

**Westport School Committee
Work Session
DATE: Wednesday July 17, 2024
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: 2nd Floor Conference Room, Westport Middle-High School**

Google Meet / Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/wqn-immj-pdb>

MINUTES

Members Present: Gloria Cabral, Evan Gendreau, Melissa Pacheco (*attended by Google Meet Link left at 7:44 pm.*), Christopher Thrasher

Members Absent: Jason Pacheco

Others Present: Thomas Aubin Westport Community Schools Superintendent, Lori Melo Administrative Secretary (*left at 7:15 pm.*)

I. Call to Order - Chair Evan Gendreau opened the Westport School Committee Work Session at 7:00 pm. with a quorum of the members present.

II. Discussion of District Move - Following the last meeting to approve a letter to the Selectboard, Chair Gendreau informed the members that Mr. Hartnett sent a communication asking if the School Department could withhold \$50,000 in the budget to cover increased insurance costs. Presently the costs have not been determined and could go up to \$200,000.

Chair Gendreau mentioned the town has limited funds, however if town is persistent in charging \$50,000. there should be a Plan B. Chair Gendreau shared short of doing a full move, have student facing staff move into the new middle high school building and keep Business Office, Human Resources and Out of School Time Program at the old high school building.

Chair Gendreau mentioned the goal of the move was to save \$90,000 and add support staff to the current Westport Middle High School.

Chair Gendreau explained there has been a change and the town is now funding a School Resource Officer (SRO) at \$65,000. Previously, 1 SRO was funded in the school budget and 1 SRO was funded from a grant. There is School Choice money totaling \$25,000.

Chair Gendreau asked for the committee members thoughts.

Mr. Thrasher noted there is currently no written agreement between the school and the town concerning the former high school building. According to a town article the town is responsible for maintaining the building.

Ms. Melo left here at 7:15 pm.

Ms. Pacheco would like to compromise with the town and show collaboration with no damage to students. Possibly do a move out next year.

Mr. Thrasher's is hoping for a reasonable proposition between parties and does not want to see the school budget affected for the next year. Mr. Thrasher agrees with student facing staff moving.

Ms. Cabral shared she would like to work reasonably with the town. Presently the town owns the old high school building and the school subsidizes the town.

Chair Gendreau shared the committee can re-assess in April after hearing from the Long-term Building Committee.

After discussion, it was noted that getting the insurance costs is very important in order to decide on the move. If costs are lower and the town can absorb it, they can go ahead with the move.

Chair Gendreau informed members the insurance number should be known this week.

Members suggested to continue to send email communications to the town stressing the importance of receiving the insurance quote.

Ms. Pacheco left here at 7:44 pm.

Chair Gendreau mentioned they can assess another meeting on Monday morning since it depends on the insurance number and when it is received.

III. Adjourn - A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion by Thrasher, seconded by Cabral

3/0/0

The Westport School Committee Work Session ended at 7:47 pm.