

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1100, Monday, November 14, 2005
7:00 PM

Library
Central Tree Middle School

Committee Members Present:

Alice Livdahl, Chair	Kelly Maxwell
Michael Sherman, Vice-chair	Phillip Mighdoll
Cynthia Ahearn	Judith Newton
Cynthia Bazinet	John Nunnari
Elizabeth Brennan	Norman Plourde
Charles Capparelli	Cheryl Rauh
Robert Carter	Kathleen Sweeney
David Gibbs	Tammy Tod
Mark James	Margaret Watson

Committee Members Absent:

Shirley Conrad	Mary Catherine Maher
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Administration Present:

Thomas G. Pandiscio, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
John Locke, Director of Operations
Jason Newton, Director of Student/Information Services
Rebecca Petersen, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

Others present, who desired to be recorded as present (see attached Attendance Sheet – attachment 1).

Chair Livdahl called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

I. Public Hearing

Donna Dominguez, Sterling, read a prepared statement (attachment 2).

II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of 270th Special Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on November 7, 2005 – approved by consensus, Member Rauh abstaining.
- B. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on November 7, 2005

The copies of these minutes, which had been included in the November 10, 2005 Superintendent's Report, were collected by the Chair, not to be reviewed or voted on, per Member Norman Plourde.

- C. Approval of 1099th Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on October 25, 2005 - approved by consensus, Members Capparelli and Rauh abstaining, with the following corrections being made:

- Pg. 4 – Maker of motion – Michael Sherman, second unknown
- Pg. 9 – roll call vote should read:

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Cynthia Ahearn
Elizabeth Brennan
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
Mary Catherine Maher
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
David Gibbs
Mark James
Norman Plourde
Margaret Watson

Abstained:

Alice Livdahl

(Motion passed 10-5-1)

- Pg. 15 – Mark James seconded Cynthia Bazinet’s motion
- Pg. 16 – Michael Sherman seconded Robert Carter’s motion

- D. Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on October 25, 2005, to be released.

Motion: Approval of Executive Session Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on October 25, 2005, not to be released.

(K. Maxwell)

(M. Sherman)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Robert Carter
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
Norman Plourde
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

Abstained:

Charles Capparelli
David Gibbs
John Nunnari
Cheryl Rauh

(Motion passed 14-0-4)

- E. Approval of the 266th Special Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on July 27, 2005

Motion: To refer minutes of the July 27, 2005 Special Meeting of the WRSD Committee to District Counsel.

(M. Watson)
(M. Sherman)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
David Gibbs
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

Abstained:
Alice Livdahl
Phillip Mighdoll

(Motion passed 16-0-2)

- F. Approval of the Executive Session (Part B) Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on July 11, 2005, to be released.

Motion: Approval of the Executive Session (Part B) Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on July 11, 2005

(K. Maxwell)
(K. Sweeney)

Roll call vote:
In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
David Gibbs
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

Abstained:
Cheryl Rauh

(Motion passed 17-0-1)

III. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

Chair Livdahl reminded the Committee that if there were questions regarding the Comptroller'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. MCAS Presentation by Jason Newton, Director of Student/Information Services

Copies of **Using MCAS to Improve Educational Outcomes for ALL Children** were distributed (attachment 3). Jason Newton showed a PowerPoint presentation, following which he fielded questions School Committee members had regarding MCAS testing and results of testing.

7:51 PM Member Carter left the table.

7:57 PM Member Carter returned to the table.

8:02 PM Tom Pandiscio left the table.

8:03 PM Tom Pandiscio returned to the table.

Jason Newton said, if he is asked, he would be willing to attend SIMCO/School Council meetings to make a similar presentation on MCAS testing.

Chair Livdahl thanked Mr. Newton for attending this meeting. Tom Pandiscio commented on the presentation, explaining practices of the District.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Livdahl noted the addition of times on the agenda, done in the hope of running more time-conscious meetings. Chair Livdahl reminded Members of the Regional Caucus to be held in Holden on Tuesday, November 22, 2005. She also reminded the School Committee of the special School Committee meeting called for December 5, 2005 at which time Attorney Elizabeth Valerio will report to the School Committee her findings.

Attention was called to an article addressing community service at the high school, which appeared in the November/December issue of *Guidance News* (which had been included with the November 10, 2005 Superintendent's Report).

B. Student Advisory Committee (K. Getchell, C. O'Connor)

No members of the Student Advisory Committee were present. A School Committee member noted that it has been quite a while since a Student Advisory representative has attended a School Committee meeting and, since these students have been invited to sit at the table, their attendance at School Committee meetings should be encouraged. Chair Livdahl will attempt to speak with the high school representatives to encourage attendance.

- C. Management Subcommittee (A. Livdahl, Chair, C. Ahearn, E. Brennan, C. Capparelli, R. Carter, M. C. Maher, J. Newton, M. Sherman, M. Watson)

Copies of the *School Committee Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools* form (11/14/05 revision) were distributed (attachment 4). Tom Pandiscio will prepare his goals, which will be on the agenda of the November 30, 2005 Management Subcommittee meeting.

Motion: To approve the form for *School Committee Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools*.

(P. Mighdoll)
(C. Capparelli)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
David Gibbs
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Motion: To thank Member Norman Plourde and those who served on the Subcommittee to Develop the Superintendent's

Evaluation for the time, effort and attention put into the development of the form for *School Committee Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools*.

(P. Mighdoll)
(M. Watson)

Motion passed by consensus and a round of applause.

At a previous meeting, Member Capparelli had proposed wording to elect a Secretary to the School Committee. Chair Livdahl advised that such would require a By-Law change. Text of a proposed By-Law change(s) needs to be shared, in writing, with the School Committee 14 days in advance of action. Chair Livdahl explained that this matter is being looked into (the possibility of a School Committee member being elected to serve as an unpaid secretary to edit and oversee minutes of regular meetings, special meetings and executive session meetings of the full School Committee, information for what it would cost for outside services is being gathered, etc.).

Motion: It shall be the policy of this School Committee that all agendas and relevant materials shall be delivered to each Committee member at least two days prior to the School Committee or subcommittee meeting. Emergency meetings called for a special, single purpose shall be excluded from this policy at the discretion of the School Committee chair.

(R. Carter)
(P. Mighdoll)

Discussion concerning this motion ensued.

Member Mighdoll made a friendly amendment that only the agenda would be distributed in advance and would be distributed electronically, without attachments.

Member Maxwell inquired of the maker of the motion if the High School Building Committee could be excluded from this requirement. Member Carter agreed, noting this pre-meeting distribution of agendas would only affect standing subcommittees of the School Committee.

Minimum distribution would be the agenda, which was accepted by Members Carter and Mighdoll.

This motion carried by a unanimous voice vote.

Motion: Prior to regularly scheduled School Committee meetings, the Superintendent will mail to each member the following:

- Meeting agenda
- Minutes of prior meeting
- All materials significant to agenda items
- Superintendent's discretionary items
- A list of e-mails, correspondence, newsletters, educational articles, etc. that would be available to School Committee members at the Central Office.

(R. Carter)

This motion was referred to the November 30, 2005 Management Subcommittee meeting, it being the first item on the agenda for that meeting.

Motion: The School Committee requests that the administration evaluate the financial impact of the following reduction in bus fees within 1.5 miles of the schools:

- One child \$200.
- Second child \$100.
- Each additional child \$ 50.

A quick survey among parents should be taken to determine if lower fees would result in additional children taking the bus and the financial impact of increased patronage estimated.

The School Committee requests a response by the second meeting in January.

If the administration has any recommendations that accommodate the spirit of this request, they would be appreciated.

(R. Carter)

(D. Gibbs)

Per Michael Sherman, this issue is being addressed by the Business/Finance Subcommittee and the administration has been instructed to come back to the Business/Finance Subcommittee with pertinent data.

Member Carter withdrew his motion

Motion: The District will establish, on the District server, email addresses for all School Committee members. These email addresses will serve as the official, public email addresses for School Committee members.

(D. Gibbs)
(M. James)

Dr. Pandiscio addressed this motion, noting that administration will be looking for authorization by the Management Subcommittee to proceed with establishing a School Committee link on District website. Member Gibb's motion is an extension of what District Administration has been considering.

It was advised that the School Committee email policy be reviewed in light of this motion.

8:48 PM Member Sweeney left the table.

8:51 PM Member Sweeney returned to the table.

Discussion of motion continued. Tom Pandiscio gave a brief explanation of what it would take to make this happen and assured the Committee that the matter will be investigated by administration, but also noted that an answer should not be expected within a week.

Vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
David Gibbs
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
John Nunnari

Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Second reading of Draft Policy DP5273.1 **Policy Relating to Personnel Management *Alternatives to Travel and Travel expense Reduction*** will be tabled until Attorney Elizabeth Valerio reports to the School Committee.

- D. Education Subcommittee (M. Watson, Chair, C. Bazinet, D. Gibbs, A. Livdahl, J. Nunnari, N. Plourde, K. Sweeney)

The next meeting of the Education Subcommittee will be Monday, November 21, 2005. Member Watson reported that, after discussion with an attorney, she had discovered that an “Opt-In” alternative to the “Opt-Out” proposal is not legally viable under No Child Left Behind.

- E. Business/Finance Subcommittee (M. Sherman, Chair, S. Conrad, M. James, A. Livdahl, M. C. Maher, P. Mighdoll, J. Newton, T, Tod)

The next meeting of the Business/Finance Subcommittee has not yet been scheduled. Discussion is taking place regarding amending the Superintendent’s job description naming the Superintendent the Chief Procurement Officer, to be technically correct.

A draft copy of Tom Pandiscio’s letter to Finance/Advisory Committee Chairs inviting them to sit on the Budget Advisory Task Force was distributed (attachment 5).

9:09 PM Member Mighdoll left the table.

Motion: Move that the Wachusett Regional School Committee endorse Superintendent Pandiscio's proposal to establish a Wachusett Regional Budget Advisory Task Force.

(M. Sherman)

(E. Brennan)

9:12 PM Member Mighdoll returned to the table.

The motion was discussed. The question of how the School Committee would be kept apprised of this Task Force's actions, it was explained it would be similar to the Special Education Task Force where the Superintendent kept the School Committee informed, periodically, through the Superintendent's Report.

Note was made that these meetings would be open meetings and would be posted.

Vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
David Gibbs
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

- F. Community Outreach Subcommittee (E. Brennan, Chair, C. Ahearn, S. Conrad, K. Maxwell, P. Mighdoll, J. Newton, N., Plourde)

Community Outreach Subcommittee met just prior to this date's School Committee meeting. The Community Outreach Subcommittee could be the body to act as a clearinghouse when comments/issues are brought forward by the public. Chair Livdahl and Tom Pandiscio will develop a template for a thank you letter which could be sent to those who address the School Committee during the public hearing portion of School Committee meetings. Such a letter would thank the individual for speaking, note if the matter had been referred to a subcommittee for further review, but would not make any "weighty decisions" on behalf of the School Committee.

"Meet & Greets" for the public to have the opportunity to meet Superintendent Pandiscio have been scheduled in the five towns.

Policies relating to community outreach will be addressed this year.

G. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

1. Annual Audit Subcommittee for FY05 (C. Conrad, Chair, P. Mighdoll, J. Newton)

Member Mighdoll reported in the absence of Member Conrad that the mission of this subcommittee has been completed. Chair Livdahl will confirm with Annual Audit Subcommittee Chair Conrad and, if so, subcommittee will be dissolved.

2. Subcommittee to Develop the Superintendent's Evaluation (N. Plourde, Chair, K. Sweeney, T. Todd)

Subcommittee Chair Plourde noted that an evaluation process is an ongoing process, not a once a year process. The work of this subcommittee has been completed. The subcommittee has been dissolved.

3. Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Develop a Plan for Establishing a Permanent Audit Committee (S. Conrad, Chair, R. Carter, P. Mighdoll, J. Newton)

Next meeting is scheduled for November 16, 2005 at 6:30 PM.

9:32 PM Member Mighdoll the left the table.

H. Building Committees

1. High School

Member Maxwell reported.

2. Rutland – Naquag/Central Tree.

3. Rutland – Elementary School – Elizabeth Brennan

Member Brennan reported that OSHA had spent two days on the site investigating the recent fatality. It could be two months before a formal report is received. The School Committee will be kept up-to-date.

9:34 PM Member Mighdoll returned to the table.

School Committee members are invited to a tour of the Rutland Elementary School project scheduled for December 8, 2005, 3:30 PM.

I. School Council Reports:

Members Brennan and Capparelli reported on school council meetings they have attended.

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

1. Motion: To refer draft Fraud Prevention policy to the Management Subcommittee.

(M. Sherman)
(K. Maxwell)

Vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl

Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
David Gibbs
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

2. Motion: Approve the 2006 School Committee Meeting Schedule, draft dated 11/7/05.

(N. Plourde)

(M. James)

Much discussion followed concerning rotating the meeting locations. Many members thought such a change would be confusing for the public, difficult for the videographer, is something that has been tried, unsuccessfully, in the past.

Member Sherman made a friendly amendment that the proposed dates of School Committee meetings in 2006 be accepted, but the decision on the location of the meetings be held in abeyance. Member Plourde accepted this friendly amendment.

Motion: Approve the dates of meetings listed on the 2006 School Committee Meeting Schedule, draft dated 11/7/05, with the decision on the location of the meetings being held in abeyance.

(N. Plourde)
(M. James)

Vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
David Gibbs
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Memorandum from Comptroller Peter Brennan to
Superintendent Thomas Pandiscio, dated November 14, 2005,
was distributed (attachment 6).

3. Motion: To authorize the Superintendent to enter into the Project Funding Agreement with School Building Authority, subject to review by Bond Counsel Jay Gonzalez and by District Counsel Leo McCabe.

(M. Sherman)
(C. Capparelli)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman

Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
David Gibbs
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

B. Discussion of Report

Member Carter requested salary information for nurses and substitutes, such information to be prepared for the December School Committee meeting.

Member Carter requested clarification as to the duties of the Treasurer and the evaluation process.

Motion: To extend the meeting by 15 minutes

(M. James)

(D. Gibbs)

Vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter

David Gibbs
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Motion: To adjourn.

(P. Mighdoll)
(C. Capparelli)

Vote:

In favor:

Alice Livdahl
Michael Sherman
Cynthia Ahearn
Cynthia Bazinet
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Robert Carter
David Gibbs
Mark James
Kelly Maxwell
Phillip Mighdoll
Judith Newton
John Nunnari
Norman Plourde
Cheryl Rauh
Kathleen Sweeney
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The meeting adjourned at 10:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP/rlp/School Committee/Minutes