

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee

June 19, 2014

Minutes

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

S. MacDonald opened the meeting at 7:08 p.m. in the Buker Multipurpose Room. The Committee and others present rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT:

Jeanise Bertrand, Bill Dery, Deb Evans (7:12), Barbara Lawrence, Sheila MacDonald, Stacey Metternick, Larry Swartz

ALSO PRESENT:

Dr. Michael Harvey, Superintendent; Dr. Celeste Bowler, Assistant Superintendent for Learning; Jeff Sands, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration; Don Gallant, Treasurer

ABSENT:

Roger Kuebel, Bill Wilson

CITIZENS' CONCERNS:

None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Introduction of Mr. Craig Hovey

Dr. Harvey introduced Craig Hovey, who is to join HWRSD July 1 as the new principal of the Miles River Middle School. Dr. Harvey announced that Christy Reynolds has resigned from her position as assistant principal of MRMS; C. Hovey is involved in the hiring process to replace her.

Dr. Harvey updated the Committee about the hiring of a teacher to teach Chinese to 6th graders in 2014-15, and three curriculum coordinators.

CONSENT AGENDA

Field trip to Austria 2015

Minutes of June 5, 2014

School Calendar 2014-15 with PTC added

L. Swartz asked that the field trip be removed from the consent agenda; S. MacDonald said consideration would be postponed to the next meeting. (Further discussion took place later in the meeting; see below.) B. Lawrence asked that the school calendar be removed from the consent agenda.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE ALL OF THE REMAINING ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA. THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR AMENDMENT OF THIS MOTION. STACEY METTERNICK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

Dr. Harvey said the 2014-15 district calendar, which the Committee had approved at a prior meeting, was amended and re-presented because the approved version omitted the schedule for parent-teacher

conferences. (The amended calendar is appended to these minutes.) B. Lawrence said she has received negative feedback from parents about beginning school before Labor Day; she recommended the Committee consider changing this in future years. S. MacDonald noted that the Committee discussed that issue at the meeting at which it approved the initial version of the calendar. Discussion touched on the midweek scheduling of a teacher workshop day in November; Dr. Harvey said the date was selected so students would not be present when Hamilton uses Winthrop as a polling place. Further discussion touched on whether the town might relocate polling.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE 2014-2015 HWRSD CALENDAR THAT WAS APPROVED ON MARCH 6, AMENDED TO ADD THE PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES BEING THE 23RD AND 30TH OF OCTOBER. LARRY SWARTZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 5-1-1-2. (J. Bertrand voted no; B. Dery abstained.)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit	None
Facilities	None
Negotiations	None
Policy	B. Lawrence said this subcommittee would begin work in August on the student policy section of the policy manual, and present proposals in fall 2014.
Warrant	None
Student Representative	None
Legislative	None

OLD BUSINESS:

Policies 2nd Reading B. Lawrence said the draft policies were unchanged from the versions introduced at a previous Committee meeting. (They are appended to these minutes.)

Recyclable Materials Because an outdated version of this policy was provided to the Committee in the packet of materials for this meeting, action was postponed.

Transportation for Student Eligible for Special Education Services **DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE TRANSPORTATION FOR STUDENT ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES POLICY AS PRESENTED.**

JEANISE BERTRAND SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

NEW BUSINESS:

Approval of the BAN Sale

D. Gallant briefed the Committee about the proposal to sell short-term bond anticipation notes (BANs) to fund projects that were to begin the day after this meeting. (A BAN spreadsheet and the district's Standard and Poors credit profile are appended to these minutes.) He touched on details including the reason five separate motions and votes are required; the bidding date and results; the bond consultant's recommendation; bids received, the interest rates offered and premiums offered; Eastern Bank's bid, which the administration recommended the Committee accept, which would carry a net cost of \$4,000 per year (.269% net); statutory rules regarding bonding and commencement of work; and the district's AAA bond rating. Discussion touched on issues including the district's outstanding obligations on previously issued BANs; whether it would be cost-effective to combine bonding for several projects in one larger BAN issue; and other upcoming expenses and intended funding mechanisms.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE SALE OF \$1,640,000 1.00 PERCENT GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND ANTICIPATION NOTES ("THE NOTES") OF THE DISTRICT DATED JUNE 27, 2014 AND PAYABLE JUNE 26, 2015 TO EASTERN BANK AT PAR AND ACCRUED INTEREST, IF ANY, PLUS A PREMIUM OF \$11,955.10. LARRY SWARTZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE THAT IN CONNECTION WITH THE MARKETING AND SALE OF THE NOTES, THE PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF A NOTICE OF SALE AND PRELIMINARY OFFICIAL STATEMENT DATED MAY 23, 2014, AND A FINAL OFFICIAL STATEMENT DATED JUNE 11, 2014, EACH IN SUCH FORM AS MAY BE APPROVED BY THE DISTRICT TREASURER, BE AND HEREBY ARE RATIFIED, CONFIRMED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED. BARBARA LAWRENCE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE THAT THE DISTRICT TREASURER AND THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE BE, ARE HEREBY ARE, AUTHORIZED TO EXECUTE AND DELIVER A SIGNIFICANT EVENTS DISCLOSURE UNDERTAKING IN COMPLIANCE WITH SEC RULE 15C-12 IN SUCH FORM AS MAY BE APPROVED BY BOND COUNSEL TO THE DISTRICT, WHICH

UNDERTAKING SHALL BE INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE IN THE NOTES FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE HOLDERS OF THE NOTES FROM TIME TO TIME. BILL DERY SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO RATIFY AND CONFIRM THE ADOPTION OF POST-ISSUANCE FEDERAL TAX COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES ADOPTED BY THE DISTRICT, AND AUTHORIZE AND DIRECT THE DISTRICT TREASURER TO REVIEW AND UPDATE SAID PROCEDURES AS THE DISTRICT TREASURER AND BOND COUNSEL DEEM SUFFICIENT IN ORDER TO MONITOR AND MAINTAIN THE TAX-EXEMPT STATUS OF THE NOTES AND ANY OTHER TAX-EXEMPT OBLIGATIONS ISSUED TO OR TO BE ISSUED BY THE DISTRICT. LARRY SWARTZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE THAT EACH MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE, THE DISTRICT SECRETARY AND THE DISTRICT TREASURER BE, AND HEREBY ARE, AUTHORIZED TO TAKE ANY AND ALL SUCH ACTIONS, AND EXECUTE AND DELIVER SUCH CERTIFICATES, RECEIPTS OR OTHER DOCUMENTS AS MAY BE DETERMINED BY THEM, OR ANY OF THEM, TO BE NECESSARY OR CONVENIENT TO CARRY INTO EFFECT THE PROVISIONS OF THE FOREGOING VOTES. LARRY SWARTZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

PARCC or MCAS Vote

Dr. Harvey recommended that HWRSD students take the MCAS in 2014-15, rather than the PARCC text, and asked the Committee to vote accordingly. (His written recommendation is appended to these minutes.) S. MacDonald thanked the community for providing feedback about this issue.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO CONTINUE WITH THE MCAS TESTING FOR THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR. LARRY SWARTZ SECONDED THE MOTION.

Discussion touched on the time it would take to prepare to administer the new PARCC test throughout the district, and that it might limit the time administrators could spend on other initiatives already underway; data that the MCAS generates; providing students with experience taking tests online, before adopting a computer-administered

standardized test; planned professional development in this regard for 2014-15; the nature of questions on the two tests; technical requirements of online testing; the relationship between each of the tests, common core standards, and project-based instruction; advocacy groups and their possible agendas in promoting or opposing a particular standardized test; and the value of data that the MCAS generates.

THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

Recreation Department presentation
on Turf field at HWRHS

Sean Timmons, director of the Hamilton-Wenham Joint Recreation Department, recapped the process to date of a committee's assessment of whether the Towns should create a turf athletic field on the high school campus. He said the committee proposes to hire a consultant to repeat a field usage study to update data about field use and to provide some design options. In discussion he indicated this committee proposes that HWRSD and the Towns would split the \$8,000 cost of this consulting work. Discussion touched on the consulting timeline; efforts to date to assess the likely cost of constructing such a field; whether the speaker should have notified the Committee in advance that he would request for funds, should have made that request more formally, and should have provided supporting information; that the Committee's 2014-15 budget includes no funds for such an expense; why the turf field committee selected the proposed consultant, after the Rec Department passed over that firm for a contract related to the Patton Park pool; other pending projects and their anticipated cost; whether youth athletic leagues might contribute toward consulting costs; private fundraising toward construction costs; and the option of not contributing funds for the study, but allowing the committee and/or consultants to enter school property for purposes of the study. D. Evans (the Committee's liaison to the turf field study committee) described increases in use of existing fields, due in part to introduction of flag football and restoration of some freshman sports. S. Timmons said the Rec Department would contribute \$4,000 toward consulting costs, from a revolving fund. Committee members asked for information about whether the two Towns' selectmen and finance committees support the project, and asked to see the proposal submitted by the potential consultant.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROPRIATE \$4,000 FOR PURPOSES OF SHARING THE COST OF THE FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF THE TURF FIELD PROJECT. BILL DERY SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION FAILED 2-4-1-2. (J. Bertrand, B. Dery, S. MacDonald and L. Swartz voted no. B. Lawrence abstained.)

S. MacDonald suggested that as of August 2014, the Committee enact a procedural rule that during public meetings when presentations and Committee discussions are underway, members of the audience not

speak.

Field Trip to Austria, 2015

Discussion of the proposed ski trip to Austria for high school juniors and seniors touched on topics including that if the Committee did not act on this proposal at this meeting, and the trip were later approved, families would have to pay more, because a deadline for discounted registration would have passed by the time of the Committee's next meeting. Other issues touched on during discussion included the small number of expert skiers who would be eligible to participate; whether a \$5,000 component of the trip budget was to come from dedicated funds paid by those who would participate, or from a general fund paid into by the families of many more students; Dr. Harvey said the latter would be unacceptable. Discussion touched also on why the \$5,000 would be used on top of fees paid by students' families, which J. Sands said apparently was to keep the student fee from exceeding \$2,500; a reference in a letter from the sponsor to Dr. Harvey to apparent student misbehavior on a recent ski trip, whether Committee members should be privy to the details, and whether this incident is relevant to a decision about the proposed 2015 trip; whether the Committee should be privy to actions taken to prevent a similar incident from happening again; whether to ask the trip sponsor to attend a future Committee meeting to respond to questions; and whether in the future, the district should require earlier filing of field trip requests so the Committee could resolve issues over multiple meetings if necessary, without running up against registration or discount deadlines. B. Dery suggested the Committee appoint Dr. Harvey as its proxy to look into the source of the \$5,000 mentioned on the field trip request form, and if satisfied, approve the trip; Dr. Harvey said the district handbook indicates that when timing is an issue, the superintendent may do so. (The field trip request form, letter from the sponsor, and supporting documents are appended to these minutes.)

BILL DERY MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ALLOW SUPERINTENDENT HARVEY TO DECIDE THE UP OR DOWN VOTE FOR THE TRIP BASED ON THE OBJECTIONS POSED BY THIS COMMITTEE AT THIS MEETING THIS EVENING, AND IF HIS FINDINGS ARE SATISFACTORY, HE GO AHEAD AND APPROVE THE TRIP. DEB EVANS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-2.

D. Evans pointed out an inconsistency between information the Committee received, and what is in a letter to parents that was included as supporting material with the field trip request form, about the degree of skiing expertise required for a student to participate.

Summer Meeting Dates

The Committee scheduled an offsite "retreat" meeting (location t.b.a.) for July 31, and scheduled its next regular meeting for Aug. 21.

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 7-0-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

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

Field Trip Request forms and supporting documents, HWRHS juniors and seniors to Austria, February 13-21, 2015 (31 pages)
HWRSD 2014-15 Calendar (amended) (1 page)
Draft policies: Recyclable Materials Policy, Transportation for Students Eligible for Special Education Services (2 pages)
HWRSD \$1,640,000 General Obligation Bond Anticipation Notes spreadsheet (2 pages)
Standard and Poors summary, HWRSD General Obligation, Note, Credit Profile (5 pages)
Memo from Dr. Harvey to HWRSC dated 6/16, Decision of PARCC or MCAS for 2015 (2 pages)

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Sierks Smith