

**WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

**HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING**

Minutes

Special Meeting #239 Monday, September 23, 2002

7:00 PM

Media Center  
Wachusett Regional High School

*Committee Members Present:*

John Rokicki, Chairman	Peter MacDonald
Duncan Leith, Vice-Chairman	Kelly Maxwell (7:15 PM)
Donald Benson	Natalie Mello
Carol Esperti (7:10 PM)	John Nunnari
David Fedeli	Julie Scott
Kimberly Ferguson	Kathleen Singh
Jeffrey Gibbs (7:57 PM)	Tammy Tod
Jane James	Edwin Twarog
Alice Livdahl	Margaret Watson
David Lowenthal	Patricia Young

*Committee Members Absent:*

None

*Administration Present:*

Alfred D. Tutela, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools  
Paul Soojian, Director of Operations  
Philip Campbell, Director of Student/Information Services

*Others Present:*

Linda Lehans, *The Landmark*  
Stacy Grossi, *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*  
Susan Staudaher, *Sterling Meetinghouse News*  
Christine DeForge, *ECHO*  
Remo Rossi, Chair, Sterling Selectboard  
Joseph Sullivan, Chair, Holden Selectboard  
Louis Cornacchioli, Rutland Selectboard  
Joseph Giotta, Holden Finance Committee  
Mark James, Holden  
Larry Floryan, Holden  
Maureen Floryan, Holden

David Gibbs, Sterling  
Otto Lies, Holden  
Edith Morgan, Princeton  
Susan Duval, Sterling  
Ajeet Singh, Sterling  
Leo Bachant, Holden  
Sheila Bachant, Holden  
Ann Quill, Sterling  
John Kilcoyne, Sterling  
Melinda Johnson, Paxton  
Sheila Despres, Sterling  
Lori St. Germain, Holden  
Mario Finacchio, Holden

I. Call to Order

Chairman John Rokicki called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

Members David Lowenthal and Edwin Twarog distributed *Information for the WRSC Meeting of September 23, 2002* (attachment 1).

II. Public Session

Louis Cornacchioli, Rutland, spoke about his concern to limit the amount of time speakers can take at a public hearing and urged the Committee to file a counter-suit against the Town of Holden.

Ann Quill, Sterling, read a prepared statement for Judy McGrath (attachment 2). She also read a prepared statement for herself (attachment 3).

Mark James, Holden, read a prepared statement (attachment 4).

John Kilcoyne, Sterling, agreed with Ann Quill and disagreed with Mark James.

Ajeet Singh, Sterling, read a prepared statement (attachment 5).

Leo Bachant, Holden, supports a ballot vote, two schools and renovation of the existing structure.

Melinda Johnson, Paxton, supports one school and town meeting votes.

Maureen Floryan, Holden, read a prepared statement (attachment 6).

Joseph Giotta, Holden, supports a ballot vote with a binding debt excluding vote linked to the question.

Remo Rossi, Chair Sterling Selectboard, read a prepared statement (attachment 7).

David Gibbs, Sterling, read a prepared statement (attachment 8).

Susan Duval, Sterling, was disappointed that the facilitators came back with the same options; that no additional information was provided; and that the town meeting is a mute point which would not have full participation of the towns.

Sheila Despres, Sterling, supports a ballot vote in order to allow both parents to vote.

Edith Morgan, Princeton, supports a ballot vote. All facts should be presented thoroughly. Continues to support two schools. The School Committee should give consideration to modulars because somewhere down the line the District might break up. Two schools give Princeton and Sterling a sense of community.

Chairman Rokicki requested facilitator, Michael Daley, to clarify the issue of the numbers used to calculate debt and the linkage to debt exclusion. Facilitator Daley responded that the financial models used were very conservative, considered a six-year BAN, responded to speaker Rossi's request and need to be tweaked to adjust from twenty-six years to twenty-five years to accommodate the change in the law.

Additionally facilitator Daley indicated that linking of town meeting and ballot vote is a municipal function and the towns need to find a way to get a debt exclusion. The District has no standing on the linkage of debt.

### III. Discussion Regarding the Permanent High School Facility Solution

Motion: To contact the modular company to see if the modular company will give an extension for up to three months to exercise Phase II of the modular project.

(E. Twarog)  
(C. Esperti)

A friendly amendment was offered by Member Carol Esperti and accepted by Member Edwin Twarog, to add “provided it is legal”.

In response to the request of facilitator Eugene Raymond, the Committee was informed that a December 1<sup>st</sup> submission is necessary to receive a preliminary rank for the FY04 reimbursement list and that the final project must be submitted by June 1, 2003.

Motion: To move the question.

(K. Maxwell)  
(T. Tod)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith  
David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Donald Benson  
Carol Esperti  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Julie Scott

Abstained:

John Rokicki

(Motion passed 13-6-1)

Roll call vote on main motion, which reads: To contact the modular company to see if the modular company will give an extension for up to three months to exercise Phase II of the modular project, provided it is legal.

In favor:

John Rokicki  
Carol Esperti  
David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
John Nunnari  
Kathleen Singh  
Edwin Twarog  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Natalie Mello  
Julie Scott  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson

(Motion passed 12-8)

Motion: To reconsider the following motion acted upon at September 12, 2002 Meeting:

*That the Wachusett Regional School District Committee bring forward to ballot vote three separate warrant articles. The first article is for Option B1 as currently proposed by Strekalovsky & Hoit, Inc. plus the cost of land. The second*

*article is for Option A1 plus the cost of 22 acres of land adjacent to the current high school site. The third article is for Phase 2 of the modular project if neither B1 nor A1 achieve the necessary two thirds majority. Should both B1 and A1 achieve a two thirds majority, the option with the highest percentage would be constructed. The Wachusett Regional School District Committee directs the Superintendent to ask that all town meetings be scheduled for the same date and time. The Wachusett Regional School Committee directs the Superintendent to inform the school district communities of the warrant articles, to appropriate \$25,000 from the E & D fund to cover the costs of information distribution and the costs of ballot votes. The Wachusett Regional School District Committee also directs the Superintendent to have the necessary warrant articles prepared.*

(D. Leith)  
(M. Watson)

Chairman Rokicki informed the Committee that he would limit discussion on the merits of reconsideration to ten minutes.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Kimberly Ferguson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Carol Esperti  
David Fedeli

David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kathleen Singh  
Edwin Twarog

(Motion passed 14-6)

Motion: To divide the question into three parts: 1.) Ballot Vote, 2.) Two Options, B1 and A1 and modulars, and 3.) the scheduling of the town meetings, preparation of the warrant articles, and appropriation of \$25,000 from E&D to pay for the cost of the election and the distribution of information.

(P. MacDonald)  
(K. Singh)

Member Patricia Young left the meeting at 9:00 PM.

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Rokicki  
David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Kathleen Singh  
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Carol Esperti  
Alice Livdahl  
David Lowenthal  
Natalie Mello  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog

(Motion passed 11-8)

Member Patricia Young returned to the meeting at 9:05 PM.

Divided Motion (Part 1): That the Wachusett Regional School District Committee bring forward to ballot vote three separate warrant articles.

(D. Leith)

(A. Livdahl)

Chairman Rokicki limited debate to twenty minutes.

Motion to Amend: To strike “ballot vote” and substitute “town meeting”.

(D. Leith)

(D. Benson)

Motion: To extend debate ten minutes

(K. Singh)

(E. Twarog)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kathleen Singh  
Edwin Twarog

Opposed:

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Carol Esperti  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Tammy Tod



Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

(Motion failed 6-14)

Roll call vote on motion to amend, which reads: To strike “ballot vote” and substitute “town meeting”.

In favor:

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Carol Esperti  
David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog

(Motion passed 11-9)

Motion to Amend: That any town meeting vote not be binding but be advisory

(E. Twarog)

Chairman Rokicki declared the motion to amend invalid.

Roll call vote on motion, as amended to read: That the Wachusett Regional School District Committee bring forward to town meeting three separate warrant articles.

In favor:

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Carol Esperti  
David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog

(Motion passed 11-9)

Member Carol Esperti left the meeting at 9:35 PM.

Divided Motion (Part 2): The first article is for Option B1 as currently proposed by Strekalovsky & Hoit, Inc. plus the cost of land. The second article is for Option A1 plus the cost of 22 acres of land adjacent to the current high school site. The third article is for Phase 2 of the modular project if neither B1 nor A1 achieve the necessary two thirds majority. Should both B1 and A1 achieve a two thirds majority, the option with the highest percentage would be constructed.

(D. Leith)

(A. Livdahl)

Motion to Amend: To strike the words “The third article is for Phase 2 of the modular project if neither B1 or A1 achieve a two thirds majority”.

(K. Singh)  
(E. Twarog)

Motion: To extend the meeting for thirty minutes

(D. Leith)  
(K. Ferguson)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
David Lowenthal  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Donald Benson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Peter MacDonald

(Motion passed 16-3)

Motion: To extend debate by five minutes

(D. Lowenthal)  
(E. Twarog)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Julie Scott  
Kathleen Singh  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Tammy Tod  
Patricia Young

Abstained:

John Rokicki

(Motion failed 9-9-1)

Roll call vote on motion to amend which reads: To strike the words  
“The third article is for Phase 2 of the modular project if neither B1 or  
A1 achieve a two thirds

In favor:

David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Julie Scott  
Kathleen Singh  
Edwin Twarog

Opposed:

John Rokicki

Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

(Motion failed 8-11)

Motion to Amend: To substitute Option C1 (two same size schools), by Strekalovsky & Hoit, Inc.

(K. Singh)  
(P. Young)

Chairman Rokicki limited debated to twenty minutes.

A friendly amendment was offered by Member Patricia Young and accepted by Member Kathleen Singh to add “for the modular portion of the warrant articles”.

Chairman Rokicki clarified that in addition, the last sentence of the main motion, now divided, would be changed to “Should B1, A1, and/or C1 achieve a two thirds majority, the option with the highest percentage would be constructed.” This was accepted by Member Kathleen Singh as a friendly amendment.

Motion: To move the question

(D. Benson)  
(N. Mello)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Natalie Mello

John Nunnari  
Margaret Watson

Opposed:

David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Julie Scott  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Patricia Young

Abstained:

John Rokicki

(Motion failed 8-10-1)

Roll call vote on motion to amend, which reads: To substitute Option C1 (two same size schools), by Strekalovsky & Hoit, Inc. for the modular portion of the warrant articles. And that the last sentence of the main motion, now divided be changed to “Should B1, A1, and/or C1 achieve a two thirds majority, the option with the highest percentage would be constructed.”

In favor:

David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Jeffrey Gibbs

Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Margaret Watson

(Motion failed 8-11)

Motion: To extend the meeting by fifteen minutes

(D. Leith)

(J. Scott)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
Julie Scott  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Jeffrey Gibbs  
John Nunnari

Abstained:

John Rokicki

(Motion 16-2-1)

Member Kimberly Ferguson left the meeting at 10:25 PM.

Motion: To move the question

(J. Scott)  
(T. Tod)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

David Lowenthal  
Kathleen Singh  
Edwin Twarog

Abstained:

John Rokicki

(Motion passed 14-3-1)

Motion to Amend: By substituting “700 students” for “575 students” in  
Option B1

(D. Lowenthal)  
(E. Twarog)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

David Fedeli  
David Lowenthal



Kathleen Singh  
Edwin Twarog

Opposed:

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

(Motion failed 4-14)

Member Kimberly Ferguson returned to the meeting at 10:33 PM.

Member Julie Scott left the meeting at 10:33 PM.

Motion: To move the question

(T. Tod)  
(A. Livdahl)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Kimberly Ferguson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari

Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

David Fedeli  
David Lowenthal  
Edwin Twarog

(Motion passed 15-3)

Member Julie Scott returned to the meeting at 10:35 PM.

Roll call vote on main motion to read: The first article is for Option B1 as currently proposed by Strekalovsky & Hoit, Inc. plus the cost of land. The second article is for Option A1 plus the cost of 22 acres of land adjacent to the current high school site. The third article is for Phase 2 of the modular project if neither B1 nor A1 achieve the necessary two thirds majority. Should both B1 and A1 achieve a two thirds majority, the option with the highest percentage would be constructed.

In favor:

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald

Kathleen Singh  
Edwin Twarog

(Motion passed 13-6)

Divided Motion (Part 3): The Wachusett Regional School District Committee directs the Superintendent to ask that all town meetings be scheduled for the same date and time. The Wachusett Regional School Committee directs the Superintendent to inform the school district communities of the warrant articles, to appropriate \$25,000 from the E & D fund to cover the costs of information distribution and the costs of ballot votes. The Wachusett Regional School District Committee also directs the Superintendent to have the necessary warrant articles prepared.

(D. Leith)  
(A. Livdahl)

Motion to Amend: To strike the words: “to appropriate \$25,000, from the E&D fund to cover the costs of information distribution and the costs of ballot vote”.

(N. Mello)  
(D. Benson)

A friendly amendment was requested by Member Benson and accepted by Member Mello to change “ballot vote” to “town meetings”.

Roll call vote on motion to amend, which reads: To strike the words: “to appropriate \$25,000, from the E&D fund to cover the costs of information distribution and the costs of town meeting.”

In favor:

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

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

Opposed:  
David Lowenthal

Abstained:  
Peter MacDonald

(Motion passed 17-1-1)

Roll call vote on main motion, as amended, to read: The Wachusett Regional School District Committee directs the Superintendent to ask that all town meetings be scheduled for the same date and time. The Wachusett Regional School Committee directs the Superintendent to inform the school district communities of the warrant articles. The Wachusett Regional School District Committee also directs the Superintendent to have the necessary warrant articles prepared.

In favor:  
John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
Donald Benson  
David Fedeli  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Natalie Mello  
John Nunnari  
Julie Scott  
Tammy Tod  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Kimberly Ferguson  
David Lowenthal  
Kathleen Singh  
Edwin Twarog

(Motion passed 15-4)

Chairman John Rokicki scheduled the next Special Meeting for Monday, September 30, 2002, at 7:00 PM in the Media Center at the high school. Issues for discussion are to include response from Department of Education to Chairman's letter regarding reimbursement for modular classrooms, debt exclusion, and timeline.

IV. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn

(J. Scott)  
(J. Nunnari)

Vote:

In favor:

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

Opposed:  
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

ADT:ss

School committee/minutes