

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee

Meeting of Oct. 20, 2011

Minutes

**SCHOOL CHOICE
PUBLIC HEARING:**

Chair Alexa McCloughan called the public hearing on school choice to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Multi-purpose Room of Buker School. Bob Gray of Hamilton asked whether the choice program creates additional staff needs. P. Gray answered that it does not; he, A. McCloughan, and R. Kuebel commented on the program's benefits to the district. Barbara Lawrence of Hamilton commented on its benefits regarding cultural diversity and class size. L. Swartz suggested evaluation of the district's capacity to accept choice students in the lower grades; the Committee briefly discussed the issue. A. McCloughan closed the public hearing on school choice at 6:50 p.m.

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

A. McCloughan called the regular meeting to order at 7 p.m. in the Multi-purpose Room of Buker School. The Committee and audience rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT:

Sean Condon, Bill Dery, Kym Donnellan, Roger Kuebel, Alexa McCloughan, Ann Minois, Dacia Rubel, and Lawrence Swartz

ALSO PRESENT:

Peter Gray, Superintendent; Dr. Celeste Bowler, Assistant Superintendent for Learning

ABSENT:

John O'Keefe

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2011. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION.

Discussion that followed touched on circulating minutes more promptly, decreasing the degree of detail, and whether a statement written out in advance and read aloud during a meeting should appear verbatim in minutes.

BILL DERY MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO AMEND THE MOTION TO INCLUDE REFERENCE TO AND ATTACHMENT OF WRITTEN COMMENTS HE READ ALOUD AT THAT MEETING. KYM DONNELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION TO AMEND PASSED 6-1-1. (Larry Swartz abstained; Dacia Rubel voted no.) THE AMENDED MOTION PASSED 5-1-2. (Roger Kuebel and Larry Swartz abstained; Dacia Rubel voted no.)

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE JOINT MEETING WITH THE WENHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN HELD ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2011. KYM DONNELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION. Dacia Rubel requested that incorrect references on page 2 to Jason Goodrich be corrected to read "Tyson Goodrich." **THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES WITH THOSE CORRECTIONS PASSED 6-0-2.** (Larry Swartz and Roger Kuebel abstained.)

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2011. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. Larry Swartz said he was present at the Sept. 22 meeting as a visitor, because he had not yet been sworn in as a Committee member, and he did not vote on any motions. He requested correction of all the vote reports, which erroneously counted him as a voter. **THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES WITH THOSE CORRECTIONS PASSED 6-0-2.** (Roger Kuebel and Larry Swartz abstained.)

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 6, 2011. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-0-2. (Bill Dery and Roger Kuebel abstained.)

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 12, 2011. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-0-2. (Bill Dery and Roger Kuebel abstained.)

OLD BUSINESS:

Operational Audit Tri-Board Meeting

P. Gray announced that a joint meeting of the Committee and the Wenham and Hamilton boards of selectmen is scheduled for Thurs. Oct. 27; the time and location were not yet settled. District administrators are to update the three boards on the district response to the operational audit.

Superintendent Search Update

A. McCloughan thanked community members for their many e-mails providing input about how to proceed with the hiring of a permanent superintendent. She suggested the Committee appoint a broad-based search committee with the same distribution of representation as the committee that was formed during the last search for a superintendent. She proposed that it first assess the internal candidate, P. Gray, and recommend to the School Committee whether to offer the permanent position to him. Only if the Committee decided not to hire P. Gray would

the search committee solicit other applications and proceed with other aspects of the search process.

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE A TWELVE MEMBER SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE AND EMPLOY THE SERVICES OF A QUALIFIED THIRD PARTY AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000 TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE AND CONSULTATION TO THE SEARCH COMMITTEE. KYM DONNELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION.

The Committee discussed the pros and cons, and cost, of hiring a consulting firm versus using the services of the Massachusetts School Board Association (MASC) to assess P. Gray's candidacy, and whether a search committee is needed for that task. Discussion also touched on public involvement in the search process, the services MASC could provide, how the town of Bedford is handling a similar situation, and whether a committee or a professional would be better at "processing" public input and making a recommendation to the School Committee.

ANN MINOIS PROPOSED AN AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION, TO INCREASE THE APPROVED MAXIMUM COST TO \$10,500. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION TO AMEND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0). THE AMENDED MOTION PASSED 6-2-0. (Roger Kuebel and Larry Swartz voted no.)

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ESTABLISH A SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERSHIP: THREE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS (CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, MEMBER), ONE SCHOOL DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBER, TWO SCHOOL DISTRICT FACULTY MEMBERS, ONE MEMBER FROM THE LEADERSHIP OF THE TOWN OF HAMILTON, ONE MEMBER FROM THE LEADERSHIP OF THE TOWN OF WENHAM, AND FOUR MEMBERS FROM THE COMMUNITY. KYM DONNELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION.

The Committee discussed criteria for selecting search committee members; whether the entire Committee or a subcommittee should screen applications and select its members; and whether assessment of a single internal candidate constitutes preliminary discussion or consideration of a finalist, and hence, whether the search committee could legally discuss the internal candidate in executive session.

DACIA RUBEL PROPOSED AN AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION, TO VOTE THAT A SEARCH COMMITTEE BE ESTABLISHED TWO WEEKS FROM THE DATE OF THIS

MEETING BY THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE AT ITS NOV. 3, 2011 MEETING.

THE AMENDED MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

The Committee set an Oct. 31 deadline for submission of letters of interest in appointment to the search committee, which should be accompanied by résumés. The Committee agreed the chair and vice chair would review the letters and résumés, and submit a slate of search committee nominees for consideration on Nov. 3 by the full School Committee.

B. Dery withdrew his previously announced intention of moving at this meeting to immediately offer the permanent position to P. Gray.

NEW BUSINESS:

Field Trip Approval: Foreign Language Department Trip to Cuba

P. Gray said the leadership team is satisfied that the proposed April 2012 trip to Cuba for high school Spanish students, about which the Committee received written information prior to this meeting, has adequate safeguards; he recommended Committee approval. Spanish Curriculum Leader Kevan Sano spoke highly of the proposed tour company and the experience students would have. Several Committee members expressed concern about whether the firm has government authorization to lead tours in Cuba, and adequate experience in that country. The Committee asked K. Sano to obtain more information and arrange for a tour company representative to attend the Committee's Oct. 27 meeting.

Field Trip Approval: HS Chorus to New York, April 2012

P. Gray recommended approval of this trip to a choral festival. Committee members briefly discussed the district's policy that security measures should be detailed in field trip proposals.

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE HS CHORUS TRIP TO NEW YORK CITY APRIL 27-30, 2012. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

School Choice 2012-2013

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM FOR GRADES K-5 AND GRADES 6-7-8 FOR THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM FOR GRADES 9-12 FOR THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

Approval of Mass Cultural Arts
Grant Funds

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ACCEPT THE \$200 GRANT FUNDS FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS CULTURALARTS COUNCIL TO DEFRAY TRANSPORTATION COST TO THE PEABODY-ESSEX MUSEUM ON OCTOBER 25, 2011. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

Athletic Scholarship Fund Deficit

P. Gray reported that applications for scholarships for fall sports user fees exceeded the balance in the athletic scholarship fund, and the deficit is expected to increase as the school year progresses. The Committee discussed the current funding strategy of channeling one third of athletic gate receipts to this fund and agreed to revisit the policy. P. Gray asked the Committee to approve transfer of \$10,000 from a discretionary fund to supplement the scholarship fund.

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO AUTHORIZE TRANSFER OF \$10,000 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

Appointment of District Treasurer

P. Gray said the most qualified applicant for the part-time position of district treasurer is former Committee member Don Gallant. He briefed the Committee on the job's responsibilities and pay rate, and noted that per state law this employee reports to the School Committee. He said the district complied with legal requirements related to the possible hiring of a former Committee member.

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPOINT DON GALLANT TO THE POSITION OF DISTRICT TREASURER. DACIA RUBEL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. McCloughan noted that Committee members received minutes of recent working group meetings, which are available to the public.

LEADERSHIP REPORT:

Administrators made no further reports.

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT &
ADOPTION:**

D. Rubel said the Policy Working Group continues to review district policies and intends to propose revision of a number of them. No such proposals were made at this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

ROGER KUEBEL MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADJOURN. KYM DONNELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

**DOCUMENTS & EXHIBITS USED
AT THIS MEETING**

Field Trip Proposal, Foreign Language Department Trip to Cuba
Field Trip Proposal, HS Chorus Trip to New York, April 2012
Memo from John Hughes re \$200 Mass. Cultural Council grant
Interest Letter & resume from Don Gallant PT District Treasurer position
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Respectfully submitted,

Ann Smith, School Committee recording secretary