

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee

Sept. 19, 2013

Minutes

**CALL TO ORDER AND
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Roger Kuebel opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. in the Buker Multipurpose Room. The Committee and others present rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT:

Jeanise Bertrand, Sean Condon, Bill Dery, Deb Evans, Roger Kuebel (chair), Barbara Lawrence, Sheila MacDonald

ALSO PRESENT:

Dr. Michael Harvey, Superintendent; Dr. Celeste Bowler, Assistant Superintendent for Learning

ABSENT:

Melissa Even Moore, Bill Wilson

CITIZENS' CONCERNS:

None.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Harvey reported he has met with representatives of the project management and design firms involved in preliminary assessment of planned improvement projects at Buker and Winthrop; noted he and other administrators attended the schools' kick-off ice cream socials; and said Winthrop and high school students who take the PARC test this year as part of the state's pilot program to test out the potential MCAS replacement will not be required to take the MCAS.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

R. Kuebel said discussions are underway with the district's auditors to identify any additional testing the district would like to have done.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Minutes of Sept. 5, 2013
Field Trip, X-C Track to Warwick, RI
EdFund Project Grant Application Form
EdFund Grant Acknowledgement &
Acceptance of Terms

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE H-W REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE ALL OF THE REMAINING ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA. THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR AMENDMENT OF THIS MOTION. SHEILA MACDONALD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Negotiation

This group has not met since the last meeting of the full Committee.

Audit

This group was to meet with auditors the morning following this meeting.

Facilities

At its Sept. 9 meeting this subcommittee worked on frameworks for planning future facilities maintenance.

Master Plan Steering Committee

Dr. Harvey said he would organize "visioning sessions" for October, in which an educational consultant would run sessions with 50 people in the district to elicit input about their vision for the district. The group is to have balanced representation of faculty, parents, community members and members of Town governments.

NEW BUSINESS:

Recommendation to Hire Assistant Superintendent of Administration & Finance

Dr. Harvey recommended that the Committee offer the position of Assistant Superintendent of Administration and Finance to Jeff Sands, who spent 14 years in the financial industry before taking his current position in 2011 as business administrator for the Tewksbury Schools. Dr. Harvey recapped the review process; he and Committee members involved in the process spoke enthusiastically about the candidate. J. Sands answered Committee members' questions, and then departed prior to the Committee's discussion and vote.

Dr. Harvey said a 3-year contract with a salary of \$125,000 for the first year includes incentives for good performance, with proficiency to be assessed per the state evaluation rubric.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE H-W REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO HIRE MR. JEFF SANDS AS THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE FOR THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT. BARBARA LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

Teaching Assistants' and Cafeteria Workers' Pay Rates

Dr. Harvey briefed the Committee on these employees' similar situations in the district; neither group has a bargaining unit, and their compensation is governed under a district policy that outlines their working conditions. He recommended review of the policy. He said these staff members' hourly pay exceeds that for comparable positions in neighboring districts. He did not recommend a pay increase for teaching assistants for 2013-14; he recommended providing a 1% increase to cafeteria workers, per a food services department plan already in place.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE H-W REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE A 1% INCREASE FOR THE CAFETERIA WORKERS FOR THE FULL 2013-14 SCHOOL YEAR. SHEILA MACDONALD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-1-0-2.

School Committee Goals Discussion

Committee members and Dr. Harvey discussed his draft (which is appended to these minutes) of Committee goals for 2013-14. The discussion touched on topics including developing working principles for Committee members' interaction and work together; improving budget presentations; district transparency and communication with the

community; and which members would fill in additional details about some of the draft goals.

Second Reading of Policies

The Committee voted to accept policies that had been discussed at a previous meeting. (The policies are appended to these minutes.)

Policy Dissemination

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE H-W REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ACCEPT THE POLICY DISSEMINATION POLICY AS PRESENTED. SEAN CONDON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

Policy Revision & Review

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE H-W REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ACCEPT THE POLICY REVISION & REVIEW POLICY AS PRESENTED. SHEILA MACDONALD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-1-0-2.

Conflicts

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE H-W REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ACCEPT THE CONFLICTS POLICY AS PRESENTED. SEAN CONDON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

Policy Adoption

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE H-W REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ACCEPT THE POLICY ADOPTION POLICY AS PRESENTED. BARBARA LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

First Reading of Policies

R. Kuebel explained the reason for proposal of five additional policies, which the Committee's counsel has reviewed. (The draft policies are appended to these minutes.)

Executive Sessions

This describes Massachusetts law about executive sessions.

Guidelines for Public Comment

Going beyond what state law requires, this proposed policy describes this district's longtime practice of providing time for public comment during regular meetings, and sets ground rules- for the public comment period early in the meeting. Members discussed whether to specify a maximum number of minutes per speaker, or refer that matter to the chair's discretion.

Gifts to Staff

This describes Massachusetts law. Members noted it is important to communicate to parents what is, and is not, acceptable at holidays.

Solicitation by Staff

No discussion of this took place.

Tutoring for Pay

This is from the Attorney General's advisory on students and teachers.

Vote to add James Farnham to

At the Facilities Sub-Committee's request the Committee appointed to

Facilities Sub-Committee

that subcommittee James Farnham, a community member who is a contractor and developer, and who served on the Capital Management Committee and on the district Building Committee.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE H-W REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADD JAMES FARNHAM TO THE FACILITIES SUB-COMMITTEE. JEANISE BERTRAND SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

Motion to Pursue Winthrop and Buker Capital Projects

Dr. Harvey asked the Committee to approve a motion with language that would give him the authority to put three funding requests on the warrants of the two Towns' fall Town meetings, but would not commit the district from moving those items forward for a vote at the Town Meetings; the deadline for submitting warrant items was two business days after this meeting. (The text of the proposed warrant items is appended to these minutes.)

Review of Material for Vote in October for MSBA Project

Discussion followed and touched on points including whether the wording of one proposed warrant item adequately described the glass curtain at Winthrop School; repair and upgrade work done in the past year; other work approved but still pending; the reliability of existing boilers at Buker and options if one fails this winter; funds sequestered to cover part of the future cost of sprinklers at Buker; and information R. Kuebel researched about fires in schools, which he provided during discussion of the latter topic.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO SUPPORT ACCOMPLISHING THE FOLLOWING CAPITAL PROJECTS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE: REPLACE WINDOWS AT THE WINTHROP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, REPLACE THE BOILERS AT THE WINTHROP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, REPLACE THE BOILERS AT THE BUKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND INSTALL A SPRINKLER SYSTEM AT THE BUKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. THE MOTION PASSED 6-0-1-2.

The Committee agreed by general consent to use placeholder dollar figures in the warrant text, \$1 million for the Buker heating system, \$1.75 million for the Winthrop heating system and glass curtain, and \$500,000 for a sprinkler system at Buker, figures earlier approved by bond counsel.

MASC/MASS Conference Registration for School Committee

Three Committee members said they would attend the annual MASC/MASS conference in November, with Dr. Harvey.

ADJOURNMENT:

BILL DERY MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADJOURN. DEB EVABS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

**DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS
USED AT THIS MEETING:**

School Committee Goals 2013-14, dated 9/16/2013 (3 pages)
Draft policies: Policy Dissemination, Policy Revision and Review, Conflicts between District Policy and Collective Bargaining Agreements or State and Federal Laws, Policy Adoption, Executive Sessions, Guidelines for Public Comment, Gifts to Staff, Solicitations by Staff, Tutoring for Pay (12 pages)
MASC/MASS Conference registration forms (2 pages)
Field trip request dated 8-13-2013, HWRHS Cross-Country team to Warwick, RI, 1 day trip to track meet, 9/28/13 (7 pages)
EdFund Project Grant application form dated 9/1/2013, Joe Maher, iPad Digital Work Stations (2 pages)
EdFund Grant Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Terms form, undated, for grant approved 9/20/2013, iPad Digital Workstation (1 page)
Text of warrant articles and motions for use by the member towns to approve debt for Buker heating system project, Winthrop heating system and windows project, and Buker sprinkler system project (3 pages)

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Sierks Smith, School Committee recording secretary