

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1156 Monday, December 8, 2008

Cafeteria
Davis Hill Elementary School

Committee Members Present:

Margaret Watson, Chair	Stacey Jackson
John Nunnari, Vice-chair	Mark James
Cynthia Bazinet	Duncan Leith
Robert Carter	Michael Pantos
Colleen Cipro	Robert Pelczarski
Shirley Conrad	Norman Plourde
Steven Hammond	Michael Sherman
Robert Imber	Joseph Sova

Committee Members Absent:

Thomas Ackerman	Marcie Zaharee
Melinda Coyle	

Administration Present:

Thomas G. Pandiscio, Superintendent of Schools
Jack Locke, Deputy Superintendent
Darryll McCall, 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	Greg Savageau
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Guests Present:

Kelley Gangi	Deborah LaBombard
Charlene Griffin	Catherine Schofield
Rachel Kodra	

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 7:03 PM.

I. Public Hearing

No members of the public wished to address the School Committee.

II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of 1155th Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRDSC held on November 24, 2008

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held November 24, 2008.

(D. Leith)

(M. Pantos)

The minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held November 24, 2008 were approved by consensus, with Members Jackson and Sova 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 members this would be the last time the School Committee would meet at Davis Hill Elementary School. Beginning January 12, 2009 School Committee meetings will be held in the Media Center of Wachusett Regional High School. Chair Watson recognized Davis Hill Elementary School custodians John Noonan, Ron Sciascia and Jeff Todd and publicly thanked them for their service during the School Committee's run of meeting at Davis Hill. Mr. Noonan, Mr. Sciascia and Mr. Todd were given a round of applause.

Chair Watson spoke of the Annual School Committee Retreat planned for Saturday, February 7, 2009, at the high school. She also mentioned the New Member Orientation that will be presented by MASC Executive Director Glenn Koocher on Saturday, January 24, 2009, at the Central Office.

Chair Watson introduced Kelley Gangi, English/Language Arts Curriculum Supervisor, who gave the School Committee an update on literacy initiative related activities taking place in the District schools. Mrs. Gangi showed a PowerPoint presentation (attachment 2). Following the presentation, the four literacy coaches were asked to introduce themselves and School Committee members were given the opportunity to ask questions. The literacy initiative presentation concluded at 7:33 PM and Mrs. Gangi and the literacy coaches left the building.

B. Student Representatives

Student Representative Greg Savageau reported on recent activities at WRHS: student registration for 2009-2010 classes has begun; *Diary of Anne Frank* performance recently concluded; many fundraisers are taking place; sports update; some bathrooms have been boarded up because of student smoking.

C. Management Subcommittee (M. Watson, Chair, J. Nunnari, Vice-chair, C. Bazinet, M. Coyle, R. Imber, D. Leith, M. Pantos, N. Plourde, M. Sherman)

Chair Watson reported on the December 4th meeting of the Management Subcommittee and said that the next meeting has been called for January 13th.

D. Education Subcommittee (C. Bazinet, Chair, S. Hammond, Vice-chair, R. Imber, S. Jackson, J. Nunnari, R. Pelczarski, M. Zaharee)

Subcommittee Chair Bazinet reported the Education Subcommittee has not met since the last School Committee meeting.

1. Amended Policy – AP6437 **Policy Relating to Pupil Services Promoting Civil Rights and Prohibiting Harassment, Bullying, Discrimination and Hate Crimes** – second reading

Motion: To approve the second reading of AP6437 **Policy Relating to Pupil Services Promoting Civil Rights and Prohibiting Harassment, Bullying, Discrimination and Hate Crimes**, waiving the reading.

(C. Bazinet)

(J. Nunnari)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Subcommittee Chair Bazinet announced the December 17th Education Subcommittee meeting is canceled. The subcommittee will meet next on January 28, 2009.

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

Business/Finance Subcommittee Chair Sherman reported on the meeting of the Business/Finance Subcommittee which took place immediately before this School Committee meeting. He informed the full Committee there is one amendment to the December 2, 2008 narrative he prepared evaluating District Treasurer James Dunbar. The additional language reads: The week-to-week duties described in the above criteria are being reliably accomplished, **with the exception of the monthly Treasurer's Reports which continue to be submitted tardy.**

Motion: To approve the recommendation of the Business/Finance Subcommittee of a one year appointment of James Dunbar as WRSD Treasurer January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2009 and to approve the recommendation of the Business/Finance Subcommittee to grant a 3% annual increase to the contract amount for James Dunbar as WRSD Treasurer January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2009.

(M. Sherman)
(S. Conrad)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman

Joseph Sova

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Subcommittee Chair Sherman called the Committee's attention to a December 3, 2008 letter from Representative Lewis Evangelidis to State Treasurer Tim Cahill, copies of which were distributed (attachment 3).

Motion: To endorse Representative Lewis Evangelidis' position on legislation proposed by State Treasurer Timothy Cahill and to direct the School Committee Chair to correspond with area legislators seeking their support of said legislation.

(M. Sherman)
(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Subcommittee Chair Sherman referred to a recent letter to Rutland Selectboard Chair Joseph Becker inviting Selectboard Chairs to join the Budget Advisory Task Force, in which letter Chair Watson stated BATF meetings would be held in the spring. Subcommittee Chair Sherman clarified that the Budget Advisory Task Force usually has its first meeting shortly after

the mid-winter School Committee Retreat. Chair Watson will communicate with the Selectboards to relay this correction.

- F. Community Outreach Subcommittee (C. Cipro, Chair, R. Pelczarski, Vice-chair, R. Carter, N. Plourde)

Community Outreach Subcommittee Chair Cipro reported on the meeting of this subcommittee which was held immediately before this School Committee meeting. She informed the Committee that subcommittee members' next presentations at Member Town Selectboard meetings will focus on outcome data reports from Wachusett Regional High School (SAT results, college selections, remedial support provide at state colleges and universities, etc.) The Community Outreach Subcommittee will meet on January 12, 2009.

- G. Audit Advisory Board (S. Conrad, J. Sova)

Audit Advisory Board Chair Conrad reported the AAB has not met since the last School Committee and as of this time no future meeting has been posted. She did comment that recommendations contained in the auditor's Management Letter will be on-going Business/Finance Subcommittee agenda items.

- H. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees

1. Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Study Possible Academic Disparity Among the Schools in the Wachusett District (S. Hammond, Chair, S. Conrad, M. Coyle, R. Imber, J. Nunnari)

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Hammond began with a thank you to District administration, school principals and School Committee members who served on the Ad Hoc Subcommittee. He continued by outlining the process taken to address the charge given this ad hoc subcommittee. He called the School Committee's attention to page 10 of the report **Achievement & Opportunity Disparities in the Wachusett Regional School District** (attachment 4).

Motion: To task the Management Subcommittee with monitoring the District administration in the creation and implementation of a plan to bring the Rutland schools achievement (as measured by a combination of standardized test scores and high school performance) into parity with the rest of the District over the next five years.

(S. Hammond)
(J. Nunnari)

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Hammond spoke to this motion.
Superintendent Pandiscio made a statement about this motion.

Amendment to motion: To task the Management Subcommittee with monitoring the District administration's plan to bring the Rutland schools achievement (as measured by a combination of standardized test scores and high school performance) into parity with the rest of the District over the next five years.

(R. Imber)
(J. Nunnari)

Discussion and debate continued. Chair Watson re-read the amended motion.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Nunnari
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 8-7-1)

Amendment to motion: To task the Management Subcommittee with monitoring the District administration's plan to bring the Rutland schools achievement (as measured by a combination of standardized test scores and high school performance) into parity with the rest of the District.

(M. Sherman)
(S. Conrad)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Nunnari
Shirley Conrad
Stacey Jackson

Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion failed 5-10-1)

Main motion as amended: To task the Management Subcommittee with monitoring the District administration's plan to bring the Rutland schools achievement (as measured by a combination of standardized test scores and high school performance) into parity with the rest of the District over the next five years.

(R. Imber)
(J. Nunnari)

Discussion and debate of the motion continued. Member James voiced his opinion that the School Committee should accept the report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Study Possible Academic Disparity Among the Schools in the Wachusett District as a whole, before tasking subcommittees and/or the administration with reacting to the report.

Chair Watson re-read the amended motion on the floor.

Roll call vote on main motion as amended:

In favor:

John Nunnari
Colleen Cipro
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter

Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Abstained:
Margaret Watson

(Motion failed 6-9-1)

9:00 PM Member Sherman left the table.

9:00 PM Member Cipro left the table.

Motion: To accept the report of the Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Study Possible Academic Disparity Among the Schools in the Wachusett District (**Achievement & Opportunity Disparities in the Wachusett Regional School District**) with the exception of *Summary and Next Steps* on pages 10 and 11.

(S. Hammond)

(S. Conrad)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

9:03 PM Student Representatives Hillary Blakeney and Greg Savageau left the building.

9:03 PM Member Sherman returned to the table.

Motion: To task the Education Subcommittee and District administration with examining the middle school foreign language program in the District and to report back to the full School Committee with recommendations.

(S. Hammond)

(J. Nunnari)

9:04 PM Member Cipro returned to the table.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Nunnari
Robert Carter
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman

Abstained:

Margaret Watson
Colleen Cipro

(Motion passed 9-5-2)

Motion: To task the Education Subcommittee with examination of the District's aging text books.

(S. Hammond)

(J. Nunnari)

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Hammond spoke to the motion.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Nunnari
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond

Robert Imber
Michael Pantos
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman

Abstained:

Margaret Watson

(Motion failed 6-9-1)

Motion: To task the Education Subcommittee to look at ways to foster voluntary intra-District transfers/opportunities to help balance student enrollment and to discourage programmatic disparities.

(S. Hammond)

(J. Nunnari)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

Robert Carter
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Norman Plourde

Abstained:

Margaret Watson
Stacey Jackson

(Motion passed 10-4-2)

9:17 PM Joseph Sova left the table.

Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Hammond scheduled the last meeting of this ad hoc subcommittee, for minutes approval, for 6:45 PM on January 12, 2009, immediately before the School Committee meeting. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Chair Hammond extended thanks to the full School Committee for the attention paid this important matter.

I. Building Committee

1. High School

High School Building Committee Chair Leith gave an update on recent building project activities.

9:20 PM Member Sova returned to the table.

9:21 PM Member Pelczarski left the table.

Building Committee Chair Leith wanted to publicly recognize Curriculum Specialist – Athletics Jennifer Lynch and high school custodian Steven McRell for the time and attention they expended at the various athletic activities that took place on the high school site over the Thanksgiving weekend.

The High School Building Committee will meet on December 10, 2008.

J. School Council Reports:

Central Tree Middle School (M. Pantos), Chocksett Middle School (J. Sova), Davis Hill Elementary School (R. Carter), Dawson Elementary School (M. James), Glenwood Elementary School (J. Nunnari), Houghton Elementary School (S. Conrad), Mayo Elementary School (S. Hammond), Mountview Middle School (C. Bazinet), Naquag Elementary School (C. Cipro), Paxton Center School (R. Pelczarski), Thomas Prince School (R. Imber), Wachusett Regional High School (D. Leith), Special Education Parent Advisory Council (S. Jackson)

Member Jackson – Special Education Parent Advisory Council – November 12, 2008

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Superintendent Pandiscio distributed copies of correspondence from Thomas Prince School Principal Mary Cringan regarding water quality testing results (attachments 5 & 6). Superintendent Pandiscio gave history of these water sample test results. He further explained the safety of students and staff is not a concern, but DEP wishes to continue monitoring.

The invitation the Superintendent received to attend a meeting of the Regional Finance Committees, planned for December 11, 2008, was questioned. Superintendent Pandiscio explained he did not know the intended purpose of the meeting. He gave the Committee a brief report of what has been done to date in preparation for the FY10 budget. It was asked if the meeting is a posted meeting, but that is not known. Although Chair Watson is unable to attend the December 11th meeting, Business/Finance Chair Sherman does plan to attend, along with Superintendent Pandiscio and Business Manager Brennan.

B. Recommendations Requiring Action by the School Committee

Motion: Whereas the District currently has a three year contract with Waste Management that expires January 30, 2009 that can be extended upon mutual agreement for two (2) one-year periods, thus making the Contract a multi-year contract, that the School Committee thus grant approval of said contract extension, to a new expiration date of January 30, 2011.

(M. Sherman)
(J. Sova)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

9:40 PM Director of Human Resources Sullivan left the meeting.

Motion: To authorize the acceptance of 13 Dell computers and 13 Dell monitors, donated by the University of Massachusetts Medical School to the Dawson Elementary School

(M. Sherman)
(J. Sova)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Motion: To approve the School Calendar for School Year 2009-2010

(J. Sova)
(M. Sherman)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad

Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Motion: To approve travel reimbursement for Member Carter's attendance at MASC/MASS Joint Conference, November 2008

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Motion: To accept the \$4,995 donation from the Estate of Robert Drazek to be used for updating Challenge Course elements at Mountview Middle School.

(M. Sherman)
(J. Sova)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet
Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

VI. Public Hearing

No members of the public wished to address the School Committee.

VII. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business brought before the School Committee.

VIII. New Business

There was no new business brought before the School Committee.

IX. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

(D. Leith)
(M. James)

Vote:

In favor:

Margaret Watson
John Nunnari
Cynthia Bazinet

Robert Carter
Colleen Cipro
Shirley Conrad
Steven Hammond
Robert Imber
Stacey Jackson
Mark James
Duncan Leith
Michael Pantos
Robert Pelczarski
Norman Plourde
Michael Sherman
Joseph Sova

Opposed:
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

TGP:rlp