent Pandiscio returned to the table.

Motion: Based upon the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement and District Counsel, I move that the WRSDC accept and recommend to the Member Towns for final adoption at the next annual or special town meeting, the following changes to Section 16 Capital Expenditures from Surplus:

Delete 'Regional District School'

Delete the words 'not to exceed \$250,000 in any fiscal year or for any single project, and'

insert the fraction with parentheses '(2/3)' after the word 'two-thirds.'

(J. Nunnari)

(M. Coyle)

District Counsel McCabe explained the intent of this motion.

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 18-0-1)

Motion: Based upon the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement and District Counsel, I move that the WRSDC accept and recommend to the Member Towns for final adoption at the next annual or special town meeting, the following changes to Section 15 Incurring of Indebtedness:

Change on each occurrence throughout the entire Section 'member town' to 'Member Town'

Change on each occurrence throughout the entire Section 'member towns' and 'participating towns' to 'Member Towns'

Delete 'Regional District School' on each occurrence

In subsection 15.2 insert the fraction with parentheses '(2/3)' after the word 'two-thirds'

In subsection 15.5 delete '\$50,000' and insert in its place '\$100,000'

(J. Nunnari)

(R. Imber)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 18-0-1)

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Nunnari explained the following motion would be split into two parts; the first motion would address non-substantive changes; the second motion would address a substantive change.

Motion: Based upon the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement, I move that the WRSDC accept and recommend to the Member Towns for final adoption at the next annual or special town meeting, the following changes to Section 11 Assignment of Students:

- 11.1 Insert the numeral 8 with parentheses '(8)' after the word 'eight'
- 11.2 Delete 'Regional School' and
Delete the words 'students in grades six through eight' and insert in its place the words 'middle school students'
Change 'towns' to 'Member Towns'
- 11.3 Delete 'Regional School'
Delete 'elementary' and insert in its place the words 'pre-kindergarten through grade eight (8)'
- 11.4 Change 'town' to 'Member Town'
Delete 'which is'

(J. Nunnari)
(M. Coyle)

Member Conrad noted that the word 'only' on the third line of Section 11.2 is crossed out in January 10, 2008 School Committee Report Attachment #5, but that change had not been read into the motion. The maker and seconder of the motion agreed this change should be a part of the motion.

Motion: Based upon the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement, I move that the WRSDC accept and recommend to the Member Towns for final adoption at the next annual or special town meeting, the following changes to Section 11 Assignment of Students:

- 11.1 Insert the numeral 8 with parentheses '(8)' after the word 'eight'
- 11.2 Delete 'Regional School' and
Delete the words 'students in grades six through eight' and insert in its place the words 'middle school students'
Change 'towns' to 'Member Towns'
Delete 'only' after the word 'residence'
- 11.3 Delete 'Regional School'
Delete 'elementary' and insert in its place the words 'pre-kindergarten through grade eight (8)'
- 11.4 Change 'town' to 'Member Town'
Delete 'which is'

(J. Nunnari)
(M. Coyle)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 18-0-1)

Motion: Based upon the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement, I move that the WRSDC accept and recommend to the Member Towns for final adoption at the next annual or special town meeting, the following changes to Section 11 Assignment of Students:

Insert the phrase 'to balance enrollment' after the words 'in whole or in part'

(J. Nunnari)

(R. Imber)

Members of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement spoke to this motion. A member stated this recommendation was made to invite conversation by the School Committee as a whole and by the public. Members of the full School Committee were given the opportunity to comment upon this motion and share their views and opinions.

Motion: To table the motion.

(M. Sherman)

This motion died due to lack of second.

Discussion continued.

Motion: That the motion on the table be amended to apply only to middle school students and to have the words 'with parental approval' inserted after 'to balance enrollment.'

(J. Newton)

This motion died due to lack of second.

Discussion continued;

Motion: To move the question.

(S. Hammond)
(C. Bazinet)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:

Melinda Coyle
Judith Newton

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 16-2-1)

Roll call vote on main motion:

In favor:

Melinda Coyle

Duncan Leith
John Nunnari

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Judith Newton
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion failed 3-15-1)

8:55 PM Member Kelley left the table.

8:56 PM Superintendent Pandiscio left the table.

Motion: Based upon the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement and District Counsel, I move that the WRSDC accept and recommend to the Member Towns for final adoption, at the next annual or special town meeting, the following changes to Section 7 Admission of Additional Towns:
Delete on each occurrence the words 'Regional School' and 'Regional District School'
Change 'town' to 'Member Town'
In the last sentence change 'State Department of Education' to 'Massachusetts Department of Education'
Delete the words 'and the State Emergency Finance Board' and insert in its place the words 'in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws'
(J. Nunnari)
(S. Hammond)

8:57 PM Member Kelley returned to the table.

8:58 PM Superintendent Pandiscio returned to the table.

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 18-0-1)

Chair Watson thanked the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement for all the work they have accomplished.

8:59 PM Member Zaharee left the table.

9:00 Member Sherman left the table.

Motion: To refer the matter of downsizing the School Committee to District Counsel for further study and possible suggestions on methods to downsize.

(R. Carter)

(J. Newton)

9:03 PM Member Zaharee returned to the table.

9:04 PM Member Sherman returned to the table.

Chair Watson informed the members discussion of this motion would be limited to twenty minutes. Each member would be allowed to speak twice, for two minutes each. Discussion would be completed by 9:30 PM.

Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement Member Imber did let the full Committee know this matter had been considered by the Ad Hoc Subcommittee. Member Carter offered to withdraw his motion. He was told he could not, as discussion had taken place.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Robert Carter
Judith Newton
Norman Plourde

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Melinda Coyle
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
John Nunnari
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion failed 3-15-1)

District Counsel McCabe left the meeting.

B. Student Representatives

Hillary and Steve reported on recent activities at the high school: recent athletic results, the "Mr. Wachusett" contest, the upcoming Winter Carnival (February 9th) and the Madrigal Dinner (the coming weekend), mid-terms have been completed.

C. Management Subcommittee (M. Watson, Chair, D. Leith, Vice-chair, C. Ahearn, C. Bazinet, R. Carter, R. Imber, J. Nunnari, M. Sherman, J. Sova)

Chair Watson reported there was no quorum at the last scheduled meeting. She will poll Subcommittee members as to a convenient time and date and will post a meeting.

- D. Education Subcommittee (C. Bazinet, Chair, S. Hammond, Vice-chair, C. Ahearn, J. Kelley, J. Nunnari, N. Plourde, K. Sweeney, M. Zaharee)

Subcommittee Chair Bazinet reported the Education Subcommittee will meet February 7, 2008 at 7:00 PM to begin work on the Superintendent's evaluation.

9:32 PM Hillary Blakeney and Steven Palombo left the meeting.

9:33 PM Member Coyle left the meeting.

- E. Business/Finance Subcommittee (M. Sherman, Chair, S. Conrad, Vice-chair, T. Ackerman, M. Coyle, M. James, J. Newton, J. Sova)

Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair Sherman reported there will be a meeting January 30th at 6:30 PM.

- F. Community Outreach Subcommittee (K. Sweeney, Chair, N. Plourde, Vice-chair, C. Cipro, M. Coyle, J. Newton)

Community Outreach Chair Sweeney reported there will be a meeting on January 31st at 7:00 PM.

- G. Audit Advisory Board (Shirley Conrad, Chair, Judith Newton, Vice-chair, School Committee Representatives)

Audit Advisory Board Chair Conrad reported on the upcoming meeting, at which representatives from Powers & Sullivan will be present, scheduled for February 5th at 6:00 PM.

- H. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

1. Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement (J. Nunnari, Chair, M. Coyle, S. Hammond, R. Imber, N. Plourde)

Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee: To accept the final report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Review the Regional Agreement

This recommendation was acted upon under Agenda item IV.A.1 above.

I. Building Committees

1. High School

High School Building Committee Chair Leith reported on progress being made at the high school and that the next meeting of the Building Committee will be January 30th in the Superintendent's Conference Room.

J. School Council Reports

Central Tree Middle School (J. Nunnari), Chocksett Middle School (J. Sova), Davis Hill Elementary School (C. Bazinet), Dawson Elementary School (M. James), Glenwood Elementary School (J. Kelley), Houghton Elementary School (N. Plourde), Mayo Elementary School (S. Hammond), Mountview Middle School (M. Sherman), Naquag Elementary School (C. Cipro), Paxton Center School (C. Ahearn), Thomas Prince School (R Imber/K. Sweeney), Wachusett Regional High School (D. Leith), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (M. Zaharee)

Mark James – Dawson Elementary School

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Superintendent Pandiscio shared with the Committee his ideas on the best way to approach planning the FY09 budget. The Business/Finance Subcommittee will meet on January 30th to review the information and materials in preparation for the School Committee Retreat on February 2nd.

The Landmark has been approached and is receptive to the idea of a new monthly column in that publication to highlight happenings in the schools and throughout the District. Member Carter expressed his appreciation to the Superintendent for following up on his suggestion about increased public relations.

Member Sherman commented on the effect the energy management program has had on energy costs, noting the savings to date have been very impressive.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

Motion: To approve the appropriation of School Building Authority funds in the amount of \$222,495 to the Town of Rutland for reimbursement for Naquag Elementary School.

(R. Imber)
(K. Sweeney)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

VI. Public Hearing

No one from the public wished to address the School Committee.

VII. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business brought before the School Committee.

VIII. New Business

In an attempt to address a possible academic inequity issue in the District, Chair Watson will appoint an ad hoc subcommittee, comprised of members of the Business/Finance, Education and Management subcommittees, to study the issue. The Administration will be directed to develop a plan to address this issue.

Motion: To extend the meeting fifteen minutes, to adjourn no later than 10:15 PM.

(M. Sherman)

(K. Sweeney)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
Cynthia Bazinet

Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:
None

Abstained:
Colleen Cipro

(Motion passed 17-0-1)

10:01 PM Member Plourde left the table.

10:03 PM Member Plourde returned to the table.

Motion: To appoint an ad hoc subcommittee, to include at least one member of the Business/Finance, Education and Management subcommittees, to study the matter of academic inequity in the Wachusett Regional School District. This ad hoc subcommittee will deliver a report to the full School Committee with recommendations before the final meeting of this standing School Committee.

(M. Sherman)

(T.Ackerman)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith

Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:
None

Abstained:
Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 17-0-1)

IX. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(M. Sherman)
(K. Sweeney)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
Cynthia Bazinet
Thomas Ackerman
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Julianne Kelley
Duncan Leith
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova
Kathleen Sweeney
Marcie Zaharee

Opposed:
None

(The motion passed unanimously)

The meeting adjourned at 10:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP:rlp