

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Regular Meeting #1060, Monday, June 9, 2003
7:00 PM

Media Center
Wachusett Regional High School

Committee Members Present:

Duncan Leith, Chair	Alice Livdahl
Natalie Mello, Vice-Chair	Norman Plourde
Donald Benson	René Rodriguez
Elizabeth Brennan	Julie Scott
Charles Capparelli	Michael Sherman
Clifford Connell (7:07 PM)	Tammy Tod (7:26 PM)
Carol Esperti	Margaret Watson
Patricia Gates	Patricia Young
Mark James	

Committee Members Absent:

Peter MacDonald	John Rokicki
John Nunnari	

Administration Present:

Alfred D. Tutela, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools
Paul K. Soojian, Director of Operations
Steven Penka, Director of Administrative Services
Susan Sullivan, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

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

Chairman Duncan Leith called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

- I. Public Hearing
 - A. Public Hearing

No member of the public wished to speak.

Chairman Duncan Leith addressed Item VB1, *Presentation of Revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum*. The Superintendent introduced Kelley Nosel, the Curriculum Supervisor, who reviewed the proposed changes to the Health and Physical Education Curriculum. Previously the State Health and Physical Education Curriculum had nine standards; when revised the State had fourteen standards.

Motion: To adopt the Revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum, as presented

(C. Esperti)
(J. Scott)

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Natalie Mello
Donald Benson
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Clifford Connell
Carol Esperti
Patricia Gates
Mark James
Alice Livdahl
Norman Plourde
René Rodriguez
Julie Scott
Michael Sherman
Margaret Watson
Patricia Young

Opposed
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

II. Secretary's Report

- A. Approval of Organizational Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on May 29, 2003 – accepted by consensus

Chairman Duncan Leith welcomed newly elected Sterling representative Norman Plourde back to the Committee. Member Plourde had served previously on the School Committee.

- B. Approval of 1059th Regular Meeting Minutes of the WRSD Committee held on May 29, 2003 – accepted by consensus, striking the last sentence of the last paragraph on page 10.

III. Treasurer's Report/Financial Statements

Chairman Duncan Leith informed the Committee that if there were any questions of the Treasurer, to direct them to either Chairman Leith or Vice-chair Natalie Mello, will continue to serve as Chair of the Business/Finance Committee until new committees are formed. Chairman Duncan Leith will be sharing information with Members requesting preference for service on Subcommittees and School Councils. He reviewed briefly the functions of the three main subcommittees: Management, Education, and Business/Finance.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Student Advisory Committee

No members of the Student Advisory Committee were present.

Chairman Duncan Leith reported that the high school graduation is scheduled for Saturday, June 14, 2003. Members were encouraged to attend.

B. Management Subcommittee

C. Education Subcommittee

- 1. Motion: To approve AP3311.1 **Policy Relating to Education Graduation Requirements** for the second reading, waiving the reading

(J. Scott)

(M. James)

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith

Natalie Mello

Donald Benson
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Clifford Connell
Carol Esperti
Patricia Gates
Mark James
Alice Livdahl
Norman Plourde
René Rodriguez
Julie Scott
Michael Sherman
Margaret Watson
Patricia Young

Opposed
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

2. Motion: To approve AP3311.31 **Policy Relating to Education *Online Education Policy*** for the second reading, waiving the reading
(J. Scott)
(C. Capparelli)

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Natalie Mello
Donald Benson
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Clifford Connell
Carol Esperti
Patricia Gates
Mark James
Alice Livdahl
Norman Plourde
René Rodriguez
Julie Scott
Michael Sherman
Margaret Watson

Patricia Young

Opposed
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

3. Motion: To approve AP3350 **Policy Relating to Education *Experimental and Innovative Programs*** for the second reading, waiving the reading
(J. Scott)
(R. Rodriguez)

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Natalie Mello
Donald Benson
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Clifford Connell
Carol Esperti
Patricia Gates
Mark James
Alice Livdahl
Norman Plourde
René Rodriguez
Julie Scott
Michael Sherman
Margaret Watson
Patricia Young

Opposed
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

4. Motion: To approve AP6650 **Policy Relating to Pupil Services *Confidentiality*** for the second reading, waiving the reading
(J. Scott)
(M. Watson)

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Natalie Mello
Donald Benson
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Clifford Connell
Carol Esperti
Patricia Gates
Mark James
Alice Livdahl
Norman Plourde
René Rodriguez
Julie Scott
Michael Sherman
Margaret Watson
Patricia Young

Opposed

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

- D. Business/Finance Subcommittee
- E. Ad-Hoc Subcommittees
- F. Building Committees
 - 1. High School – John Rokicki

The next meeting will be Monday, June 16, 2003 at the high school. High School Building Committee chair John Rokicki requested, through the Superintendent, that the Committee reconsider its action appointing URS as Construction/Project Management Firm and appointing Payton Construction.

Motion: To rescind the School Committee action of April 28, 2003 appointing URS as Construction/Project Management firm

(N. Mello)
(C. Capparelli)

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Natalie Mello
Donald Benson
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Patricia Gates
Mark James
Alice Livdahl
Norman Plourde
René Rodriguez
Julie Scott
Michael Sherman
Margaret Watson
Patricia Young

Opposed
None

Abstained:

Clifford Connell
Carol Esperti
Tammy Tod

(Motion passed 14-0-3)

Motion: To appoint Payton Construction as Construction/Project Management firm for the high school project

(N. Mello)
(J. Scott)

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Natalie Mello

Donald Benson
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Patricia Gates
Mark James
Alice Livdahl
Norman Plourde
René Rodriguez
Julie Scott
Michael Sherman
Margaret Watson
Patricia Young

Opposed
None

Abstained:
Clifford Connell
Carol Esperti
Tammy Tod

(Motion passed 14-0-3)

2. Holden – Julie Scott
3. Rutland – Naquag/Central Tree – John Rokicki
4. Rutland – Elementary School – John Nunnari

The Superintendent reported that it appears that Rutland will be on the list, pending the Governor's approval. The Superintendent reported that the purchase of land will be going to the Rutland Town Meeting for approval.

5. Sterling

The School Committee members from Sterling met with Timothy Bragan to receive an update on the parking lot proposal. No date has been set for installation.

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

School Improvement Plan review is scheduled for Tuesday, June 10, 2003. Members are encouraged to attend.

V. Superintendent's Report

A. Discussion of Report

The Superintendent reported that he was notified by a parent that a field trip from Paxton Center School was scheduled and permission slips had not been solicited. The permission slips were subsequently sent home with students today to be returned before students are allowed to attend.

Member Alice Livdahl reported that \$23,000 was raised for the Paxton Playground at a fund-raiser.

Superintendent and Member Alice Livdahl met with Paxton Finance Committee members, which was very cordial.

The Superintendent reported that he is beginning the process for application to the Department of Education for a one-twelfth budget, as provided by Massachusetts General Laws, should a District budget not be approved by July 1, 2003. The Superintendent reported that making up the \$570,000 shortfall will not directly impact the educational program in the District. Any further reductions will dramatically affect the educational program.

The Superintendent reported that the Holden Town Manager stated at a public meeting that he would strongly oppose the School Committee's budget, which was not necessarily the sense of the selectboard members who attended the meeting. Holden Town Counsel Robert Martin has advised the Holden Selectboard that the budget can be split; District Counsel Leo McCabe indicated that towns must vote the School Committee budget up or down.

There is still not confirmation that the Early Retirement Incentive Program is either alive or dead.

On Thursday, June 12, 2003, a ceremony is scheduled for veterans to receive diplomas. Members were encouraged to

attend to support the veterans and extend thanks to them for their sacrifices.

Further discussion occurred regarding the meeting with Holden Selectboard.

The Superintendent explained that the budget recommended by the Superintendent and adopted by the Committee is short \$570,000 due to special education transportation increases and last minute notification by the Department of Education of Choice and Charter tuition increases.

The Superintendent reported that the administrative meeting with municipal leaders reached consensus on delaying action for the District budget until June 30, 2003, at which time all will have a better idea of the State budget. The group also reviewed several scenarios for borrowing for the high school.

The Superintendent reported to the group that if there were consensus from the Member town leadership to borrow in a particular way, the Superintendent would recommend that to the Committee. If there is no consensus, the Superintendent will bring a recommendation to the Committee. An additional administrative meeting was scheduled for August to further review the recommendation of town representatives for long-term borrowing.

Following inquiry, the Superintendent reported that his recommendation regarding the Early Retirement Incentive Program is to commit any savings from this program to reduce the assessments, for the present.

The Superintendent reported that the letters of assessment will be adjusted downward because Chapter 70 was included, as the Governor's proposal was to send Chapter 70 directly to the towns.

Discussion occurred regarding supporting the budget, detailing what has been reduced, transportation fees, etc. A Special Meeting was suggested to discuss these issues, after a final budget is presented by the legislature.

The Superintendent reported that he is working on information in support of the budget but would not discuss personnel publicly until he has had an opportunity to talk with them directly.

The Superintendent will be mailing information to all District parents regarding the need to support the budget.

Member Donald Benson left the meeting at 8:07 PM.

Following inquiry, the Superintendent reported to the Committee that when an administrative meeting is scheduled it will not be open to the public. Concern was expressed regarding the Superintendents meetings being closed to the public.

The Superintendent reported that Holden and Paxton have indicated a need for a proposition 2 ½ override. The Superintendent has not heard definitely from the other three towns. Rutland and Holden have scheduled June 30, 2003 town meetings; other boards will be taking action on a delay at their respective Selectboard meetings.

The Superintendent, following inquiry, informed the Committee that 50% of the design for the high school project is anticipated to be completed by June 30, 2003.

- B. Recommendations requiring action by the School Committee
1. Presentation of Revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum

See above.
 2. Adoption of Revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum

See above.
 3. Motion: To authorize the Wachusett Regional School District Treasurer, acting under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 16(g) as amended by Chapter 134 of the Acts of 1972, and with the approval of the Chairman of the District Committee, to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of

revenue, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2003 and to issue a note or notes therefore, payable within one year, in accordance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 44, Section 17.

(C. Esperti)
(N. Mello)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Natalie Mello
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Clifford Connell
Carol Esperti
Patricia Gates
Mark James
Alice Livdahl
Norman Plourde
René Rodriguez
Julie Scott
Michael Sherman
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson
Patricia Young

Opposed
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

VI. Public Hearing

No member of the public wished to speak.

VII. Unfinished Business

VIII. New Business

Motion: That the Wachusett Regional School Committee request that the Member Towns include a \$225,000 override for School District transportation in order to reinstate transportation services to the 2002 school year level

(R. Rodriguez)
(M. James)

The Superintendent reported that all five towns would have to vote affirmatively for the override. The Superintendent informed the Committee that to date eighteen parents have sent in checks for transportation; only thirteen parents attended the informational meeting; no parents attended the School Committee meeting to express concerns.

Member Carol Esperti asked for a friendly amendment to remove the override option. The wording could be that a warrant article be placed on each member town warrant to cover the \$225,000 transportation shortfall. The friendly amendment was accepted by Members René Rodriguez and Mark James.

The Superintendent reported that the Town of Princeton has already requested information from the District to pay for the transportation for Princeton students. The District has advised the Town of Princeton that the cost would be \$260 per student living under one and one-half miles.

The Superintendent clarified his prior advice that approval by four of five towns was needed for operating cost. If the School Committee requests the override, then the Superintendent believes that it would require approval by all five towns.

Roll call vote on the motion, which reads, That the Wachusett Regional School Committee request that the Member Towns include a \$225,000 override for School District transportation in order to reinstate transportation services to the 2002/2003 school year level

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Clifford Connell
Carol Esperti
Mark James
René Rodriguez
Tammy Tod

Opposed:

Natalie Mello
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Patricia Gates
Alice Livdahl
Norman Plourde
Julie Scott
Michael Sherman
Patricia Young
Margaret Watson

(Motion failed 6-10)

IX. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn

(C. Esperti)
(J. Scott)

Vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith
Natalie Mello
Elizabeth Brennan
Charles Capparelli
Clifford Connell
Carol Esperti
Patricia Gates
Mark James
Alice Livdahl
Norman Plourde
René Rodriguez
Julie Scott
Michael Sherman
Tammy Tod
Margaret Watson
Patricia Young

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alfred D. Tutela
Superintendent of Schools

ADT:ss/School Committee/Minutes