

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1041, Tuesday, May 28, 2002  
7:00 p.m.

Media Center  
Wachusett Regional High School

*Committee Members Present:*

John Rokicki, Chairman	Kelly Maxwell
Duncan Leith, Vice Chairman	Natalie Mello
Donald Benson	John Nunnari
David Fedeli	Kathleen Singh
Jeffrey Gibbs	Tammy Tod
Jane James	Edwin Twarog
Alice Livdahl	Margaret Watson
Peter MacDonald	Patricia Young

*Committee Members Absent:*

Carol Esperti	David Lowenthal
Kimberly Ferguson	Julie Scott

*Administration Present:*

Alfred D. Tutela, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools  
Susan Sullivan, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

*Others present:*

Linda Lehans, *The Landmark*  
Stacey M. Grossi, *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*  
Christine Nelson, *Sterling Meetinghouse News*  
Joseph Sullivan, Chair, Holden Selectboard  
Joseph Giotta, Holden Finance Committee  
Larry Floryan, Holden  
Maureen Floryan, Holden  
David Gibbs, Sterling  
Norman Plourde, Sterling  
Melinda Johnson, Paxton  
Mark James, Holden

Jason Newton, Holden  
Jeffrey Wentzell, Paxton  
Kate White, Holden  
Debbie Demantas, Holden  
Tracey Strandguard, Holden  
Mary Connors-Whamond, Holden  
Kimberly Whamond, Holden  
Jinna Tibbetts, Holden  
Martha Casey, Holden

Chairman Rokicki called the meeting to order at 7:58 PM.

The Chairman addressed Agenda Item IV.

IV. Education Presentation – Joseph Rappa, Executive Director of Massachusetts Office of Education Quality and Accountability

Chairman Rokicki introduced Joseph Rappa who reviewed his new role as the Executive Director of Massachusetts Office of Education Quality and Accountability. Dr. Rappa distributed *Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Wachusett Public School District* (attachment 2 [no attachment 1]). The Superintendent distributed *Massachusetts Educational Quality and Accountability Standards, Student Assessment, and The Education Management Audit Council* and (attachments 3, 4, and 5).

Dr. Rappa explained the connection of attendance to the possibility of success on the MCAS tests. The provisions of legislation, *No Child Left Behind*, 95% of students must participate in testing in order to receive federal funds. It is critical to be in compliance as Massachusetts receives \$943 million in Title I funds.

The Massachusetts Office of Education Quality and Accountability is taking a closer look at 60 of 362 districts, and looking for districts to focus efforts on creating learning opportunities for students that turn out quality students.

The office will use examiners that are fulltime and highly trained, with eight years teaching or administration and advanced degree, and three years experience. Site visits will be by teams of five people for two-week visit, making assessments on the status of thirty-four standards. The office will use a data driven, standards based approach.

The Office chooses districts by selecting some from the top and some from the bottom and then choosing randomly among those.

Dr. Rappa pointed out that there should be a broader view and more focus on testing. School Committees should set policies but also set the tone. There is co-responsibility of the School Committee with the administration.

#### I. Public Hearing

Tracey Strandguard, Holden, expressed concerns regarding the new bus fees and in particular the short time frame for payment. She also thought that all parents should be charged, not just some.

Melinda Johnson, Paxton, suggested that the School Committee introduce themselves before the meetings if the videographer is going to continue. She reminded Committee members that they are responsible for the education of all students, not just the students from the respective towns.

Kate White, Holden, expressed concern regarding the bus fees. She was concerned about the photo identification system.

Martha Casey, Holden, expressed concern regarding the bus fees. She was particularly concerned about the lack of sidewalks.

#### II. Secretary's Report

A. Approval of 232<sup>nd</sup> Special Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on May 15, 2002 – approved by consensus

B. Approval of the 1040<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on May 15, 2002 – approved by consensus with the following change on page 7, removing Edwin Twarog from the “Opposed” list.

C. Approval of the Executive Session Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on May 15, 2002 -- approved by consensus and will be released when all items have been resolved.

#### III. Communications

A concern was expressed regarding the payment schedule for transportation. The Superintendent reported the critical nature of scheduling busses. The ridership must be established by the end of the school year. The District began the process of establishing bus routes in April, following kindergarten registration. There are unique situations that will be dealt with on an individual basis. Discussion continued regarding the early deadlines. A member contacted Jay Sullivan from the Department of Education (DOE) who indicated that the DOE would measure the mileage. The Superintendent will check with Jay Sullivan to check on the process.

Following a request, the Superintendent advised that the bus company is paid monthly and state law defines bus ridership capacity.

The Superintendent reported that the administration is struggling with identification measures. The District must assure that the right students get on the bus. The Superintendent reported that the names could be eliminated, but the picture is necessary.

Motion: To reconsider the motion on developing a transportation fee schedule.

(E. Twarog)  
(K. Singh)

Point of Order by Member John Nunnari: That to reconsider, the maker of the motion must have voted in favor of the original motion. Neither the maker of the motion or the person seconding the motion voted in favor; therefore Chairman Rokicki ruled the motion out of order.

Following a request for clarification, the Superintendent explained the process for transportation reimbursement. The District receives reimbursement for students being bussed beyond one and a half miles. The Superintendent explained that if fees are collected from students entitled to a free ride, the fee must be deducted from the transportation reimbursement.

Motion: To reconsider the motion on developing a transportation fee schedule.

(K. Maxwell)

The motion died due to the lack of a second.

Motion: To change the bus transportation fee to \$100 for the first child by June 10 and \$100 by July 10<sup>th</sup> and \$100 for family by June 10, \$100 July 10, \$100, August 1.

(K. Maxwell)  
(D. Leith)

Since the motion is not a policy motion, Chairman Rokicki asked for consensus from the Committee to adopt this fee schedule. The Superintendent supported the fee schedule and agreed that he would notify parents this week of the three-payment option.

V. Committee Reports

A. Student Advisory Committee (L. McNally, C. Smith)

No report.

B. Education Subcommittee

No report.

C. School Council Reports: Central Tree Middle School, Chocksett, Davis Hill, Dawson, Houghton, Mayo, Mountview, Naquag, Paxton, Thomas Prince, and Wachusett Regional High School.

No report.

VI. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

Following inquiry, the Superintendent explained his practice of soliciting support for budgets from parents and staff on town meeting issues. The Superintendent explained that the staff is critical in supporting the budget.

The Superintendent also explained the process for the FY03 budget. Towns must vote the budget adopted by the School Committee; the number cannot be lowered. If four towns do not affirm the budget, the District can try to negotiate with the town, which did not approve the budget. If still not successful, the Commissioner can be petitioned and the towns would fund the District on a one-twelfth of the FY02 budget by month. By

December, the state would take over the District and direct the towns to pay costs, determined by the Department of Education, to the District.

B. Recommendations requiring action by the School Committee

Member Jeffrey Gibbs left the meeting at 9:50 PM.

1. FY02 Appropriation Budget

- a. Motion: To appropriate FY02 District Funds as contained in the Superintendent's Report, including transferring all remaining funds to *Instructional Support*  
(J. Nunnari)  
(N. Mello)

Roll call vote:

In Favor:

John Rokicki  
Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Jane James  
Duncan Leith  
Alice Livdahl  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

- Motion: To extend the meeting by thirty minutes  
(M. Watson)  
(A. Livdahl)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Rokicki  
Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Jane James  
Duncan Leith  
Alice Livdahl  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Peter MacDonald  
Edwin Twarog

(Motion passed 13-2)

- b. Motion: To transfer \$45,000 from *Excess & Deficiency* to  
*Transportation*

(P. MacDonald)  
(D. Leith)

Roll call vote:

In Favor:

John Rokicki  
Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Jane James  
Duncan Leith  
Alice Livdahl  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson

Patricia Young

Opposed:  
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

2. FY03 Appropriation Budget

Member Jeffrey Gibbs returned to the meeting at 10:10 PM.

- a. Motion: To appropriate FY03 District Funds as contained in the Superintendent's Report

(J. Nunnari)  
(D. Leith)

Motion: To amend the motion to change \$33,000 to \$23,000 under District Administration

(K. Singh)  
(P. MacDonald)

Roll call vote:

In Favor:

Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Jane James  
Duncan Leith  
Alice Livdahl  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Margaret Watson

Abstained:

John Rokicki



(Motion passed 9-6-1)

Roll call vote on the main motion as amended:

In Favor:

John Rokicki  
Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Duncan Leith  
Alice Livdahl  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

- b. Motion: To transfer \$310,000 from *Excess & Deficiency*  
(A. Livdahl)  
(E. Twarog)

Roll call vote:

In Favor:

John Rokicki  
Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Duncan Leith  
Alice Livdahl  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello

John Nunnari  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:  
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

4. Motion: To Amend the Agenda of the Special Meeting on June 24, 2002 to include an Executive Session for the purposes of discussing strategies for negotiations  
(P. MacDonald)  
(D. Leith)

Vote:

In Favor:

John Rokicki  
Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Duncan Leith  
Alice Livdahl  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:  
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

VII. Public Hearing

No member of the public wished to speak.

VIII. Unfinished Business

IX. New Business

Subcommittees and Standing Committees will be re-established by Chairman Rokicki. Chairman Rokicki will appoint members to one Subcommittee unless a member desires to not be assigned to a Subcommittee.

A member asked that the Superintendent's evaluation be brought back to the Committee for action.

A member asked that the By-Law changes and the policies be brought back to the Committee for action.

X. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn

(E. Twarog)  
(D. Leith)

Vote:

In Favor:

John Rokicki  
Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Duncan Leith  
Alice Livdahl  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:  
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

ADT:ss/School Committee/Minutes