Approved by the HWRSD School Committee on January 16, 2025

HAMILTON-WENHAM
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
5 SCHOOL STREET, WENHAM, MA 01984 · TEL. 978-468-5310

School Committee Meeting (agenda)
Buker Elementary School Multipurpose Room
In-Person Meeting, Zoomlink is for Public Comment Only
Meeting ID: 89599992497
Thursday, December 19, 2024
7:00 p.m. - 9:10 p.m.

Present:
Dana Allara
Julia Campbell (participated remotely departed at approximately 8:15 p.m.)
Jen Carr (departed at approximately 8:30 p.m.)
David Frenkel
Trent Honda
Amy Kunberger
David Polito

Also Present:
Eric Tracy, HWRSD Superintendent
Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent

1. Call to Order
At 7:00 p.m. Dana Allara called the meeting to order.

2. Pledge of Allegiance
All those in attendance rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. Dana Allara reminded the community that the meeting is being recorded and live streamed via HWCAM.

3. Citizen's Comments Exhibit
Any citizen wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify themself by name and address. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material.

There was no citizen comment.

4. Review of School Committee Protocol Exhibit
Dana Allara read School Committee protocol number 7.

5. Review of School Committee Mission Statement Exhibit
Trent Honda read the following from the mission statement: *The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District School Committee's mission is to ensure our schools create graduates with a passion for lifelong learning together with the critical skills needed to maximize their*

potential.
The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee will lead and inspire a District that supports and guides the Superintendent to execute and achieve the approved 2024-2025 District Goals.

Dana Allara stated that Julia Campbell is participating remotely this evening and all votes will need to be roll call votes.

6. Student Representative Report; *Anderson Kraft*
Anderson Kraft updated the Committee on events and activities throughout the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District.

7. Consent Agenda

a. Warrants Exhibit

- Voucher No. 13
- Voucher No. 1020
- Voucher No. 1021
- Voucher No. 4060
- Voucher No. 4061
- Voucher No. 4062
- Voucher No. 4063
- Voucher No. 4064

b. Minutes

- December 5, 2024 Exhibit

c. Donations

- HW Edfund Grant - EQ's Tremor Table; $7,330.25 Exhibit
- Friends of Winthrop - "Learnin' The Ropes"; $800 Exhibit

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee accept the consent agenda as written in the packet.

Motion by: David Polito Seconded by: Jen Carr

ROLL CALL VOTE MOTION PASSED 7-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)

8. New Business

a. Fall Athletic Recognitions Exhibit
Athletic Director Genualdo reviewed the Hamilton-Wenham fall athletic accomplishments.

b. MSBA Initial Compliance Certification Approval (High School Roof) Exhibit
Superintendent Tracy discussed the DESE Initial Compliance document for the high school roof.
I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee authorize Superintendent Tracy and Dana Allara to apply for the MSBA initial compliance certification approval as presented in tonight's meeting agenda.

Motion by: David Polito Seconded by: Amy Kunberger

In response to questions, Superintendent Tracy stated that this is an invitation to participate in the process not a guarantee that MSBA will work with the district on this project and it does not bind the district to work with MSBA if accepted. This project, if moved forward, would be similar to the building project, there would be some design costs before an actual quote on the project cost is provided. He stated that a ballpark estimate on reimbursement rate based on similar projects is 39% of eligible costs. He stated that part of this process is learning about different options for the roof.

ROLL CALL VOTE MOTION PASSED 7-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)

c. Vote Revised 2025-26 Calendar Exhibit

Superintendent Tracy discussed the proposed revisions to the 2025-2026 calendar. He stated that he is waiting to hear back from the State on whether the district is required to have lunch for students on the parent/teacher conference early release days. In response to a request, Superintendent Tracy agreed to further highlight the early release days for elementary students on the calendar for clarity for parents. The Committee discussed concerns that all high school students and any student with food insecurity have access to lunch. Superintendent Tracy confirmed that the union has reviewed both calendars.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee vote to approve the revised 2025-2026 calendar as presented in tonight's exhibit.

Motion by: David Polito Seconded by: Amy Kunberger

ROLL CALL VOTE MOTION PASSED 7-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)

d. Vote 2026-2027 Calendar Exhibit

Superintendent Tracy reviewed the proposed changes to the 2026-2027 calendar. In response to a question, Superintendent Tracy stated that the clarification on early release day will be included on this calendar as well.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee vote to approve the revised 2026-2027 calendar as presented in tonight's exhibit.

Motion by: David Polito Seconded by: Jen Carr

ROLL CALL VOTE MOTION PASSED 7-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)

e. NEC Annual Report 2023-2024 Exhibit

Superintendent Tracy discussed the NEC annual report.

f. Subcommittee Assignment

Dana Allara stated that one member, David Polito, expressed interest in serving on the Policy Subcommittee.

Dana Allara asked for nominations.

I nominate David Polito to take the third seat on the Policy Subcommittee.

Motion by: Jen Carr Seconded by: Amy Kunberger

There were no further nominations

David Polito accepted the nomination.

ROLL CALL VOTE MOTION PASSED 7-0 (Members Allara, Campbell, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)

Amy Kunberger stated that she will email the Policy Subcommittee members to schedule a meeting date.

g. Energy Assessment

David Frenkel stated that National Grid will provide funding for an architectural engineering company to provide a comprehensive building assessment for each school and produce a report identifying areas for energy payback projects. David Frenkel discussed a proposed motion.

The Committee discussed the timeline for warrant articles being submitted to Town Meeting and whether this item should go through the Capital Projects Committee. Superintendent Tracy stated that the updated state of facilities report is scheduled to be presented to the Committee at the 2nd meeting in January.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee task the Superintendent with initiating in early January 2025, with National Grid funding, a comprehensive building assessment of all 5 schools with a view to creating capital projects in time for consideration of April 2025. It is understood that these assessments are all fully funded by National Grid Mass Save Funds. These studies should provide the Committee and Superintendent with an evidence based roadmap on ways to improve our utility costs which have been given urgency by the 40% rise in electricity rates that Vinne Leone raised at the previous school committee meeting. The rate raise is locked in for the next 3 years. No replacement or update decisions on HVAC equipment should be made without these reports and recommendations. All such update and replacement decisions should require a vote by the full School Committee. These are significant investments.

Trent Honda made a friendly amendment to change April 2025 to June 2025. The friendly amendment was accepted.

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee task the Superintendent with initiating in early January 2025, with National Grid funding, a comprehensive building assessment of all 5 schools with a view to creating capital projects in time for consideration of June 2025. It is understood that these assessments are all fully funded by National Grid Mass Save Funds. These studies should provide the Committee and Superintendent with an evidence based roadmap on ways to improve our utility costs which have been given urgency by the 40% rise in electricity rates that Vinne Leone raised at the previous school committee meeting. The rate raise is locked in for the next 3

years. No replacement or update decisions on HVAC equipment should be made without these reports and recommendations. All such update and replacement decisions should require a vote by the full School Committee. These are significant investments.

Motion by: David Polito Seconded by: Amy Kunberger

In response to questions, David Frenkel stated that there is no cost to the district and the study spans from capital improvement project recommendations to insulation suggestions. He was unsure of what sort of time commitment would be necessary from staff and whether this would take place during the school day. The Committee discussed having the Superintendent direct the Facilities Manager provide input on the feasibility and timeline of conducting a building assessment.

MOTION FAILED 0-5-1 (Members Allara, Carr, Honda, Kunberger and Polito voted no, Member Frenkel abstained)

I move that the Hamilton-Wenham School Committee direct the Superintendent to task the Facilities Manager to assess the feasibility of undertaking a National Grid Comprehensive Building Assessment for the school district and to report on the logistic and financial considerations of completing the assessment to the School Committee.

Motion by: Trent Honda Seconded by: Jen Carr

In response to a question, Superintendent Tracy stated that he believes the Director of Facilities will be able to provide the information requested in the motion.

MOTION PASSED 6-0 (Members Allara, Carr, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)

9. Finance & Operations (continued)

b. FY26 Budget Update Exhibit, Exhibit

Assistant Superintendent Leone reviewed the changes and stated that the budget presented on November 21 would most likely result in an operational override in at least community at Town Meeting. Because we are already asking for a debt exclusion for the new elementary school project, the Capital/Finance Subcommittee recommended reducing expenses using one-time E&D funds. He stated that he wanted to be clear that what we are doing is using one time revenue to supplement the operating budget. He stated that the tentative budget is scheduled to be voted on at the January 2 meeting.

10. Committee Report

a. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee - no additional update
b. Policy Subcommittee - meeting to be scheduled
c. Negotiations Subcommittee - no update
d. Secretary Report - no update

11. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Tracy stated that the Central Office building will be closed during break for asbestos abatement. Staff will be working in different locations and the best way to communicate with staff is via email. He provided an update on the building project costs. The new numbers are $142 million with a reimbursement estimate of $48 million. The

reimbursement number can still increase with incentive points, more information on this should be available in February.

12. Chair's Report

Amy Kunberger stated that she is meeting tomorrow with Chris Ford, the volunteer for the Visual Communication Project. Dana Allara reminded members the next meeting is January 2 and is a zoom meeting. She informed the Committee that the first meeting to discuss the Regional Agreement has been scheduled for January 8.

13. Topics for Future Meetings

There were no topics for future meetings.

14. Adjourn

I move to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.

Motion by: David Frenkel Seconded by: Amy Kunberger MOTION PASSED 5-0

(Members Allara, Frenkel, Honda, Kunberger and Polito)