

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN ♦ PAXTON ♦ PRINCETON ♦ RUTLAND ♦ STERLING

Minutes

Special Meeting #244, Tuesday November 12, 2002  
8:00 p.m.

Media Center  
Wachusett Regional High School

*Committee Members Present:*

John Rokicki, Chairman	Peter MacDonald
Duncan Leith, Vice-Chairman	Kelly Maxwell
Carol Esperti	Natalie Mello
David Fedeli	Julie Scott
Kimberly Ferguson	Kathleen Singh
Jeffrey Gibbs (7:27 PM)	Tammy Tod
Jane James	Edwin Twarog
Alice Livdahl	Margaret Watson
David Lowenthal	Patricia Young (7:14 PM)

*Committee Members Absent:*

Donald Benson	John Nunnari
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*Administration Present:*

Alfred D. Tutela, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools  
Paul K. Soojian, Director of Operations  
Steven Penka, Director of Administrative Services  
Philip E. Campbell, Director of Student/Information Services  
Susan H. Sullivan, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

*Others Present:*

Linda Lehans, *The Landmark*  
Mary Anne Magiera, *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*  
Sue Staudaher, *Sterling Meetinghouse News*  
Joseph Sullivan, Chair, Holden Selectboard  
Remo Rossi, Chair, Sterling Selectboard  
Paul Sushchik, Sterling Selectboard  
Joseph Giotta, Chair, Holden Finance Committee  
Edmund Benoit, Holden Finance Committee  
Marilynn Foley, Holden Finance Committee

Mark James, Holden  
Larry Floryan, Holden  
Maureen Floryan, Holden  
David Gibbs, Sterling  
David Clark, Sterling  
Ron Johnson, Paxton  
Melinda Johnson, Paxton  
Jeffrey Wentzell, Paxton  
Bill Theurkoff, Sterling  
Donna Dominguez, Sterling  
Al Ferron, Holden  
James Hedlund, Holden  
Kevin Viner, Holden  
Patricia Gates, Princeton  
Michael Esperti, Holden  
Peter Crowley, Princeton  
John Kilcoyne, Sterling  
Bill Rasku, Holden  
Ann Quill, Sterling  
Bob Williamson, Princeton  
Patrick McNamara, Sterling  
Karen Monfreda, Sterling  
Leo BACHANT ~~Bachand~~, Holden

I. Call to Order

Chairman John Rokicki called the Special Meeting to order at 8:08 PM.

Following an inquiry, Chairman Rokicki apologized for not getting back to the members who had requested the meeting, as to its schedule.

II. The Non-approval Distribution of Strekalovsky & Hoit Provisional Analysis of Operating Expenses

Member Alice Livdahl reported that the Paxton Selectboard wished to go on record that level funding would be supported.

The Superintendent clarified that the operating cost information was prepared by the professional consultants, and therefore, public. Policy decisions have not been made by the Committee regarding the program for the second school; these decisions need to be made.

The report was made to the administration. The report contains many figures and is provided for discussion purposes.

The Superintendent reported that the consultants were delayed in preparing the information due to the School Committee's lack of policy direction on the small school.

The Superintendent clarified that the member of the administration who attended the Princeton informational meeting distributed the report to School Committee members and put the remaining information on a table, available to the public.

Discussion continued regarding Strekalovsky & Hoit's report on operating costs, including concerns surrounding the staff reductions for the level funded budget. The Superintendent reminded the Committee that staffing is solely the Superintendent's responsibility.

Motion: In any high school proposal, student teacher ratios should not BE increased

(M. Watson)

The motion died due to a lack of a second.

Motion: To reject Strekalovsky & Hoit's operating budget

(C. Esperti)

(E. Twarog)

Motion: To move the motion

(T. Tod)

(D. Fedeli)

Roll call vote:

In favor

John Rokicki

Duncan Leith

Donald Benson

Carol Esperti

David Fedeli

Jane James

David Lowenthal

John Nunnari

Julie Scott

Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:  
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

Roll call vote on main motion:

In favor:

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

Opposed:

Duncan Leith  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Natalie Mello  
Julie Scott  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

(Motion passed 10-8)

The Superintendent advised the Committee that he would contact Strekalovsky & Hoit and ask if they would provide a copy of the report without the operating costs. If that is not possible, the report will not be distributed but will be made available upon request since it is public information and the School Committee has no authority to edit a District consultant's report without the author's permission.

III. The Impact on the Region of Princeton's Insistence on a Ballot Vote Rather Than Town Meetings for the High School Building Issue

Chairman Rokicki reported that town meetings can be held on different dates. The Town of Princeton could schedule a meeting in the future, which would still be binding.

The Superintendent reported that there are four ways to request a Special Town Meeting:

1. 200 signatures requests a Special Town Meeting
2. 100 signatures to request additional articles be added to an already scheduled Special Town Meeting
3. 10 signatures to request additional articles to be added to the Annual Town Meeting
4. Selectboard refuses to schedule the town meeting; 100 signatures called by the Justice of the Peace

Motion: That the Committee requests THAT the town meetings for the three warrant articles be cancelled.

(E. Twarog)  
(D. Lowenthal)

Member Margaret Watson raised a point of order. She indicated that this is a second reconsideration.

The Superintendent advised that a project would get two-thirds only at town meetings, as history has shown to the Committee.

Motion: To extend the meeting thirty minutes

(K. Maxwell)  
(E. Twarog)

Roll call vote:

In favor

John Rokicki  
David Fedeli  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell

Julie Scott  
Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog

Opposed:

Duncan Leith  
Carol Esperti  
Kimberly Ferguson  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Natalie Mello  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

(Motion passed 10-8)

Chairman Rokicki read the sections in Robert's Rules of Order, applying to this motion. A two-thirds majority vote would be required for passage of the motion to RESCIND ~~reconsider~~, as the membership did not get proper notice of such a request.

The Superintendent advised the Committee that there is not enough time to schedule a ballot vote and meet the timeline. The Superintendent reported that he had notified the Committee of his discussion with Jay Gonzalez, Bond Counsel. The Superintendent reported that Attorney Gonzalez was unclear and it was the Superintendent who voiced the opinion that all five towns should be included.

Motion: To move the question

(C. Esperti)  
(K. Singh)

Roll call vote:

In favor:

Duncan Leith  
Carol Esperti  
David Fedeli  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Natalie Mello

Kathleen Singh  
Tammy Tod  
Edwin Twarog  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

Opposed:

Kimberly Ferguson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
David Lowenthal  
Peter MacDonald  
Kelly Maxwell  
Julie Scott

Abstained:

John Rokicki

(Motion failed 11-6-1 – two-thirds majority needed)

The Superintendent reminded the Committee that the School Committee sets a District ballot election and by law it can only be eight hours in length. The Superintendent also advised that the timelines are in jeopardy if Princeton does not schedule a town meeting as the consultants from Strelakovsky & Hoit indicated that the latest date was December 15<sup>th</sup> to receive authorization from the member towns.

Roll call vote on the motion: That the Committee requests the town meetings for the three warrant articles be cancelled.

In favor:

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

Opposed:

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith

Jeffrey Gibbs  
Jane James  
Alice Livdahl  
Natalie Mello  
Julie Scott  
Margaret Watson  
Patricia Young

(Motion failed 9-9)

IV. The Importance of Permanent Modulars

No action was taken on this agenda item.

V. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn

(N. Mello)  
(A. Livdahl)

Vote:

In favor

John Rokicki  
Duncan Leith  
Carol Esperti  
David Fedeli  
Kimberly Ferguson  
Jeffrey Gibbs  
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:  
None

(Motion passed unanimously)

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

ADT:ss/School Committee/Minutes