

**The Hamilton Wenham Regional School District
School Committee Meeting
Buker Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room
Wednesday, August 1, 2018 7:00 PM**

Present:

Michelle Bailey
Jeanise Bertrand
Gene Lee, Vice Chairperson
David Polito, Chairperson
Peter Wolczik, Assistant Secretary

Also Present:

Michael Harvey, Superintendent
Jeffrey Sands, Assistant Superintendent

1. Call to Order

7:00pm

Mr. Polito calls the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All in attendance rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Consent Agenda

- A. Warrants
- July 18, 2018

Exhibit A

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA INCLUDING WARRANTS FROM 07/18/2018.**

**MOTION by Peter Wolczik; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey.
Unanimously approved by 5 members present.**

4. Citizens' Comments

Anne Gero, 180 Asbury Street, Hamilton: Appearing as member of the Hamilton Waste Reduction Committee, and by suggestion of the Hamilton Board of Selectmen. The Waste Reduction Committee is respectfully requesting the School Committee support composting in the Middle School and High School. Ms. Gero reviews history of composting in Hamilton/Wenham Schools, and points to the reasons why program was not maintained. Ms. Gero and the Waste Reduction Committee suggest a pilot program to begin composting in the kitchen only, and with support, eventually expanding the program to students as well.

5. Chair's Report

- Superintendent evaluations are due back from School Committee members by Friday, August 10. Mr. Polito will send out a reminder email with a link to information.
- Thank you to Jeffrey Sands and his team for providing prompt information regarding prior school year. This allows School Committee ample time to complete Superintendent evaluations.

- Thank you again to Jeffrey Sands for keeping District in compliance while filling the Assistant Treasurer position.
- Thank you to Leslie Davidson for her role as Assistant Treasurer, and her many years of service to the School District and Towns. Leslie will be missed! The Assistant Treasurer position has been posted on School Spring, multiple job boards, and the Salem Evening News. Mr. Sands has also reached out to Powers & Sullivan accounting firm for referrals.
 - Ms. Bailey inquires about whether this position was posted in MASBO and/or MMA. Mr. Sands states that he is happy to post the position if School Committee directs him to do so.
 - Ms. Bailey asks if there was a reason that the School Committee was not consulted about the posting of this job. Mr. Polito explains that Leslie Davidson is vacating role on Friday, August 3rd and the job duties/expectations are clearly defined.
 - Ms. Bailey asks if the town of Hamilton has been consulted. Mr. Sands states that neither town is in a position to help with this task.

6. Superintendent's Report

- Arbitrator has ruled in District's favor in the *Custodial Union Grievance*. This case addressed District's use of substitutes to cover custodian's absences during regular shifts. Union's position argued the District would only employ substitutes **after** shifts were offered as overtime to union members. Independent arbitrator heard two days of testimony and issued her ruling on July 11th. This ruling, as well as the summary from Attorney Stonberg is included in the [School Committee Packet](#) (Exhibit B and Exhibit B1). Dr. Harvey summarizes the ruling: District is able to continue practice allowing substitutes to fill in during the absence of custodians.
- On July 14, the MSBA notified Dr. Harvey that the Cutler School Statement of Interest moved forward to the *Senior Study Site Visit*. There were over 80 building project applications submitted to the MSBA this year, 20 of which are moving forward. The Senior Study Site Visit is currently scheduled for early October and will involve MSBA staff and senior architectural consultants touring Cutler, reviewing the identified deficiencies, and discussing the impact with district leadership. The decision to move forward to the final feasibility study phase will occur in January/February 2019.

7. New Business

A. End of FY 18 Close

Exhibit C

Mr. Sands thanks the entire team involved in the FY18 close. Reviews presentation prepared for School Committee:

- Comprehensive Year End Closing Process for FY18 has been completed as of July 27, 2018.
- As a result, the District has ended the Fiscal Year \$8,166 or 0.027% favorable to Budget. Said differently, the District expended 99.973% of the funds that were appropriated for FY18.
- Review of the DESE Budget Categories for FY18. Mr. Sands details each category and the savings or expenditures attributable to either the favorable/ unfavorable amounts at year end.
 - Administration
 - Capital, Operations, Maintenance

- Guidance, Counseling, Testing
- Instructional Material
- Instructional Leadership
- Insurance, Retirement, Other
- Other Teaching Services
- Professional Development
- Pupil Services
- Teachers
- Tuitions - discussion of Circuit Breaker Revolving account, how funds are budgeted, and process by which funds are reimbursed/used.

Discussion: budget, variances, encumbrances, POs, etc.

- Mr. Sands details the proposed transferring of funds allowing each of the above categories to end favorably (listed on the “FY18 proposed budget transfers by DESE category” [08/01/2018 School Committee Packet](#), Exhibit C, page 43).

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE FY18 OPERATING EXPENSE BUDGET TRANSFERS AS RECOMMENDED HEREIN BY THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION AND AS PRESENTED ON THE PREVIOUS SLIDE ENTITLED “PROPOSED BUDGET TRANSFERS BY DESE CATEGORY”.

MOTION by Peter Wolczik; SECONDED by Jeanise Bertrand.

Discussion: Ms. Bailey reiterates her repeated requests asking to have this information sooner. Although she understands the process, the Department of Revenue/Division of Local Services clearly stated that closing of FY needs to be completed by July 15th. Discussion regarding this timeline, with Mr. Sands stating there is no law requiring School Districts to complete transfers by this day.

Unanimously approved by 5 members present.

On May 7, 2015, the School Committee voted to establish *Regional Transportation Reimbursement Fund*. Mr. Sands is proposing that *Transportation Chapter 71 Revenue Account* balance of \$12,662.00 is transferred to the *Regional Transportation Reimbursement Fund*.

Discussion: Mr. Sands explains the unused funds remaining in the *Transportation 71 Revenue Account* are returned to E&D in the subsequent year. Further discussion regarding reserve accounts, line item transfers, E&D account (perceptions and reality), stabilization funds, effective budget management, etc.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE FY18 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION TRANSFER AS RECOMMENDED HEREIN BY THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION AND AS PRESENTED ON THE PREVIOUS SLIDE ENTITLED “PROPOSED REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION TRANSFER”.

MOTION by Peter Wolczik; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey.

Unanimously approved by 5 members present.

- Mr. Sands expresses his gratitude to the School Committee for their support and concludes the budget presentation.
- FY18 Annual Audit with Powers & Sullivan is underway, and the annual audit presentation will occur in October 2018 (likely the 2nd week).
- District will submit E&D for certification to MA DOR by October 31st, as required.

B. Grounds & Maintenance Agreement

Exhibit D

Mr. Sands provides background: District worked with Hamilton and Wenham and in October 2015 developed and signed agreement to provide lawn cutting services and basic lawn maintenance. The town of Hamilton withdrew from this agreement in December 2017. Peter Lombardi and Bill Tyack have agreed to provide maintenance to elementary schools, the details of which are included in the School Committee packet. The agreement was put before the Wenham Board of Selectmen in July, however, the Board requested support from the School Committee before signing.

Ms. Bertrand inquires whether the replacement of Town Manager changes anything, with Mr. Sands and Dr. Harvey clarifying that the Town has already withdrawn from agreement and therefore nothing changes.

Mr. Lee asks about snow plowing, and other winter related maintenance. Mr. Sands details the winter maintenance for the District.

Mr. Sands understands the Wenham Board of Selectmen would like School Committee's official vote in support of the new agreement.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE AUTHORIZE SUPERINTENDENT DR. HARVEY TO SIGN THE GROUNDS MAINTENANCE AND GENERAL CLEANUP AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF WENHAM FOR THE TIME PERIOD BEGINNING JUNE 25, 2018 AND TO REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL CANCELLED BY EITHER PARTY WITH COMPENSATION NOT TO EXCEED \$20,000.00 PER FISCAL YEAR TO MAINTAIN GROUNDS AND FIELDS AS SPECIFIED AT THE FIVE SCHOOLS.

**MOTION by Peter Wolczik; SECONDED by Jeanise Bertrand.
Unanimously approved by 5 members present.**

Thank you to the Town of Wenham for continued service and dedication to our schools!

C. Timeline for Superintendent's Review

Exhibit E

Mr. Polito discusses the process for timeline review as detailed in Exhibit E, adding that he will send out an email with further information.

D. School Committee Goals 2018-2019

Discussion regarding developing School Committee Goals and feasibility in addressing the breadth of this discussion in tonight's meeting.

School Committee members offer opinions on goal priorities, some of which include:

- Turf Field project

- Master Plan
- Communication
- Beyond level services
- Longmeadow
- Tennis courts
- Athletic fees
- Capital expenses
- Regional agreement
- School safety
- OPEB
- Stakeholder involvement - Board of Selectmen & FinComs

Discussion regarding the need for a meeting to discuss goals more in depth. August 29th is the first day of school, but an entire meeting is necessary to completely dedicate time to discuss these goals. Goal discussion will be tabled until August 29th, with a facilitator needed.

E. Open Meeting Law Complaint

Open Meeting Law complaint stemming from June 20th meeting where a text message accidentally went to everyone in the School Committee. A complaint was filed, Mr. Polito spoke with Dr. Harvey, and they referred to counsel, Naomi Stonberg. On July 26th, Ms. Stonberg suggested Ms. Bertrand issue an apology at a public meeting and opined that this public apology would resolve the issue. Mr. Polito explains that Ms. Bertrand did immediately apologize for the text.

Ms. Bertrand admits her mistake and offers another apology. States that she should be paying more attention and apologizes for any grief it has caused to any School Committee members.

Mr. Polito apologizes on behalf of the School Committee and suggests revisiting committee norms, specifically that electronic communications should be minimal.

Ms. Bailey asks who will write a response to the AG regarding the OML violation.

Discussion regarding procedure and sending a response, with members ultimately deciding that Mr. Polito will reach out to Naomi Stonberg to ask she send response.

Ms. Bailey asks why this information was not provided in Dropbox and further states that the text in question was unprofessional and inappropriate. Would like to respectfully remind all members to remain professional and courteous at all times.

Discussion regarding meeting norms and maintaining collegial relationships. Mr. Polito reminds committee that the text was not an issue of private deliberations, but rather a personal text that referenced a committee member.

Further discussion regarding the context of the text message being sent, with Ms. Bertrand stating that the message would have been delivered to everyone normally included on the group text about coordinating attendance at warrant meetings. Discussion continues regarding the context of message, with explanation of the agreement reached at the subcommittee meeting.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE AUTHORIZE NAOMI STONBERG TO RESPOND TO THE OPEN MEETING LAW

COMPLAINT WITHIN 14 BUSINESS DAYS OF TODAY, AND TO SEND A FINAL REPORT TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

**MOTION by Peter Wolczik; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey.
Unanimously approved by 5 members present.**

F. Donations

Exhibit F

Miles River Middle School Class of 2018 has generously donated a Raised Garden Bed (estimated value of \$400.00), approximately 4x10 in order to enhance the outdoor classroom area. This raised garden bed was constructed by student council with assistance from the school facilities department. The bed will be planted and maintained by student council representatives.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE DONATION FROM THE MILES RIVER MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASS OF 2018 OF THE RAISED GARDEN BED, WITH AN ESTIMATED VALUE OF \$400.00.

**MOTION by Peter Wolczik; SECONDED by Jeanise Bertrand.
Unanimously approved by 5 members present.**

Thank you to the Miles River Middle School Class of 2018! This is an amazing, generous, and living gift! Generous donations like these are what makes our schools so excellent.

8. Other

- Topics for Next Meeting 08/29/2018
 - School Committee Goals 2018-2019
- Topics for Future Meetings, Dates TBD
 - Executive Session to discuss Contract Negotiations
 - Longmeadow discussion/ status update

9. Vote to Adjourn

9:00pm

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
ADJOURN AT 9:24 PM.**

**MOTION by Michelle Bailey; SECONDED by Gene Lee.
Unanimously approved by 5 members present.**