

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Executive Session, Monday, March 29, 2004  
7:40 PM

Curriculum Center  
Jefferson School

*Committee Members Present:*

Duncan Leith, Chair	Alice Livdahl
Natalie Mello, Vice-Chair	John Nunnari
Donald Benson	Norman Plourde
Elizabeth Brennan	Julie Scott
Charles Capparelli	Michael Sherman
David Dickman	Tammy Tod
Patricia Gates	Margaret Watson
Mark James	Patricia Young
John Kane	

*Committee Members Absent:*

Clifford Connell	René Rodriguez
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*No Administration Present*

Chair Duncan Leith called the executive session to order at 7:40 PM.  
The Chair asked Vice-chair Mello to act as secretary for the remainder of the meeting.

Member Tod expressed concern that the draft minutes of the executive session meeting of February 23, 2004 did not accurately reflect the discussion that occurred at that meeting. Her memory was that the WRSDC did discuss the reimbursement issue and a recommendation was made to refer the issue to the management Subcommittee. Member Benson specifically asked Chair Leith if he called for a vote to refer the subject of Dr. Tutela's reimbursement process. The answer was no. Discussion ensued regarding the difference between "comments being made" and a "structured discussion led by the Chair." Consensus was that what occurred was not a structured discussion.

Motion: To insert into the minutes of February 23, 2004: “A brief discussion of reimbursement issues as related to the Superintendent’s contract occurred yet no motion was made.”

(T. Tod)  
(J. Nunnari)

Substitute Motion: To insert into the minutes of February 23, 2004: “Questions were raised about the Superintendent’s contract obligation regarding personal meal reimbursement. It was recommended to refer all discussion to the Management Subcommittee. No motion was made.”

(P. Young)

Substitute motion was accepted by the makers of the original motion.

Friendly Amendment: To insert into the minutes of February 23, 2004: “Questions were raised about the Superintendent’s contract obligation regarding personal meal reimbursement. It was recommended to refer defer all discussion to the Management Subcommittee to the next regularly scheduled WRSDC meeting. No motion was made.”

(J. Scott)

Amendment was accepted as friendly.

Amended Motion: To insert into the minutes of February 23, 2004: “Questions were raised about the Superintendent’s contract obligation regarding personal meal reimbursement. It was recommended to defer all discussion to the next regularly scheduled WRSDC meeting. No motion was made.”

(T. Tod)  
(J. Nunnari)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith  
Natalie Mello  
Donald Benson  
Elizabeth Brennan  
Charles Capparelli  
Mark James  
John Kane  
Alice Livdahl  
John Nunnari  
Norman Plourde  
Julie Scott  
Michael Sherman

Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
David Dickman  
Patricia Gates

(Motion passed 15 to 0 to 2)

Motion: To accept the amended minutes not to be released.

(N. Mello)  
(J. Scott)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith  
Natalie Mello  
Donald Benson  
Elizabeth Brennan  
Charles Capparelli  
Mark James  
John Kane  
Alice Livdahl  
John Nunnari  
Norman Plourde  
Julie Scott  
Michael Sherman  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:  
None

Abstained:  
David Dickman  
Patricia Gates

(Motion passed 15-0-2)

Discussion turned to Dr. Tutela's request that had been referred to Management Subcommittee. Chair Leith read aloud the letter that had been sent to Dr. Tutela (Attachment A). Chair Leith distributed Dr. Tutela's response (Attachment B).

Discussion continued regarding three options: new contract, buy-out, or do nothing. Many thoughts were shared by most members regarding the plusses of pursuing a buy-out with the Superintendent while looking for ways to facilitate a smooth transition in leadership for the district. These options should be explored before there is a change in the make-up of the Committee.

Motion: The issue of buying out the Superintendent's contract be referred to the management Subcommittee for negotiation with the assistance of legal counsel, that a proposal be brought back to the full Committee forthwith and that negotiations be completed on or before May 1, 2004.

(P. Gates)  
(J. Scott)

Friendly Amendment: The issue of buying out the Superintendent's contract be referred to the Management Subcommittee for negotiation with the assistance of legal counsel, that a proposal be brought back to the full Committee forthwith and that negotiations be completed IF POSSIBLE on or before May 1, 2004

(J. Kane)

Amendment was accepted as friendly.

Discussion continued about what might be best for the District. Consensus was that it would be a win / win situation if this buyout could be achieved within the money already allocated in the budget. Consensus was also reached that it needs to be made clear to the public that this investigation into a buyout is not a reaction to the recent reimbursement issue but is completely separate.

Amended Motion: The issue of buying out the Superintendent's contract be referred to the Management Subcommittee for negotiation with the assistance of legal counsel, that a proposal be brought back to the full Committee forthwith and that negotiations be completed if possible on or before May 1, 2004

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith  
Natalie Mello  
Donald Benson

Elizabeth Brennan  
Charles Capparelli  
David Dickman  
Patricia Gates  
Mark James  
John Kane  
Alice Livdahl  
John Nunnari  
Norman Plourde  
Julie Scott  
Michael Sherman  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:  
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Motion: We as a Committee give the Management Subcommittee the following guidelines for developing an exit strategy:

1. A time frame for Dr. Tutela's departure being no earlier than 7/1/04 and no later than 6/30/05;
2. The cost for the buyout and subsequent new hire not exceed the amount budgeted pursuant to the existing Superintendent's contract if possible;
3. To develop a replacement strategy guideline as part of the process.

(A. Livdahl)

(D. Benson)

Friendly Amendment: We as a Committee give the Management Subcommittee the following guidelines for developing an exit strategy:

1. A time frame for Dr. Tutela's departure being no earlier than 7/1/04 and no later than 6/30/05;
2. The cost for the buyout and subsequent new hire not exceed the amount budgeted pursuant to the existing Superintendent's contract if possible;
3. To develop a replacement ~~strategy guideline as part of the process.~~  
FRAMEWORK.

(M. Sherman)

The amendment was accepted as friendly.

Friendly amendment: We as a Committee give the Management Subcommittee the following guidelines for developing an exit strategy:

1. A time frame for Dr. Tutela's departure being ~~no earlier than 7/1/04 and no later than 6/30/05~~;
2. The cost for the buyout and subsequent new hire not exceed the amount budgeted pursuant to the existing Superintendent's contract if possible;
3. To develop a replacement process framework.

(P. Gates)

The amendment was accepted as friendly.

Amended Motion: We as a Committee give the Management Subcommittee the following guidelines for developing an exit strategy:

4. A time frame for Dr. Tutela's departure being no later than 6/30/05;
5. The cost for the buyout and subsequent new hire not exceed the amount budgeted pursuant to the existing Superintendent's contract if possible;
6. To develop a replacement process framework.

(A. Livdahl)

(D. Benson)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith  
Natalie Mello  
Donald Benson  
Elizabeth Brennan  
Charles Capparelli  
David Dickman  
Patricia Gates  
Mark James  
John Kane  
Alice Livdahl  
John Nunnari  
Norman Plourde  
Julie Scott  
Michael Sherman  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Motion: To adjourn

(N. Mello)  
(P. Young)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith  
Natalie Mello  
Donald Benson  
Elizabeth Brennan  
Charles Capparelli  
David Dickman  
Patricia Gates  
Mark James  
John Kane  
Alice Livdahl  
John Nunnari  
Norman Plourde  
Julie Scott  
Michael Sherman  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The Committee adjourned at 9:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Natalie A. Mello  
Acting Secretary