

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee

March 20, 2014

Minutes

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

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

PRESENT:

Sean Condon, Bill Dery (7:10), Deb Evans, Roger Kuebel (chair) (through 9:42), Barbara Lawrence, Larry Swartz, Bill Wilson (vice chair)

ALSO PRESENT:

Dr. Michael Harvey, Superintendent; Dr. Celeste Bowler, Assistant Superintendent for Learning; Jeff Sands, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Administration

ABSENT:

Jeanise Bertrand, Sheila MacDonald

CITIZENS' CONCERNS:

Richard Boroff (Moynihan Rd., Hamilton) offered his opinions about what subcommittees the School Committee should have and suggested the Committee has recently approved more policies than are needed. He spoke in favor of keeping the Committee its current size, and continuing to elect members "at large" rather than seeking proportional representation of the populations of the district's two member towns.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Hamilton Selectmen's Meeting Report

R. Kuebel reported the Hamilton Board of Selectmen unanimously voted to support the proposed FY15 district budget; the Hamilton Finance Committee continues to support an increase only up to 4% above forecasted FY14 spending.

Wenham Selectmen Meeting on
Reducing Committee Size

He said Wenham selectmen have suggested the Committee explore proportional representation.

Feedback on SC Goals

He reminded members to submit feedback.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

The high school has advanced to the finals of the Educational Theater Guild state finals and is to perform in Boston on Sat. March 29.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Minutes of March 6, 2014

B. Dery asked for the minutes of March 6, 2014 to be removed from the consent agenda. He requested correction of a sentence on page 6, which misquoted a statement he made at that meeting. The Committee assented.

**BILL WILSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE
MINUTES OF MARCH 6, 2014 AS AMENDED. LARRY**

**SWARTZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED
6-0-1-2.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Audit	None.
Facilities	This working group discussed the Collins Center report at a recent meeting and will continue to do so at its next meeting March 27.
Negotiations	A negotiating session with the teachers' association representatives took place the day before this meeting and another is scheduled for the week of March 24.
Policy	This working group's recommendations were to be discussed later in the meeting. B. Lawrence said the group is reviewing J. Sands' suggestions regarding transportation policies and would prepare drafts for discussion at the next meeting of the full Committee.
Warrant	None.
Student Representative	Chase Schaub updated the Committee about strong showings by high school students in several athletic and extracurricular competitions.
Other	The demographic study and visioning studies reports that are part of the master planning process can be accessed on the district website under District Resources, Current Reports.

NEW BUSINESS:

Presentation, North Shore United Way	Lynnette Fallon of Hamilton, a member of the board of directors of North Shore United Way (NSUW), introduced two staff members who briefed the Committee on the agency's student assistance program, which spends \$130,000 a year to place professional counselors in five schools including HWRHS, and about its new online "volunteer hub" at which agencies can post volunteer opportunities, and individuals wishing to volunteer can obtain information about a broad range of opportunities. They gave the Committee folders with information about NSUW. L. Fallon proposed having a table at curriculum nights to acquaint parents with these programs. L. Swartz suggested the district consider giving employees the option of charitable giving via payroll deduction.
Report, Collins Center, on Shared Facilities Model	Rob Haley and Monica Lamboy of the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management at UMass Boston, which has been assisting the district and Towns in studying whether the three entities could merge some facilities-related services, gave a PowerPoint presentation reporting on that study. (The slides are appended to these minutes.) They said all three entities have inadequate facilities maintenance staff, and recommended phasing in a joint department to perform such tasks across both Towns' and the district's facilities, beginning with the hiring

in FY15 of a foreman and three other maintenance staffers. The report and discussion during and after the presentation touched on topics including the 3 types of shared service agreements the state recognizes; the 8 categories of tasks involved; the net savings that result from spending on preventive maintenance; the consultants' recommendation regarding governance and management structure; the timeframe for state legislation necessary to approve an intermunicipal agreement like the one contemplated; custodians' duties versus maintenance duties, and the proposal to count a small portion of each existing custodian's job as contributing toward total maintenance staff full-time equivalents (FTEs); tasks that would still be hired out; projected additional costs; projected net savings; and the proportion of repair and maintenance work that is now performed by district staff versus by contractors. M. Lamboy said the next steps as study and planning continue are to discuss performance measures, levels of service, and how to structure an agreement.

Review of Operational Audit Progress

R. Kuebel recapped the history of the operational audit performed by Evergreen Consulting in 2010 to assess and make recommendations about a broad range of operational issues. Dr. Harvey gave a PowerPoint presentation on the 65 major tasks from the early 2011 operational audit report and updated those present on which have been completed, which are in process, which are under review, and which ones district officials have decided not to pursue. (The PowerPoint slides and the audit report spreadsheet of 125 findings are appended to these minutes.) Dr. Harvey said some recommendations are now somewhat out of date given common core standards and the evaluation system for teachers that have been mandated since the audit report was completed. R. Kuebel noted that some issues the report identified are being addressed in a way other than the strategy recommended by the consultants.

Acceptance of EdFund Grant to Support a Second Foreign Language for 2014-2015

Dr. Harvey said the EdFund has offered \$45,000 a year for 2 years to fund non-recurring costs: payment of teachers for development of language curriculum, supplies/materials for teaching a second language, and \$15,000 for interactive online courses in 4 languages. He described his plan to introduce the second language in 2014-15 at the sixth grade level and said no additional teaching positions would be required, because after taking both languages for half a year each in the sixth grade, each student would then choose one or the other for the school years that follow. Curriculum planning for implementation at middle and high school levels would take place concurrently. He said he posted ads for teachers of French, German or Chinese and would decide later which language to add, because having the right teacher in place is more important than the choice of language.

In discussion that followed, R. Kuebel and B. Dery said they do not think the district needs to offer a second language; D. Evans spoke in support of it. Discussion also touched on introduction of foreign

language instruction in elementary grades. B. Lawrence said language instruction has broad benefits. Chase Schaub said existing high school Spanish courses educate students about culture as well as how to speak the language.

Noting that this proposal was introduced at this meeting, L. Swartz recommended the Committee reflect on it before voting.

BILL WILSON MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ACCEPT THE MONIES FROM THE EDFUND FOR SUPPORT OF A SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR THE 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR. DEB EVANS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Discussion continued.

LARRY SWARTZ MADE A MOTION TO TABLE DISCUSSION UNTIL THE NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING. BILL DERY SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION FAILED 2-5-0-2. (S. Condon, D. Evans, R. Kuebel, B. Lawrence, and B. Wilson voted no.)

The Committee voted on the main motion to accept the EdFund grant. **THE MOTION PASSED 5-1-1-2.** (B. Dery voted no; R. Kuebel abstained.)

Discussion of Proportional Representation on School Committee

Members discussed whether to propose a change in the current system of election of all Committee members "at large," and instead having each member Town elect a number of members from its own citizenry, in proportion to the Towns' populations. Discussion touched on topics including members' expressed perception that town partisanship has not been evident to date, and the number of seats that might be allocated to each Town under the current size of the Committee (9) or the proposed reduced size (7). The Committee reached a consensus that members are not inclined to pursue a change in governance to introduce proportional representation.

R. Kuebel departed at 9:43 p.m.; B. Wilson chaired the remainder of the meeting.

Policies (second readings)

B. Lawrence said the only updates in the draft policies were to incorporate changes agreed upon during Committee discussion at a prior meeting.

Authorized Use of School-Owned Equipment

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADOPT THE AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED EQUIPMENT POLICY DATED TODAY AS PRESENTED IN EXHIBIT B. SEAN CONDON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 5-0-0-3.

Buildings and Grounds Security

In discussion of possible rephrasing the Committee agreed to rephrase the first sentence of the text proposed by the Policy Working Group.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADOPT THE BUILDING AND GROUNDS SECURITY POLICY AS INDICATED IN THE PACKET, THE FIRST SENTENCE TO READ "THE SUPERINTENDENT AND HIS OR HER DESIGNEE WILL ASSURE THAT REASONABLE PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE TO ENSURE THE SECURITY OF THE BUILDINGS AND OCCUPANTS AT ALL TIMES." BARBARA LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-0-0-3.

Guidelines for Public Comment

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADOPT THE GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY AS PRESENTED IN THE PACKET. BILL DERY SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-0-0-3.

Memorials for Deceased Students

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADOPT THE MEMORIALS FOR DECEASED STUDENTS OR STAFF POLICY AS PRESENTED. BARBARA LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 5-1-0-2. (D. Evans voted no.)

VOTE TO ADJOURN:

BILL DERY MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADJOURN. BARBARA LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-0-0-3.

The meeting adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

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

Operational Audit PowerPoint report dated March 20, 2014 (19 slides)
Operational Audit Response updated spreadsheet dated 3/1/2014
(22 pages)
Grant proposal for expansion of foreign language offerings (undated)
(1 page)
Draft policies: Authorized Use of School-Owned Equipment
(1 page), Buildings and Grounds Security (1 page), Guidelines
for Public Comment (2 pages), Memorials for Deceased Students
or Staff (1 page)

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Sierks Smith