

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1144 Monday, March 24, 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
Peter Brennan, Business Manager
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

Student Representatives Present:

None

8:06 PM John Nunnari left the table.

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 8:07 PM. Chair Watson explained the agenda of the regular meeting had been altered, moving action required on the adoption of the FY09 Appropriation to IV.A. She explained this revised agenda would require a vote of approval by the School Committee.

Motion: To accept the agenda of the Regular Meeting #1144, as revised.
(J. Sova)

(D. Leith)

Vote:

In favor:

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

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

I. Public Hearing

No members of the public wished to address the School Committee

II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of 1143rd Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on March 11, 2008

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held March 11, 2008.

(D. Leith)
(J. Sova)

The minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held March 11, 2008 were approved, with Members Ackerman, Coyle, Newton and Zaharee abstaining.

8:10 PM Member Nunnari returned to the table.

B. Approval of minutes of the executive session held on March 11, 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 minutes of the executive session held March 11, 2008.

(J. Sova)
(K. Sweeney)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
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

(Motion passed unanimously)

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. Superintendent's Report

A. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

Motion: To adopt, as presented, the *FY09 Appropriation* in the amount of \$73,203,960 and assessments to the Member Towns of:

Holden:	\$20,550,410
Paxton:	\$ 5,006,584
Princeton:	\$ 4,630,983
Rutland:	\$ 6,805,951
Sterling:	\$ 9,200,489

(J. Sova)

(J. Kelley)

Member Newton asked the Superintendent if he sees populations in the Member Towns decreasing. Superintendent Pandiscio will analyze recently received NESDEC data and will prepare an analysis for the School Committee.

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:

Melinda Coyle

(Motion passed 18-1)

8:15 PM Member Kelley left the table.

8:15 PM Member Coyle left the table.

8:15 PM Superintendent Pandiscio left the table.

V. Committee Reports

A. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Watson reminded members that all materials relating to the Superintendent's evaluation are due to her no later than April 14, 2008.

Chair Watson asked that any members interested in being registered to attend the Massachusetts Association of School Committee's Day on the Hill, planned for April 29th, should contact either Chair Watson or Rebecca Petersen.

8:16 PM Member Sweeney left the table.

B. Student Representatives

There were no student representatives in attendance.

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 on the March 18th meeting of the Management Subcommittee.

1. Draft Policy – DP1432 **Policy Relating to School Committee Operation Reimbursement for Travel Expenses of School Committee Members** – first reading

8:17 PM Superintendent Pandiscio returned to the table.

Motion: To approve the first reading of draft policy DP1432 **Policy Relating to School Committee Operation Reimbursement for Travel Expenses of School Committee Members**

(R. Carter)
(J. Nunnari)

8:18 PM Member Kelley returned to the table.

8:18 PM Member Sweeney returned to the table.

8:19 PM Member Coyle 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 requested that Member Nunnari speak to a by-law change to be recommended by the Management Subcommittee for full School Committee consideration. Member Nunnari reminded the Committee of a recent School Committee By-Law amendment where the term limit for District auditors was eliminated. He said that he believes Article II, Section 3 of the School Committee By-Laws, which states “The offices of Chair and Vice-Chair shall be for a term of one year, and they may not succeed themselves more than once.” causes problems similar to the term limit that was in place for District auditors – it “causes change for the sake of change.” The Management Subcommittee is recommending the language be amended to read “.....may not succeed themselves more than **three additional times.**” It was made clear that this discussion does not serve as the 14 day notice to be given to the School Committee prior to a vote of the Committee to amend School Committee by-Laws. It is expected this recommendation will be considered at the April 14, 2008 School Committee, in advance of action of the School Committee at its April 28, 2008 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 reported on the Education Subcommittee meeting of March 19th. The subcommittee had reviewed its portion of the Superintendent’s evaluation.

8:32 PM Member Zaharee left the table.

Bus safety was discussed and Superintendent Pandiscio, who attended the meeting, informed the subcommittee of the plan to deal with this issue. Superintendent Pandiscio explained to the full Committee that Interim Director of Operations Darryll McCall will meet with elementary principals to: develop a preventative training protocol for students; devise a uniform bus discipline code; and inform parents of these measures in back-to-school letters.

8:35 PM Member Zaharee returned to the table.

Subcommittee Chair Bazinet reported that Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services Nancy Houle will be invited to attend the April meeting of the Education Subcommittee, which has not yet been scheduled, to discuss the comprehensive health curriculum.

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

Subcommittee Chair Sherman reported the next meeting of the Business/Finance Subcommittee will be April 10th, at which meeting the Superintendent's evaluation will be reviewed. If warranted and deemed beneficial, the Business/Finance Subcommittee will meet with the Budget Advisory Task Force that same evening.

Motion: To act on agenda items V.E.1-13 (amended policies, second reading) as a single motion, waiving the reading.

(M. Sherman)

(S. Conrad)

Subcommittee Chair explained none of the recommended amendments are substantive.

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: To approve the second reading of amended policies:

Policy Relating to Budget/Finance

AP4100 *Budget*

AP4161 *Reporting and Transferring Between Appropriation
Categories*

AP4170 *Carrying Budgeted Amounts Forward to the New Fiscal
Year*

AP4241 *Court Supervised Students*

AP4240 *Tuition*

AP4323.2 *Bidding Requirements*

AP4600 *Administration of District Funds*

AP4610 *Bank Account Maintenance*

AP4640 *Bonded Employees and Officers*

AP4713.1 *Audit Advisory Board*

AP4721 *Student Activity Funds*

AP4714 *Periodic Financial Reports*

Policy Relating to Support Operations

AP7112 *Non-District Use of Facilities*

(M. Sherman)

(S. Conrad)

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)

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

Subcommittee Chair Sweeney reminded members the next meeting of this subcommittee would be March 27th, at which time the Superintendent's evaluation would be reviewed.

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

Audit Advisory Board Chair Conrad announced the next meeting of the AAB will be Thursday, April 10th, at 6:15 PM, immediately before the meeting of the Business/Finance Subcommittee. At this meeting, the auditor's Year-End-Report will be reviewed.

- 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)

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Hammond reported on the last meeting, held on March 17th. A focus of discussion has been achievement disparity vs opportunity disparity. In an attempt to learn about achievement vs opportunity around the District, a survey is being developed for principal completion. The next meeting of this subcommittee will be March 31st.

- I. Building Committees

1. High School

Building Committee Chair Leith gave a brief update on activities at the high school site. He reported on a tour of the building which he took on this date. He enthusiastically reported on computer software which can track energy consumption in the building. The next meeting of the Building Committee will be March 26th.

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)

There were no reports from members on recent School Council meeting.

VI. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

School Committee members received a letter from WRHS students who were on the Model U.N. trip to Italy and Member Nunnari asked the Superintendent to comment on the statement in the letter that Model U.N. at Wachusett is now defunct. The Superintendent assured the public that Model U.N. is not defunct. Superintendent Pandiscio also commented that public opinion is that the administration and/or school took action against Model U.N., which is not the case. Superintendent Pandiscio is hopeful the Model U.N. trip planned for New York will go on this spring as scheduled. The Superintendent is aware that field trip policy needs to be addressed, to be sure such an unfortunate incident is not repeated.

Chair Watson requested clarification on two sections of Business Manager Peter Brennan's report, which was included in the Superintendent's Report of March 20th. Mr. Brennan answered the questions.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

Motion: To approve the following warrant articles to amend the Wachusett Regional School District Agreement, language to be included on Annual Town Meeting warrants for the upcoming May 2008 meetings:

(R. Imber)
(S. Hammond)

Warrant Article for Non-Substantive Amendments of Amended
Wachusett Regional School District Agreement

To see if the Town will vote to approve the various amendments to the Amended Wachusett Regional School District Agreement, as recommended and approved by vote of the Regional District School Committee on January 28, 2008, consisting of non-substantive changes of the wording in the following Sections:

Opening Paragraph

Section 1. Members of the Regional District School Committee.

Section 2. Location.

Section 3. Type of Regional School District.

Section 4. Method of Apportioning Costs of the Regional School District.

Section 5. Payments to the Regional District School Treasurer.

Section 6. Transportation.

Section 8. Withdrawal of Member Towns - Pre-Kindergarten-Grade 12.

Section 9. Annual Report.

Section 10. Budget.

Section 12. Powers and Duties of the Regional District School Committee.

Section 13. Organization of the Regional District School Committee.

Section 14. Amendments.

Section 17. Lease of Schools.

Section 18. Professional Staff/Personnel.

Section 19. Effective Date and Jurisdiction.

Signature Page

The changes in wording consist of describing Towns as "Member Towns" rather than participating Towns, refers to the Wachusett Regional School District as the "District" and to the Wachusett Regional District School Committee as the "Committee", deletes references to State laws and inserts Massachusetts General Laws and deletes the word "selectmen" and inserts therefor the word "Selectboard", a copy of the proposed amendments to the above Sections are on file at the office of the Town Clerk in a report entitled "Wachusett Regional School District Committee Recommendations for Changes to Regional Agreement Annual Town Meetings 2008", or act or do anything relative thereto.

Warrant Article for Amendment of Section 7 of Amended
Wachusett Regional School District Agreement

To see if the Town will vote to approve the amendment of Section 7. ADMISSION OF ADDITIONAL TOWNS of the Amended

Wachusett Regional School District Agreement, as recommended and approved by vote of the Regional District School Committee on January 28, 2008. The proposed amendment deletes the words "Regional School", deletes the word "state" and substitutes therefor the word "Massachusetts", deletes the words "Regional District School", deletes the words "the State Emergency Finance Board" and substitutes at the end of the Section the words "in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws", a copy of the proposed Amendment is on file at the office of the Town Clerk in a report entitled "Wachusett Regional School District Committee Recommendations for Changes to Regional Agreement Annual Town Meetings 2008", or act or do anything relative thereto.

*Warrant Article for Amendment of Section 11 of Amended
Wachusett Regional School District Agreement*

To see if the Town will vote to approve the amendment of Section 11. ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS of the Amended Wachusett Regional School District Agreement, as recommended and approved by vote of the Regional District School Committee on January 28, 2008. The proposed amendment to Section 11.2 deletes the words "Regional School" before the word "Committee", deletes the words "students in grades six through eight", substitutes therefor the words "middle school students" and deletes the word "only" after the word "residence" and deletes the word "towns" and substitutes therefor the words "Member Towns". The amendment to Section 11.3 deletes the words "Regional School" before "Committee", deletes the word "elementary" and inserts therefor the words "pre-kindergarten through grade eight (8)" before the word "pupils".

The amendment to Section 11.4 deletes the words "which is" before the word "subject" and deletes the word "town" and substitutes therefor the words "Member Towns".

A copy of the proposed Amendment is on file at the office of the Town Clerk in a report entitled "Wachusett Regional School District Committee Recommendations for Changes to Regional Agreement Annual Town Meetings 2008", or act or do anything relative thereto.

*Warrant Article for Amendment of Section 15 of Amended
Wachusett Regional School District Agreement*

To see if the Town will vote to approve the amendment of Section 15. INCURRING OF INDEBTEDNESS of the Amended Wachusett Regional School District Agreement, as recommended and approved by vote of the Regional District School Committee on January 28, 2008. The proposed amendment to Section 15 capitalizes the letter "M" in the word "member" and the letter "T"

in "town" or "towns" throughout the Section, amends Section 15.2 by deleting the words "participating towns" and inserting the words "Member Towns" and by inserting the fraction (2/3) after the words "two thirds", amends Section 15.3 and Section 15.6 by deleting the words "Regional District School" where they precede the word "Committee", amends Section 15.5 by deleting the figure "\$50,000" and inserting therefor the figure "\$100,000", a copy of the proposed Amendment is on file at the office of the Town Clerk in a report entitled "Wachusett Regional School District Committee Recommendations for Changes to Regional Agreement Annual Town Meetings 2008" or act or do anything relative thereto.

Warrant Article for Amendment of Section 16 of Amended
Wachusett Regional School District Agreement

To see if the Town will vote to approve the amendment of Section 16. CAPITAL EXPENDITURES FROM SURPLUS of the Amended Wachusett Regional School District Agreement, as recommended and approved by vote of the Regional District School Committee on January 28, 2008. The proposed amendment deletes the words ""Regional District School" where they precede the word "Committee", deletes the clause after "Section 16" which reads: "not to exceed \$250,000 in any fiscal year or for any single project, and", and by inserting the fraction (2/3) after the words "two thirds", a copy of the proposed Amendment is on file at the office of the Town Clerk in a report entitled "Wachusett Regional School District Committee Recommendations for Changes to Regional Agreement Annual Town Meetings 2008", or act or do anything relative thereto.

The motion was discussed.

Motion: In the wording of the Warrant Article for Non-Substantive Amendments of Amended Wachusett Regional School District Agreement, quotation marks be moved to include "the" when referencing "the District" and "the Committee."

(M. Coyle)

Motion died due to lack of a second.

Discussion continued.

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
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

(Motion passed unanimously)

Motion: To approve the following warrant article for incurring District debt/environmental remediation, language to be included on Annual Town Meeting warrants for the upcoming May 2008 meetings:
(M. Sherman)
(M. James)

To see if the Town of _____ will approve the borrowing of \$2,000,000 by the Wachusett Regional School District as authorized by the vote of the Regional District School Committee on February 25, 2008 for the purpose of paying the costs for environmental remediation and cleanup of the oil contamination of the Jefferson School Building, including ongoing operating, assessment and remediation efforts as required by the Department of Environmental Protection or otherwise, and incurring debt by the issuance of bonds or notes under Chapter 214 of the Acts of 2007 and Section 15 of the Amended Wachusett Regional School District Agreement, and to that end the District Treasurer, with the approval of the Regional District School Committee, be authorized to issue bonds or notes therefor; and to authorize the Superintendent to enter into and execute all contracts necessary or otherwise material to such work and to act or do anything relative thereto.

9:11 PM Member Newton recused herself and left the table.

Vote:

In favor:

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

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

9:12 PM Member Newton returned to the table.

The Superintendent explained to the Committee that he has suggested to the Member Towns they consider holding a Special Town Meeting, immediately before the Annual Town Meeting, to address the two matters being brought before the Town Meetings by the District. To date, the Member Towns have not responded to the Superintendent's suggestion.

Motion: To approve the extension to the Contract, dated July 1, 2003, Between Wachusett Regional School District and URS Corporation, for the provision of professional services in connection with the high school addition and renovation project, as presented.

(D. Leith)
(M. James)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
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

(Motion passed unanimously)

Superintendent Pandiscio informed the Committee that he would be recommending a similar extension of the contract between the District and the high school architectural firm, Strekalovsky Hoit and Raymond. This recommendation would be coming forward following the March 26, 2008 High School Building Committee meeting.

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

Member Newton wanted to let the School Committee know that high school students participating in this year's Drama Festival have advanced to the State Finals, which will take place the weekend of March 27, 28 and 29, 2008.

Motion: The School Committee will commend high school teacher Doug Ingalls and the high school students participating in this year's Massachusetts High School Drama Guild *Drama Festival* and congratulate them for advancing to the State Finals.

(J. Newton)

(R. Imber)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
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

(Motion passed unanimously)

Member Cipro called attention to a letter of apology addressed to Interim Director of Operations Darryll McCall, which was copied to School Committee members, from Cynthia Hanson with attached letter from Attorney Deborah Hemdal.

IX. Adjournment

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

(J. Sova)

(S. Hammond)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
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

(Motion passed unanimously)

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP:rlp