

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Special Meeting #267 Thursday, July 28, 2005
6:30 PM

Library
Central Tree Middle School
Rutland

Committee Members Present:

Alice Livdahl, Chair	Mary Catherine Maher (6:52 PM)
Michael Sherman, Vice-chair	Kelly Maxwell
Cynthia Bazinet	Phillip Mighdoll
Elizabeth Brennan	Judith Newton
Charles Capparelli	Norman Plourde
Robert Carter	Cheryl Rauh
Shirley Conrad	Kathleen Sweeney (6:40 PM)
David Gibbs	Tammy Tod (6:43 PM)
Mark James	

Committee Members Absent:

Cynthia Ahearn
John Nunnari
Margaret Watson

Administration Present:

Alfred D. Tutela, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools
Rebecca Petersen, Interim Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

District Counsel Leo McCabe (7:25 PM).

I. Call to Order

Chair Alice Livdahl called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM. Chair Livdahl noted that the agenda for this special meeting had incorrectly listed a Public Session. She asked those who desire to address the School Committee hold their remarks until the August 8, 2005 regularly scheduled School Committee meeting.

Chair Livdahl informed the Committee she would be mailing a response to Inspector General Gregory W. Sullivan, a copy of which had been sent to the Committee on July 25, 2005 (attachment 1).

Community Outreach Subcommittee Chair Elizabeth Brennan distributed a copy of the wording for postcards to be mailed to parents of District students and employees who live in the Member Towns encouraging attendance at the August 9, 2005 Town Meetings (attachment 2). These postcards will be customized for each town, listing the particular time and location of the meeting. These postcards will be sent from the Wachusett Regional School Committee.

Motion: Postcards from the Wachusett Regional School Committee will be mailed to parents of District students and employees who live in the Members Towns encouraging attendance at the August 9, 2005 Town Meetings.

(D. Gibbs)

(R. Carter)

Motion passed by consensus.

II. FY06 Appropriation

Chair Livdahl indicated that all School Committee Members would be given the opportunity to speak to the budget and the upcoming Town Meetings. A copy of correspondence to Vice-Chair Michael Sherman and the Superintendent from Chair Livdahl was distributed (attachment 3). Chair Livdahl called on Members in the following order:

Michael Sherman
David Gibbs
Norman Plourde
Kelly Maxwell
Judith Newton
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter – pass
Cynthia Bazinet
Phillip Mighdoll – pass
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Robert Carter
Mary Catherine Maher
Elizabeth Brennan

Tammy Tod
Mark James
Shirley Conrad
Phillip Mighdoll
Alice Livdahl

Motion: The School Committee agrees to discuss alternative approaches to reducing assessments.

(P. Mighdoll)
(M. Sherman)

Motion: To move the question.

(J. Newton)

Chair Livdahl asked that there be opportunity to discuss the motion before taking a vote.

Member Carter left the table at 7:38 PM.

Member Carter returned to the table at 7:40 PM.

Roll Call Vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
Mary Catherine Maher
Kelly Maxwell
Judith Newton
Norman Plourde
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
David Gibbs
Mark James
Cheryl Rauh

Abstained:

Phillip Mighdoll

(Motion passed 12-4-1)

Motion: Return to the FY06 Appropriation, \$60,052,440, approved by the School Committee on March 28, 2005.

(S. Conrad)
(K. Maxwell)

Vice-Chair Sherman stressed the importance of the operating budget not being reduced if the School Committee votes to return to the \$60,052,440 appropriation figure.

Member Rauh left the table at 8:00 PM.

Member Mighdoll asked permission to distribute a spreadsheet he had prepared, Wachusett Regional School District Budget & Revenue, Questions for the Superintendent (attachment 4).

Member Rauh returned to the table at 8:02 PM.

Roll Call Vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Elizabeth Brennan
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
Kelly Maxwell
Judith Newton
Norman Plourde
Kathleen Sweeney

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
David Gibbs
Mark James
Mary Catherine Maher
Cheryl Rauh

Abstained:

Charles Capparelli
Phillip Mighdoll

Tammy Tod

(Motion failed 9-5-3)

Motion: Direct the Superintendent to inform the School Committee of the changes in educational programs should the Member Town assessments be reduced by \$500,000.

(M. Sherman)

(S. Conrad)

Vice-Chair Sherman made a friendly amendment to the motion, asking for impact on educational programs, should the assessments be reduced by \$400,000, \$500,000 and \$600,000.

Member Gibbs made a friendly amendment to the motion, asking for impact on educational programs, should the assessments be reduced by \$300,000, \$400,000 and \$500,000. This friendly amendment was accepted.

Motion: Direct the Superintendent to inform the School Committee of the changes in educational programs should the Member Town assessments be reduced by \$300,000, \$400,000 or \$500,000.

(M. Sherman)

(S. Conrad)

Roll Call Vote:

In favor:

Michael Sherman
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
David Gibbs
Mark James
Mary Catherine Maher
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod

Opposed:
Judith Newton

Abstained:
Alice Livdahl

(Motion passed 15-1-1)

III. New Business

District Counsel Leo McCabe advised the Committee that it is the Chair's call to address new business at a meeting at which new business was not included on the agenda. Chair Livdahl advised the Committee new business items would be addressed.

The School Committee has been invited to tour the high school site before the start of the School Committee meeting on August 8th. The time of the tour has been changed from 6:00 PM to 5:30 PM. School Committee Members will meet in parking lot of the school, in the area of the main office.

It was explained that at the Special School Committee Meeting of July 27, 2005, copies of a letter, dated July 27, 2005, from High School Building Committee Chair Duncan Leith to School Committee Chair Alice Livdahl had been distributed, but not discussed (attachment 5). The purpose of the letter was to request the reinstatement of the position of Deputy Superintendent. During the discussion of the letter, the Superintendent informed the Committee he had not seen Mr. Leith's letter and, to his knowledge, there had not been any issues with work at the high school being delayed while the Superintendent was out of the office. He further explained that a system is in place and every change order would be processed in a timely fashion.

Motion: To direct the Superintendent to appoint a Deputy Superintendent for the high school project in his absence.
(K. Maxwell)
(C. Capparelli)

Attorney McCabe explained that this matter must be addressed at an open meeting of the School Committee, not at an executive session. The Superintendent described the process that would be used to appoint a Deputy Superintendent. He reminded the Committee that they were delegating their approval process for a Deputy Superintendent under Massachusetts General Law to the Superintendent.

Member Carter suggested the motion be withdrawn. Member Maxwell did not wish to withdraw the motion.

Motion: To move the question.

(D.Gibbs)
(C. Bazinet)

Roll Call Vote:

In favor:

Michael Sherman
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
David Gibbs
Mark James
Mary Catherine Maher
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Alice Livdahl

(Motion passed 16-0-1)

Roll Call Vote:

In favor:

Philip Mighdoll

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad

David Gibbs
Mark James
Mary Catherine Maher
Kelly Maxwell
Judith Newton
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod

Abstained:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Charles Capparelli
Norman Plourde

(Motion failed 1-12-4)

Motion: To adjourn.

(D.Gibbs)
(C. Rauh)

Motion passed by consensus.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alfred D. Tutela, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools