

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1143 Tuesday, March 11, 2008

Cafeteria  
Davis Hill Elementary School

*Committee Members Present:*

Margaret Watson, Chair	Julianne Kelley
Cynthia Bazinet, Vice-chair	Duncan Leith
Robert Carter	John Nunnari
Colleen Cipro	Norman Plourde
Shirley Conrad (7:15 PM)	Michael Sherman
Steven Hammond	Joseph Sova
Robert Imber	Kathleen Sweeney
Mark James	

*Committee Members Absent:*

Thomas Ackerman	Judith Newton
Cynthia Ahearn	Marcie Zaharee
Melinda Coyle	

*Administration Present:*

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

*Student Representatives Present:*

Hillary Blakeney  
Sean Lane

*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.

I. Public Hearing

Chair Watson read the Guidelines for Public Hearing.

Jenni Howe, Holden, addressed the School Committee, referring to a prepared statement (attachment 2)

Following Ms. Howe's statement, Superintendent Pandiscio spoke, assuring both the public and the School Committee that policies and procedures pertaining to field trips will be reviewed in light of the situation involving Ms. Howe's daughter.

7:15 PM Member Conrad joined the meeting.

Bill Russell, Sterling, read a prepared statement (attachment 3)

Superintendent Pandiscio commented on grade configuration in the Sterling schools.

Chair Watson announced there will be an executive session at the conclusion of the regular meeting, for the purpose of union and non-union negotiations, not to return to public session.

## II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of 1142<sup>nd</sup> Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on February 25, 2008

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held February 25, 2008.

(D. Leith)  
(M. James)

The minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held February 25, 2008 were approved, with Member Sweeney 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 reminded the members that the Annual Budget Hearing will be held Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM, just before the regular School Committee meeting.

Chair Watson reminded members that the Superintendent's Evaluation forms are due to her this date.

Chair Watson reported that it has been decided, following discussion with the Superintendent, that the annual School Improvement Plan reviews will be scheduled between the May Organizational meeting and the June School

Committee meeting (June 9<sup>th</sup>). The reviews will take place in the evening, on three dates.

Chair Watson introduced Wachusett Regional High School Principal Bill Beando and Assistant Principal Catherine Knowles. Mr. Beando and Mrs. Knowles showed a PowerPoint presentation, explaining the newly instituted house plan at the high school (attachment 4).

7:50 PM Member Carter left the table.

7:55 PM Member Carter returned to the table.

Mr. Beando and Mrs. Knowles concluded their presentation at 7:56 PM and the School Committee was given the opportunity to ask questions.

7:57 PM Superintendent Pandiscio left the table.

7:59 PM Superintendent Pandiscio returned to the table.

At 8:13 PM Chair Watson thanked Mr. Beando and Mrs. Knowles for their time and effort.

B. Student Representatives

Sean Lane reported on recent activities at the high school: the spring drama competition and spring musical are on the horizon; winter sports competitions are wrapping up; "Senior Night" at the high school is this evening; the annual Massachusetts Association of Student Council conference will be held in Hyannis March 12 – 14, 2008.

Member Leith congratulated Sean on his successful hockey season.

Member Carter asked about the recent comedy show at the high school (Jimmy Tingle), and was told it was "wonderful."

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 reminded members of the Management Subcommittee that the next meeting will be Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM. The Superintendent's evaluation narrative will be reviewed at the meeting.

8:19 PM Sean Lane and Hillary Blakeney left the meeting.

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

Education Chair Bazinet reminded Education Subcommittee members of the meeting on Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM. The Superintendent's evaluation narrative will be reviewed at 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 Chair Sherman reported on the last meeting of that subcommittee, held on February 27<sup>th</sup>. He explained there are a number of policies being recommended to be amended or deleted, noting suggested changes are not substantive.

8:21 PM Member Sweeney left the table.

1. Amended Policy – AP4100 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Budget** – first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP4100 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Budget**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)  
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

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

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

8:24 PM Member Sweeney returned to the table.

2. Amended Policy – AP4161 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Reporting and Transferring Between Appropriation Categories** – first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP4161 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Reporting and Transferring Between Appropriation Categories**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)  
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

3. Policy Deletion – AP4170 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Carrying Budgeted Amounts Forward to the New Fiscal Year** – first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Deletion AP4170 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Carrying Budgeted Amounts Forward to the New Fiscal Year**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)  
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

4. Policy Deletion– AP4241 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Court Supervised Students**– first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Deletion AP4241 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Court Supervised Students**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)

(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

5. Amended Policy – AP4240 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Tuition** – first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP4240 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Tuition**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)  
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

6. Amended Policy – AP7112 **Policy Relating to Support Operations Non-District Use of Facilities** – first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP7112 **Policy Relating to Support Operations Non-District Use of Facilities**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)  
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

7. Amended Policy – AP4323.2 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Bidding Requirements** – first reading

8:27 PM Member Kelley left the table.

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP4323.2 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Bidding Requirements**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)  
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
Robert Carter  
Colleen Cipro  
Shirley Conrad



Steven Hammond  
Robert Imber  
Mark James  
Duncan Leith  
John Nunnari  
Norman Plourde  
Michael Sherman  
Joseph Sova  
Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

8:29 PM Member Kelley returned to the table.

8. Amended Policy – AP4600 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Administration of District Funds** – first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP4600 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Administration of District Funds**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)

(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

9. Amended Policy – AP4610 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Bank Account Maintenance** – first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP4610 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Bank Account Maintenance**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)  
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

10. Amended Policy – AP4640 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Bonded Employees and Officers**– first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP4640 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Bonded Employees and Officers**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)  
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

11. Amended Policy – AP4713.1 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Audit Advisory Board** – first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP4713.1 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Audit Advisory Board**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)

(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

12. Amended Policy – AP4721 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Student Activity Funds** – first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP4721 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Student Activity Funds**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)  
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

13. Amended Policy – AP4714 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Periodic Financial Reports** – first reading

Motion: To approve the first reading of Policy Amendment AP4714 **Policy Relating to Budget/Finance Periodic Financial Reports**, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)  
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(The motion passed)

8:35 PM Member Carter left the table.

Business/Finance Chair Sherman announced the Business/Finance Subcommittee will meet sometime this month to review the Superintendent's evaluation.

At the request of Business/Finance Chair Sherman, Superintendent Pandiscio reported on the March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Business/Finance Subcommittee with the Budget Advisory Task Force.

8:41 PM Member Carter returned to the table.

8:42 Member Bazinet left the table.

The next meeting of the Business/Finance Subcommittee with the Budget Advisory Task Force will be posted for April 10, 2008 at 7:00 PM.

8:47 PM Member Bazinet returned to the table.

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

Community Outreach Chair Sweeney announced the next meeting of this subcommittee will be Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, at which time the Superintendent's evaluation narrative will be reviewed. In order to assure a quorum, Subcommittee Chair Sweeney asked members of that subcommittee to report if they would be unable to attend a meeting on March 13<sup>th</sup>.

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

Audit Advisory Board Chair Conrad reported the AAB has not met since the last School Committee meeting, but a meeting will be called when the auditor's final report is ready for review.

- H. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

- 1. Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Study Possible Disparity Among the Schools in the Wachusett District (S. Hammond, M. Coyle, R. Imber, M. James, J. Nunnari, K. Sweeney)

The next meeting of this ad hoc subcommittee will be Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, reported Subcommittee Chair Hammond. A focus of discussion has been achievement disparity vs opportunity disparity.

- I. Building Committees

- 1. High School

Building Committee Chair Leith gave a brief update on activities at the high school site.

8:51 PM Member Imber left the table.

He reported the punch list is being worked on. Member Leith reported an open house will hopefully be arranged for this coming September/early autumn.

8:54 PM Member Bazinet left the table.

- 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)

Member Leith – Wachusett Regional High School

8:55 PM Member Bazinet returned to the table.

V. Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent distributed an email, dated March 3, 2008, from Representative Harold Naughton's Chief of Staff Susan C. Templeton, inviting school administration and School Committee members to a meeting with Representative Naughton and House Committee on Ways and Means Chairman Robert A. DeLeo, March 18, 2008 in Boylston (attachment 5). Chair Watson, Superintendent Pandiscio and Business Manager Brennan are planning to attend this event.

A. Discussion of Report

Member Kelley expressed her appreciation to Superintendent Pandiscio and Interim Director of Operations McCall for the efforts put into the establishment of a full day kindergarten offering at Thomas Prince School. Member Carter congratulated the Superintendent and his staff for the quick planning and subsequent interest in enrollment.

8:59 PM Member Imber returned to the table.

Member Sova raised the topic of restructuring class configuration in the Sterling schools and asked that the Superintendent keep the School Committee advised when something of this magnitude is being considered, so that members can be prepared when contacted by Member Town residents and/or the press. The Superintendent apologized for failing to be in touch with the School Committee, having misread the level of controversy generated by this matter. The Superintendent reported to the Committee that he had met with Sterling parents on March 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss this topic.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

Motion: To approve the sale by the District of a \$2,661,456 Bond Anticipation Note to Eastern Bank with a Net Interest Cost of 2.3390%, payable on March 17, 2009. Further, that the consent to bid dated March 3, 2008 by the Treasurer to First Southwest Company, the financial advisor bidding the note, be confirmed.

(J. Sova)  
(S. Conrad)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson  
Cynthia Bazinet  
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

Opposed:

None

(The 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

The Superintendent distributed copies of *Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel Planning Checklist*, and Policies P3321.1 (Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel) and P3321.2 (Travel and Study Abroad) (attachment 6). The Superintendent proceeded to outline for the Committee steps that should be taken in preparation for field trips. He acknowledged it is time to take a fresh look at the two policies relating to field trips/travel abroad, reviewing and discussing with building principals, individuals involved in such student experiences outside this District, those who have participated in field trips, including those who have had experiences less than perfect. The Superintendent will report back to the Committee by the April 28, 2008 meeting, prior to expiration of some of the current School Committee members' terms.



IX. Adjournment

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

(J. Sova)

(S. Hammond)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson

Cynthia Bazinet

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

Opposed:

None

(The motion passed unanimously)

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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