

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee

July 11, 2013

Minutes

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

Bill Wilson opened the meeting at 7:08 p.m. in the administrative conference room in the Center Building.

PRESENT:

Jeanise Bertrand, Bill Dery, Deb Evans, Barbara Lawrence, Sheila MacDonald, Melissa Even Moore, Bill Wilson (vice-chair)

ALSO PRESENT:

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

ABSENT:

Sean Condon, Roger Kuebel

CITIZENS' CONCERNS:

None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Harvey announced he would offer the new position of human resources director to a fully-vetted candidate on the day after this meeting. He said interviews with applicants for the position of Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration would begin the following week; the Committee hires for that position so at least one finalist is to meet with some or all members of the committee in a later stage of that search process. He mentioned that "early bird registration" takes place soon for the November Massachusetts Association of School Committees conference; members who have attended spoke highly of it and encouraged new Committee members to attend.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

None

CONSENT AGENDA:

Minutes of June 6, 2013
Minutes of June 20, 2013

SHEILA MACDONALD MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE ALL OF THE REMAINING ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA. THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR AMENDMENT OF THIS MOTION. MELISSA EVEN MOORE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Negotiation

D. Evans reported the district's nurses have asked that the Committee consider five issues, and extend the existing (expired) contract with a memorandum about those issues; she said the nurses are interested in joining the teachers' bargaining group beyond that time. The next meeting of this working group is scheduled for Aug. 1.

Building

B. Dery reported that three-quarters of the work at Cutler School is complete, going smoothly and within budget. Repairs to the Winthrop School roof started on the day of this meeting and rot is worse than prior evaluation had indicated, so extra expense is likely; he said the rot did not put occupants of the building at risk of injury. Painting continues there. The air handler at Buker School is to be replaced by the end of August. A meeting was to take place the day after this meeting re the proposal (already approved by the Hamilton Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals) to add 25 parking spaces at Winthrop School and widen the exit driveway so buses could park to the side; if it is approved the two Towns' departments of public works would start site preparation work immediately. A fire suppression (sprinkler) system will not be installed at Buker School this summer as planned because due to an error for which B. Dery accepted responsibility, the project budget was unrealistically low; bids came in at four times the project budget. The Committee discussed requesting funding for the additional expense from the Towns so work could proceed in 2014.

NEW BUSINESS:

Vote to appropriate funds for Feasibility Study for Buker and Winthrop MSBA Projects

Dr. Harvey asked the Committee to authorize the district to borrow up to \$100,000 to pay for feasibility studies and design work on projects to replace the boiler at Buker School, and the boiler and the glass curtains at Winthrop School, per the process of evaluation by the Massachusetts School Building Association under its Accelerated Repair Program. Following these studies and design work the MSBA would decide whether to reimburse the district for approximately 40 percent of project costs. Dr. Harvey said the studies and work would likely cost less than \$100,000, and the district would borrow only the sum needed to pay the actual expenses. Committee members discussed the pros and cons of borrowing for this purpose versus spending funds already in district accounts. Dr. Harvey noted the Towns have 60 days to vote this down if they so wish, so no funds could be borrowed until that time elapses; however, he reported both town administrators said they have no intention of challenging it. He noted also that although the MSBA states it will reimburse about 40 percent of a district's costs, its procedures add expense, so the net reimbursement to the district might be closer to 15 percent.

DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT HEREBY APPROPRIATE THE AMOUNT OF ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$100,000) FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING COSTS OF (i) CONDUCTING A FEASIBILITY STUDY AND SCHEMATIC DESIGNS FOR A BOILER REPLACEMENT AT THE BESSIE BUKER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 1 SCHOOL ST., WENHAM, MA, AT A TOTAL ESTIMATED COST OF FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000), AND (ii) FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING COSTS OF CONDUCTING A FEASIBILITY STUDY AND

DEVELOPING SCHEMATIC DESIGNS FOR A BOILER REPLACEMENT AND WINDOW REPLACEMENT AT THE WINTHROP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 325 BAY RD., SOUTH HAMILTON, MA, AT A TOTAL ESTIMATED COST OF FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000), INCLUDING THE PAYMENT OF ALL COSTS INCIDENTAL AND RELATED THERETO (COLLECTIVELY, "THE STUDIES") SAID AMOUNT TO BE EXPENDED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE FACILITIES SUB-COMMITTEE. TO MEET THIS APPROPRIATION THE DISTRICT IS AUTHORIZED TO BORROW SAID AMOUNT UNDER AND PURSUANT TO M.G.L. CHAPTER 71, SECTION 16(d), AND THE DISTRICT AGREEMENT, AS AMENDED, OR PURSUANT TO ANY OTHER ENABLING AUTHORITY. THE DISTRICT ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY'S ("MSBA'S") GRANT PROGRAM IS A NON-ENTITLEMENT, DISCRETIONARY PROGRAM BASED ON NEED, AS DETERMINED BY THE MSBA, AND ANY COSTS THE DISTRICT INCURS IN EXCESS OF ANY GRANT APPROVED BY AND RECEIVED FROM THE MSBA SHALL BE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DISTRICT; PROVIDED FURTHER, THAT THE AMOUNT OF BORROWING AUTHORIZED PURSUANT TO THIS VOTE SHALL BE REDUCED BY ANY GRANT AMOUNT SET FORTH IN THE FEASIBILITY STUDY AGREEMENT THAT MAY BE EXECUTED BETWEEN THE DISTRICT AND THE MSBA RELATING TO THE STUDIES.

FURTHER VOTED, THAT WITHIN SEVEN (7) DAYS FROM THE DATE ON WHICH THIS VOTE IS ADOPTED THE SECRETARY BE AND HEREBY IS INSTRUCTED TO NOTIFY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN OF EACH OF THE MEMBER TOWNS OF THIS DISTRICT AS TO THE AMOUNT AND GENERAL PURPOSES OF THE DEBT HEREIN AUTHORIZED, AS REQUIRED BY THE DISTRICT AGREEMENT AND BY CHAPTER 71, SECTION 16(d), OF THE GENERAL LAWS.

BILL DERY SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-0.

(An MSBA document (Bulletin 11-03) outlining requirements for motions like the one above, which was used in preparation of the motion above, is appended.)

Superintendent's Evaluation

B. Wilson related how members' individual evaluations of the superintendent were completed, collected, and aggregated. He said he delivered the individual and aggregated evaluation to Dr. Harvey on the

day of this meeting and spoke briefly about it with him at that time. B. Wilson summarized aloud at this meeting the aggregate ratings of the superintendent per the required state evaluation forms, and read aloud the summary statements on those completed forms (which are appended to these minutes). The Committee agreed Dr. Harvey met his 2012–2013 goals in all areas, and gave him a proficient rating (third in a four-category rating system) in all but one category, and in that category, fiscal systems, they unanimously rated his performance as exemplary (the fourth/top category). Members spoke appreciatively of Dr. Harvey and applauded him. He said he would base his 2013–14 goals on the comments on the evaluation, which highlight the Committee's desire that once a new business administrator joins the staff, the superintendent turn his focus to instructional leadership.

School Committee Manual and Stipends
For School Committee Members

B. Dery suggested the Committee collaboratively construct a manual for new Committee members; the Committee agreed to begin by submitting ideas for topics it should address. J. Bertrand is to coordinate this process.

B. Dery also proposed instituting a stipend for Committee members; he provided contextual information about other districts' practices and that of the member Towns' municipal governments, and outlined the required approval process involving both member Towns and the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Members offered positive and negative opinions. B. Lawrence suggested that instead, the Committee create a fund for reimbursement of the personal expenses Committee members incur (e.g. for caregivers for young children, or infirm older family members) to attend the many Committee and subcommittee meetings that membership entails. B. Dery suggested the Committee return to these issues at a future meeting, and vote.

Revised Strategic Blueprint Document

Dr. Harvey said he presented his document stating the district's mission, vision and core beliefs; the corresponding five-year "strategic blueprint" for the district; and the district improvement plan for 2013–14 to the faculty, school advisory councils, parent groups, and the public, and they all indicated they are satisfied with them.

D. Evans objected to the absence of any reference to excellence, and she advocated inclusion of "excellence" in the mission statement. The Committee discussed what benchmarks and metrics could measure excellence. The Committee agreed to amend the district motto to "Knowledge, Responsibility, Respect, Excellence" and endorsed Dr. Bowler's suggestion that it be abbreviated with the catchphrase "K2RE."

August Meeting Date

The Committee scheduled a meeting for Thursday, Aug. 22.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

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

Bulletin 11-03: MSBA Feasibility Study Vote Bulletin for Regional School Districts and their Member Communities (5 pages)
End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report: Superintendent (*and subsequent pages of DESE evaluation forms, completed by B. Wilson to aggregate individual members' evaluation forms*) (7 pages)
HWRSD Mission, Vision and Core Beliefs (3 pages)
HWRSD Theory of Action Strategic Blueprint, 2013–2018 (2 pages)
HWRSD District Improvement Plan 2013–2014 (10 pages)

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Sierks Smith, School Committee recording secretary