



HAMILTON-WENHAM
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
5 SCHOOL STREET, WENHAM, MA 01984 · TEL. 978-468-5310

School Committee Meeting ([agenda](#))
Buker Elementary School
Multipurpose Room
Wednesday, May 5, 2021
7:00 PM - 10:10 PM

Present:

Michelle Bailey, Chairperson
Michelle Horgan, Vice Chairperson
Dana Allara, Secretary
Anna Siedzik, Vice Secretary
David Polito
Peter Wolczik
Julia Campbell

Also Present:

Mary Beth Banios, District Superintendent
Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent to Finance and Administration
Thomas Geary, Director of Maintenance, Facilities & Operations
Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary
Kristen Borges, 6-12 History and Social Studies Curriculum Leader

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Ms. Bailey calls the meeting to order at approximately 7:04 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All those in attendance, with the exception of School Committee member Ms. Siedzik, rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Citizens Comments

[Exhibit](#)

Any citizen wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify himself or herself by name and address. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. After Citizen's Comments, the chat feature will be turned off. If members want to be recognized, they can use the raise hand feature.

In-Person Meeting, Zoom Link below is for Public Comment Only:
<https://zoom.us/j/96009565916?pwd=cotPeGVYcDRFVjV1UotaZkpvV3FNUT09>
Meeting ID: 960 0956 5916 Passcode: 244286

Pamela Millman-Stein, 135 Lynn St., Peabody: Ms. Millman-Stein expresses her frustration with the 2 incidents of discrimination her family has faced, which she believes represent a larger issue within the district. She urges the School Committee to take immediate action, specifically with regards to the 2021-2022 School Calendar and the Good Friday designation.

Kristin Crockett, 5 Birch Rd. Wenham: Ms. Crockett was disappointed about the School Committee's vote to not reinstate World Language. She urges the School Committee to take action to remedy the lost opportunity for student learning.

4. **New Business**

A. Recognize Peter Wolczik

Ms. Bailey reminds the community of the Town elections tomorrow, and announces that Mr. Peter Wolczik has announced his retirement from his School Committee position.

Mr. Wolczik notes his frustration in failing to convince the School Committee of his vision for the district, and hopes he will have more success in working with parents as a community member. School Committee members thank Mr. Wolczik for his extraordinary work serving on the School Committee.

B. History Project Recognitions

[Exhibit](#)

Kristen Borges, *6-12 History and Social Studies Curriculum Leader*, congratulates those who participated in this year's History Fair, as detailed in the [exhibit](#).

C. Vote on Amended 21-22 School Calendar

[Exhibit](#)

(MOTION 1) I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE AMENDED 2021-2022 SCHOOL CALENDAR, AS PRESENTED IN THE [EXHIBIT](#), WHICH REFLECTS CHANGING THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS FROM AUGUST 28, 2021 TO SEPTEMBER 1, 2021.

MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

Discussion: Ms. Allara explains that the HWEA expressed their concern surrounding the earlier than usual start date. There is discussion regarding the calendar changes; snow day/make up days; last day of school; salary/pay period changes associated with calendar change; etc. Mr. Leone clarifies that such changes do not alter teachers' total annual salary.

(MOTION 2) I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO AMEND THE MOTION ON THE FLOOR BY ADDING THE CHANGE: REMOVING THE DISTINCTION OF THE 04/15/2022 GOOD FRIDAY DATE AS A VACATION DAY, INSTEAD MAKING THIS DAY A REGULAR SCHOOL DAY, AND FURTHER, THEREFORE MOVING BACK THE LAST POSSIBLE DAY OF SCHOOL TO JUNE 24, 2022.

MOTION by Anna Siedzik; SECONDED by David Polito.

Discussion: Ms. Bailey explains that per the HWEA contract, the union must be consulted ahead of time regarding any changes to the school calendar. Mr. Polito notes that the School Committee has avoided this issue for too long and supports a favorable vote to remove the distinction of Good Friday as a holiday/vacation day.

(MOTION 3) I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE TABLE MS. SIEDZIK'S MOTION UNTIL THE NEXT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING, IN ORDER TO ALLOW THE DISTRICT TO CONSULT WITH HWEA UNION AS PRESCRIBED IN THE MOU.

MOTION by Michelle Bailey.

Discussion: There is clarification about the three motions above, with Ms. Bailey explaining why it is necessary to table the motion (2) to comply with HWEA union MOU. There is discussion regarding the

process moving forward; union grievance process; public opportunity and knowledge of agenda items; appropriateness of motions; etc.

Michelle Bailey rescinds the motion to table (motion 3) in order to allow Ms. Allara to make the following motion:

(MOTION 4) I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE SEPARATE THE ABOVE MOTIONS (MOTION 1 & MOTION 2) IN ORDER TO ALLOW THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO VOTE ON EACH INDEPENDENTLY.

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.
MOTION PASSES unanimously by seven (7) members present.**

MOTION 1 VOTE (AMEND CALENDAR AS PRESENTED)
MOTION PASSES unanimously by seven (7) members present.

MOTION 3 (TABLE GOOD FRIDAY AMENDMENT UNTIL NEXT MEETING)
MOTION PASSES through majority (4:3) by seven (7) members present.

The 2021-2022 School Calendar, as presented in the exhibit on the agenda, has been approved. The discussion and vote to amend the calendar to reflect the change in designation of Good Friday is tabled until the next School Committee meeting, which is currently scheduled for 05/19/2021.

D. 21-22 District Goal Discussion

[Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Banios reviews the 2021-2022 District Goals, as presented in the [exhibit](#). She reviews administrators involved; district's current goals; proposed additional goals; and the overview of the timeline and steps to meet these goals.

There is a lengthy discussion surrounding School Committee members' questions and feedback on the goals as presented, including, distinguishing baseline operating practices from district goals; further details surrounding deliverables/ more specific measurable outcomes; impact on budget; number of committees outlined in the document; strategic planning; including a "big picture" statement; Learning Management System (LMS); incorporating parent/community voices; alignment with district vision; implementing long term sustainable actions; etc.

Dr. Jennifer Carr is joining the meeting, however, Mr. Polito points out that he believes this discussion is premature and would have been best presented when the new School Committee board has been voted in.

Superintendent Banios will review the School Committee's feedback with the leadership team and revise the document if necessary.

E. Land Acknowledgment

[Exhibit 1](#)

[Exhibit 2](#)

E. J. Everett appears this evening on behalf of the *HWRHS Social Justice Club*. E. J. reviews the presentation, as detailed in [exhibit 1](#). They explain that the Social Justice Club requests that the district and the School Committee take the following actions:

- Physical markers on school campuses + Town Halls;
- Plaques at Pingree + Patton Park;
- Statements on the School District + Town websites;

- Reading the Massachusetts Tribe’s acknowledgement before community gatherings and major events (including, but not limited to Town Meetings, flag raisings, open houses, play productions, civic events such as Veteran’s and Memorial Day celebrations, virtual events are included).

E. J. notes that the funding for the above actions would be provided by the Hamilton - Wenham Social Justice Club.

There is discussion regarding the requests and the authority of the School Committee; potential controversy such actions bring up; legal ownership of land; tribes included; logistical processes; associated curriculum and education; next steps; etc.

F. Correct Version of Logo Discussion

[Exhibit](#)

Discussion regarding the historical and current district branding, logo, and mascot. There is discussion regarding the mascot including weapon representation, gender presentation, and revising to be inclusive/current. There is some discussion regarding the timing/urgency of this topic, as well as including the larger community in the discussion and next steps surrounding this item.

Ms. Campbell feels strongly that E. J. Everett did not receive the recognition and acknowledgment they deserved, especially in light of the attention student athletes receive. She wishes that E. J. had the opportunity to be introduced, as Ms. Siedzik requested.

~~5. Finance and Operations~~

6. Policy

A. 2nd Reading & Vote Executive Sessions (BEC)

[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Siedzik reviews the Executive Sessions policy (BEC), as presented in the [exhibit](#), noting that there have been no changes since the first reading.

B. 2nd Reading & Vote Community Resources/Speakers (IJOB)

[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Siedzik reviews the Community Resources (IJOB) as presented in the [exhibit](#), noting that there have been no changes since the first reading.

C. 2nd Reading & Vote Field Trips (IJOA)

[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Siedzik reviews the Field Trips (IJOA), as presented in the [exhibit](#), highlighting the changes that were made since the first reading (indicated in red). There is further discussion regarding the language in the policy surrounding transportation.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE IN-FORM THE POLICIES PRESENTED ON THE AGENDA: THE EXECUTIVE SESSION (BEC) POLICY [EXHIBIT](#); COMMUNITY RESOURCES/SPEAKERS (IJOB) [EXHIBIT](#), AND FIELD TRIPS (IJOA) [EXHIBIT](#) AS PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED THIS EVENING.

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.
MOTION PASSES unanimously by seven (7) members present.**

7. Chair’s Report

A. Release of Executive Session Minutes

[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Bailey explains the process of approving and releasing executive session minutes. Ms. Allara reviews the general comments received from district counsel, Naomi Stonberg.

B. Open Meeting Law Training Exhibit

Ms. Stonberg has recommended the School Committee attend Open Meeting Law Training based on her observations that executive session minutes reflect discussions best suited for open meetings. Ms. Allara will share the executive session minutes and Ms. Stonberg's comments with the full School Committee. Mr. Polito requests that there is someone present to answer specific questions for the Open Meeting Law training.

Ms. Bailey explains that the *Hamilton Master Planning Steering Committee* is soliciting a School Committee member to serve on the board. Both Ms. Siedzik and Ms. Allara are interested in serving, and each offer a statement regarding their interest and qualifications to do so.

School Committee members vote for the School Committee member to serve on the Steering Committee: Ms. Allara (3 favorable votes) and Ms. Siedzik (3 favorable votes), with Mr. Wolczik abstaining.

Ms. Bailey will request the option for two School Committee members to serve on the *Hamilton Master Planning Steering Committee*.

8. Superintendent's Report

A. Town Meeting

Superintendent Banios provides a summary of the Town Meetings, noting that both budgets passed.

B. Update on Teaching & Learning Restructuring

Superintendent Banios provides an update regarding the restructuring of teaching and learning throughout the district, including Cutler Elementary School Principal search; schools visits to clarify teaching model; etc.

There is discussion regarding the misinformation about the teaching model and the School Committee members' roles during Town Meetings to correct those misunderstandings.

Ms. Siedzik would like to respond. Ms. Bailey would like to move along and discuss this more, if necessary, after executive session.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE DESIGNATE 6 (SIX) MINUTES TO DISCUSS THE ROLE OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT TOWN MEETING.

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.
MOTION PASSES unanimously by seven (7) members present.**

Ms. Siedzik states that she disagreed with items in the budget, and therefore disagrees with Mr. Polito's comments members should have spoken in defense of the budget during Town Meeting. Ms. Allara states that she had planned to speak, but did not. Nevertheless, she heard Mr. Polito's comments and appreciates the feedback.

C. Update on ESSER II & III Grant Funds

Superintendent Banios explains that ESSER II funds have been received. The district is holding these funds for FY22. She will provide an update and recommendations as more details become available.

9. Committee Reports

A. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee

The *Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee* will continue to provide updates as they become available. The next meeting is scheduled for 05/10/2021 at 4:00 PM. The *Turf Steering Committee* will meet 05/10/2021 at 7:00 PM.

B. Policy Subcommittee

The *Policy/Legislative Subcommittee* provided an update earlier in the evening. The next meeting is scheduled for 05/20/2021 at 7:00 PM.

C. Negotiations Subcommittee

The *Negotiations Subcommittee* will provide an update in Executive Session tonight. The next meeting is scheduled for 5/17/2021 (tentatively).

10. Consent Agenda

A. Warrants

[Exhibit](#)

- Voucher No. 24
- Voucher No. 1051
- Voucher No. 1052
- Voucher No. 2993
- Voucher No. 2994
- Voucher No. 2995
- Voucher No. 2996
- Voucher No. 2997
- Voucher No. 2998
- Voucher No. 2999

B. Minutes

- April 7, 2021
- April 14, 2021

[Exhibit](#)

[Exhibit](#)

C. Donations

- *Friends of Winthrop - Playground Toys \$1,500*
- *Brick Ends Farm - Compost \$175*
- *Hamilton-Wenham Little League - Services & Goods \$22,000*

[Exhibit](#)

[Exhibit](#)

[Exhibit](#)

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE 04/14/2021 MEETING MINUTES, AND (C) DONATIONS; NO FURTHER CHANGES SHALL BE MADE.

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.
MOTION PASSES unanimously by seven (7) members present.**

Ms. Siedzik points out that she did not stand for the Pledge of Allegiance, and she would like the 04/14/2021 meeting minutes to accurately reflect this.

I MOVE THAT WE APPROVE THE 04/14/2021 MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED PER THE DISCUSSION ABOVE.

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by David Polito.
MOTION PASSES unanimously by seven (7) members present.**

Thank you to the generous donations from the Friends of Winthrop for the playground toys; Brick Ends Farms for the compost to spruce up Winthrop Elementary School grounds; and the Hamilton-Wenham Little League for the donated services and goods.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, ITEM C, DONATIONS AS WRITTEN AND DETAILED ABOVE; NO FURTHER CHANGES SHALL BE MADE.

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.
MOTION PASSES unanimously by seven (7) members present.**

11. Topics for Next Meeting

- Discussion regarding 2021-2022 School Calendar - Good Friday vacation designation;
- Land acknowledgement;
- School Committee meeting calendar (currently there is a meeting scheduled for the last day of school, also need to revisit June workshop);
- Recognition of retiring staff (06/02/2021 meeting);
- Mr. Polito requests that the consent agenda be moved to the beginning of future meeting agendas. Ms. Campbell adds that students and staff are moved to the beginning of the agenda as well.

Ms. Siedzik states that the live chat earlier in the broadcast meeting is absolutely horrific and she demands the district respond appropriately, including prioritizing the district wide DEI audit and professional development.

12. Vote to Adjourn Into Executive Session

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 10:28 PM FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION PURPOSE #3, TO DISCUSS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING WITH THE HAMILTON-WENHAM EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (HWEA); AND ALSO, POTENTIALLY TO MEET FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION PURPOSE #7, TO COMPLY WITH, OR ACT UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF, ANY GENERAL OR SPECIAL LAW OR FEDERAL GRANT-IN-AID REQUIREMENTS, SPECIFICALLY (1) DEPLOYMENT OF SECURITY PERSONNEL OR DEVICES; AND (2) DISCUSSION OF EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES AND REDACTIONS, IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH OPEN MEETING LAW 30A; ANY AND ALL OF THESE DISCUSSIONS COULD HAVE DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE DISTRICT'S BARGAINING OR LITIGATION STRATEGY; AND FURTHER, TO NOT RETURN TO OPEN SESSION THEREAFTER.

MOTION by Michelle Bailey; SECONDED by David Polito.

Julia Campbell	YES;
David Polito	YES;
Dana Allara	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
Anna Siedzik	YES.
Peter Wolczik	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of seven (7) members present.

Respectfully submitted May 11, 2021 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.