

**The Hamilton Wenham Regional School District
School Committee Meeting
Buker Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room
Wednesday, February 13, 2019 7:00 PM**

Present:

Jeanise Bertrand
Kerry Gertz (late arrival, 7:05 pm)
David Polito, Chairperson
Gene Lee, Vice Chairperson
Michelle Bailey
Stacey Metternick, Secretary
Peter Wolczik, Assistant Secretary

Also Present:

Michael Harvey, Superintendent
Jeffrey Sands, Assistant Superintendent
Lauren Verge, Student Government Representative

1. Call to Order

David Polito calls the Hamilton Wenham School Committee meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All in attendance rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Warrants

Present: David Polito, Stacey Metternick, Peter Wolczik, Michelle Bailey

Also present: Don Gallant, Treasurer; Kevin Mahoney, Assistant Treasurer; Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary

The following warrants were approved (7:05pm - 7:19pm):

| Voucher # | Amount |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1032 | \$54,310.23 |
| 1031 | \$768,712.54 |
| 17 | \$6,847.56 |
| 2677 | \$160,446.89 |
| 2678 | \$100,513.99 |

| | |
|------|-------------|
| 2669 | \$91.00 |
| 2670 | \$649.60 |
| 2671 | \$73.82 |
| 2674 | \$601.50 |
| 2673 | \$501.50 |
| 2672 | \$22,522.19 |
| 2675 | \$1,049.69 |

4. Citizens' Comments

None.

5. Chair's Report

David Polito reminds community that the School Committee member nomination papers are due back by February 25th 2019.

6. Superintendent's Report

- Kindergarten registration: Next fall HWRSD will welcome the class of 2032 to kindergarten. The HWRSD's annual Kindergarten Information Night will be held on Monday, March 18th at 6:30 PM at the Buker Elementary School. Registration will be held at the HWRSD District Offices, 5 School St., Wenham on Monday April 1st through Friday April 5th from 9:00 AM to noon. Additionally, registrations will be taken from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM on Wednesday, April 6th. Registration information and the required forms are available on the District Website. (www.hwschools.net)
- Boston Globe Scholastic Art & Writing Awards: The Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School Visual Arts and English Departments are proud to announce that our students have received two gold keys, six silver keys and eight honorable mentions in the 2019 Boston Globe Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Established in 1923, the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards are the longest-running, most prestigious recognition program for creative teens in the United States. Gold Key works will automatically advance to national judging and will be considered for national awards. Gold Key work is currently being reviewed at the national level in New York City by panels of creative professionals. National Medalists selected by these panelists will be announced on Wednesday, March 13, 2019. Gold Key award-winning work will be exhibited at the Massachusetts Scholastic Art and Writing Awards regional exhibition at Breed Memorial Hall, Tufts University, from March 16 through March 25. To see the student artwork please visit: hwfinearts.blogspot.com
 - *Visual Arts:* At Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School Violette Holbrook received a gold key. Aidan Heney, Makenzie Liphardt, and

YueYan Zhang received silver keys. Miranda Boyd, Margaret Brown, Lily Cassidy, Annabel Howley and Olivia Malloy received honorable mentions. At Miles River Middle School Maya Beach received two honorable mentions.

- *English:* At Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School Nidhi Pillai received a gold key and an honorable mention. Megan Amero received a silver key and Nora Sullivan-Horner received two silver keys.
- HWRSD Winter Athletes: Congratulations to Boy's Basketball! The team qualified for their 13th straight postseason this past weekend. The Boy's Basketball team will play for at least a share of the CAL Baker Title on February 14th.
 - Congratulation to Calvin Dalton, an HW Student-Athlete who wrestles with Salem. Calvin won an individual Sectional Championship in the 113 pound weight class this past weekend.
- School Committee nomination papers: Nomination papers for three open seats on the HW School Committee are available at the Superintendent's Office, 5 School Street, Wenham. The papers must be returned with at least 40 registered voters' signatures from the Towns of Hamilton and/or Wenham on or before 5:00 PM on Monday, February 25, 2019. Signatures will be verified from the voters' list of the Towns of Hamilton & Wenham by Wednesday, February 27, 2019. The candidate must bring their nomination papers to their respective Town Clerk to be certified that they the candidate is a registered voter prior to gathering at least 40 registered voter signatures from either town. If you have any questions, please call Donna Bunk @ 978-626-0821.

7. **Consent Agenda**

A. Minutes - Executive Sessions

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| ● January 24, 2018 | Exhibit A |
| ● April 25, 2018 | Exhibit B |
| ● October 10, 2018 | Exhibit C |

As Dr. Harvey has pointed out previously, Stacey Metternick notes that executive session minutes do not need approval through motion of the School Committee. Executive Session minutes need to be announced in open session meeting. The School Committee previously authorized secretary to approve executive session minutes, and therefore secretary's statement is sufficient. The executive session minutes from January 24, 2019, April 25, 2018, and October 10, 2018 have been reviewed and approved by Stacey Metternick, secretary, as well as reviewed and approved by Naomi Stonberg, counsel.

8. New Business

D. Donations (moved)

The Friends of Cutler – \$650.00

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE OR ACCEPT THE DONATION FROM THE FRIENDS OF CUTLER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$650.00 FOR DIGITAL PORTFOLIOS FOR GRADE 2, JOURNAL PROMPTS & SENSORY MATERIALS FOR GRADE 1, AND PURCHASING EXTRA BOOKS FOR THE GRADE 5 BOOK CLUB.

**MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Kerry Gertz.
Unanimously approved by 7 members present.**

The Friends of MRMS/RHS – \$300.00

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE OR ACCEPT THE DONATION FROM THE FRIENDS OF MILES RIVER MIDDLE SCHOOL/REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$300.00 TO HELP WITH THE COST OF THE 8TH GRADE DANCE.

**MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Jeanise Bertrand.
Unanimously approved by 7 members present.**

Thank you to the Friends groups for the amazing and generous work they do for our schools, students, and our community.

C. Approval of Warrants Procedure (moved)

Exhibit F

David Polito summarizes the 2018 Chapter 440 decision which allows for one School Committee member to sign warrants and report back to the School Committee.

Discussion regarding the change in schedule given that meetings will no longer have to be built around warrants/ payroll schedule. Jeff Sands says his recommendation would be to designate a primary and backup signor. David Polito and Kerry Gertz both volunteer/nominate themselves.

Michelle Bailey states that she does not think it is particularly burdensome to have members sign during the scheduled meeting time, and doesn't think this is beneficial unless the School Committee plans on changing the meeting schedule.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE CHANGING OF SIGNING OF WARRANTS FROM THE MEETING TO A SINGLE SIGNOR, AND I NOMINATE KERRY GERTZ TO BE AUTHORIZED IN THIS CAPACITY.

**MOTION by Jeanise Bertrand; SECONDED by Kerry Gertz.
Approved by 5 members; Opposed by 2 members - MOTION PASSES**

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE NOMINATE DAVID POLITO TO SERVE AS THE ALTERNATE DESIGNEE TO SIGN WARRANTS.

**MOTION by Jeanise Bertrand; SECONDED by Gene Lee.
Unanimously approved by 7 members present.**

a. FY20 Budget Public Hearing #2
FY20 Budget Review

Exhibit D

7:35 pm official opening of the second public hearing on budget.

Jeff Sands reviews budget process. Discussion regarding operating costs, regional regulations, and costs specific to SRO. Jeff reads his recommendation in its entirety, found in [The School Committee Packet, Exhibit D1, pages 20-21](#). Dr. Harvey points out that the committee can approve the budget as is, and then, should the towns have cover costs, the School Committee can vote the district budget down.

David Polito opens up the floor to citizen comments on budget.

Alex Begin, Wenham resident & Wenham Finance Advisory Committee Chair: Clarifies his understanding of the SRO costs and ultimate responsibility for covering such costs. Discussion between Alex Begin and Jeff Sands regarding hypothetical scenarios, with Jeff reiterating that he and Dr. Harvey are recommending that the district budget include the SRO Program.

Alex Begin provides detailed summary of the Wenham town budget and need for override.

Jeff Sands states he is struggling with Wenham's decision to attribute the entirety of the override to the schools. Alex argues that this override is structured in the exact way as last year's override.

David Polito points out that Wenham is calling their budget a "level service budget," however they have not accounted for the current students and enrollment shifts typically included in level service.

Discussion regarding override, information presented to townspeople, unnecessarily attributing override to school district.

Alex Begin states that Wenham has been considering increasing levy capacity, to obtain funds to offset costs, however, it will not help this year. Override is needed to fund Wenham's town budget, as well as the school's budget (argument & discussion regarding this, specifically with regard to the warrants at town meeting).

Michelle Bailey asks that Wenham present a budget override where the town and school hold half the burden, as this doesn't need to fall entirely on the schools. Alex responds that

this is not a philosophical decision; it is strictly a policy one.

Further discussion on Wenham override, levy limit, and town meeting.

David Polito inquires as to Wenham's support of the OPEB funding presented at Joint Committee meeting on 02/13/2019. Alex Begin says he does not think funding OPEB is a bad idea, however, he does not know how this will be afforded.

Stacey Verge, Hamilton: enthusiastically supports the SRO program. Ms. Verge voices her support for the placeholder recommendation in the budget, as without this, we risk not having SRO.

Adopt FY20 Budget

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVES AN FY20 TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BUDGET OF \$34,268,132. THIS AMOUNT INCLUDES GENERAL FUND OPERATING EXPENSES (AFTER OFFSETS) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$33,869,760 AND GENERAL FUND DEBT SERVICE EXPENSES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$398,372. FURTHERMORE, THE GROSS OPERATING EXPENSES OF THE DISTRICT (BEFORE OFFSETS) HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED TO THE DESE-DEFINED ACCOUNTS ACCORDING TO THE "SUMMARY BY DESE CATEGORY" CHART INCLUDED IN THIS BUDGET PRESENTATION DATED 2/13/2019.

MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Jeanise Bertrand.

Discussion: Michelle Bailey suggests that the district budget reflect \$1 for the SRO program. Stacey Metternick also wants to reduce the amount to \$1.

Gene Lee states he would rather have a placeholder for \$70k and later change to \$1, rather than having to increase the amount later.

Peter Wolczik asks what happens if Hamilton ends up not having the money to fund the program. Jeff Sands explains that if the cost is included in district budget, the amount would be there to guarantee SRO program begins.

Michelle Bailey points out that \$73,000 (listed amount for SRO in district budget) is above the average salary of local police officers.

Jeff Sands states this cost was provided by Chief Stevens, further explaining that he did not analyze the cost in detail, given that \$53,000 base salary plus \$20,000 for benefits is not unreasonable.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE AMEND THE CURRENT MOTION TO DECREASE THE TOTAL EXPENDITURES BY \$198,000, WHICH INCLUDES \$73,000 FOR SRO PROGRAM AND \$125,000 FOR OPEB FUNDING.

MOTION by Michelle Bailey; SECONDED by Stacey Metternick.

David Polito states that the amendment puts the district at risk of not having SRO in place, and in addition, not funding OPEB will cost the district more in the long run.

(Amendment) Approved by 3 members; Opposed by 4 members - MOTION FAILS

(Original Motion) Approved by 5 members; Opposed by 2 members - MOTION PASSES

THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTES TO ASSESS THE TOWNS OF HAMILTON AND WENHAM A COMBINED TOTAL OF \$29,896,119 AS THE AMOUNT NECESSARY TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN THE DISTRICT, AS WELL AS PAY DEBT SERVICE, FOR FY20. THE DISTRICT'S ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT SHALL DETERMINE THE AMOUNT APPORTIONED TO EACH TOWN, AND THE DISTRICT'S TREASURER SHALL CERTIFY SUCH AMOUNTS TO THE RESPECTIVE TREASURERS OF EACH TOWN WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THIS DATE.

MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Gene Lee. Unanimously approved by 7 members present.

b. Approve Office Personnel Contract Exhibit E
Dr. Harvey explains that Exhibit E in the [School Committee Packet, pages 34-35](#) reflects the tentative agreement reached with office personnel. Dr Harvey provides an overview of the changes to the agreement.

Stacey Metternick points out that the School Committee did not vote to allow administration to enter into negotiations with Office Personnel.

Michelle Bailey asks for the entire contract, and agrees that the School Committee did not authorize administration to negotiate with Office Personnel.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE TABLE THE ISSUE OF REVIEWING THE OFFICE PERSONNEL AGREEMENT UNTIL A FULL CONTRACT IS AVAILABLE.

MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey. Approved by 4 members; Opposed by 3 members - MOTION PASSES

9. Other

A. Topics for Next Meeting

- Review full contract - Office Personnel
- Executive Session minutes authorizing administration to enter into negotiations with Office Personnel

10. Vote to Adjourn
9:30pm

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN VOTE TO ADJOURN THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING AT 9:27 PM.

**MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Gene Lee.
Unanimously approved by 7 members present.**