

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

October 1, 2018

I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:02 PM at Case House by Mr. John Henry, Chair. In attendance were Mrs. Danielle Black, Mr. Alex Cobb and Dr. Ed Heller of the School Committee; Mrs. Cheryl Antoine, METCO Representative to the School Committee; Jeffrey Beaudoin, Student Representative to the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning; and Ms. Sheri Matthews, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. Not Present: Dr. Sanjay Saini.

Also present was Ms. Onika Jenkins, Alternating METCO Representative to the School Committee

I.B. Chairman's Report – Mr. Henry welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced members of the School Committee and Administration, and reviewed the evening's agenda. He introduced Mr. Leon Gaumont, new Weston Town Manager.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly reported on improvements in bus arrival times but indicated additional minor adjustments may still need to be implemented. She said routes will continue to be monitored. Dr. Connolly informed the Committee that Weston is still has a shortage of bus drivers and therefore unable to provide transportation to Meadowbrook School. She indicated that efforts to hire drivers or find other solutions have been unsuccessful, to date and Meadowbrook has been made aware. Dr. Connolly informed the Committee that the district will be taking advantage of an offer by Brian Timlege, from Mass Energy Savers, an Eversource Lighting Auditor, to take advantage of a 100% funded program to change our fluorescent bulbs to LEDs, replacing all fluorescent bulbs in the district at no cost. She said this will include a detailed lighting audit, cost of and labor to install the LEDs, and disposal of all old bulbs. She said there would be a significant monetary savings by using LEDs, which come with a 7 year warranty, emit no UV rays, and are not impacted by temperature. Mr. Cobb asked if there could be an impact on solar aggregate and suggested that the contract be reviewed to avoid problems.

Dr. Connolly reported that the WEEFC supported J-term Organic garden at the Middle school has been very bountiful, supplying all the tomatoes and basil used by the Middle School to date. In addition, the Middle School kitchen has also used zucchini and cucumbers. She noted that Principal John Gibbons used the one pound of potatoes the garden yielded to make a bacon and egg casserole for the back to school breakfast for teachers.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – Mr. Henry reported on the recent WestonPAC presentation on Executive Functioning. He said the program was great and noted that WestonPAC programs are informative for all parents, not just those with students on IEPs.

I.E. Open Forum – Allison Barlow recommended the administration be sure the illumination of the LEDs is the same as the current bulbs. Dr. Connolly indicated there would be testing done.

II.A. Weston Education Enrichment Fund Committee

Dr. Carter presented WEEFC grant proposals for Committee approval and reviewed all presented. He noted the proposals include a grant for the Assistant Superintendent (Dr. Carter) to provide professional development opportunities for teachers. He indicated he would provide a monthly update to WEEFC on how the funds are used. Dr. Carter noted that these funds are used to fund core initiatives such as SEL, Challenge Success, Responsive Classroom, and Data Wise training.

MOTION: Upon motion by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Ms. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve WEEFC grant proposals as presented in memo of September 25, 2018, totaling \$44,870.

II.B. Initial Discussion of 2018-2019 School Calendar

The Committee reviewed the first draft of the 2018-19 school calendar. Mr. Henry noted the calendar follows the same format as the current year calendar for opening days, professional development days, and no school on days of low attendance. Mr. Henry indicated the proposed calendar would be shared with the public and faculty for feedback and was scheduled for approval in November. No action taken.

II.C. Start Time/Transportation Update

Dr. Connolly noted that traffic has had an impact of a couple of METCO bus runs a few times and they are continuing to monitor. Mr. Henry reported positive feedback on the later start times so far with the exception of some transportation issues. He said they will continue to be addressed and will conduct surveys and outreach. Mr. Henry indicated that the morning child care has been poorly attended, with only a few students and the program will be reviewed over the next few months to determine its continuance. Mr. Cobb suggested bus routes might have fewer stops, particularly where students could safely walk a bit further. He also recommended a way be found so that buses have priority over private cars at Middle School dismissal. Dr. Connolly indicated they are revisiting staff duty and flexibility for student supervision. She noted that students would not be made to wait outside during cold or inclement weather. Jeff Beaudoin spoke in support of retaining the Thursday W Block. No action taken.

II.D. Superintendent's Goals 2018-2019

Mr. Henry indicated he had received no comments from Committee members regarding the Superintendent's goals as presented at the last meeting.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent's Goals for 2018-2019.

II.E. Homework Guidelines

Dr. Connolly shared new Homework Guidelines to be implemented this year, indicating they had been developed during the summer after a year-long review. Mr. Henry reminded the Committee that the Homework Policy was approved in June and noted that the guidelines do not require Committee approval. Dr. Connolly highlighted some of the guidelines, noting that there would be three no-homework weekends for the Middle and High Schools with the four major vacations as protected times with no assignments or assessments due until the second meeting of a class after a vacation. She reviewed the homework guidelines by grade and indicated that reading is the most important homework at the lower levels, with grades 4 and 5 having 30 minutes of reading and 30 minutes other homework four nights a week. Dr. Connolly said the guidelines have been presented to faculty and would be posted on website this week. She said teachers will be requesting feedback from families. She noted the guidelines would be reviewed annually and indicated the importance of parents and students informing the schools how they are working. The Committee discussed. Mrs. Black suggested a shared calendar be used by teachers for major assignments/projects/presentations. Jeff agreed that better coordination for big projects would be helpful. Mr. Cobb recommended there be a way to coordinate major assignments with concerts and athletic events as well and suggested coordination by principals and department heads. Dr. Connolly indicated communication would be continued as necessary. No action taken.

II.F. Discussion and Approval of Case Campus Road Signage

Dr. Heller presented proposed plans for Case Campus Road Signage, noting that the plans would be shared with other stakeholders, including the Director of Recreation, Council on Aging and the Library. He noted that all signs would follow the same format. Mrs. Black suggested the proposed signage be shared with relevant Town Boards and Committees as well as those employed by the Town. No action taken.

II.G. Policy Review/Discussion

Mr. Henry presented Policy FFA Memorial and Plaques and its regulations FFA-R for a second reading. The Committee discussed.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve revised Policy FFA and its regulations.

Mr. Henry presented revised Policy IIB Class Size for a first review, noting that the revised policy would maintain the class size ranges but eliminate the target number. Mr. Cobb noted he would like to have someone review and present current research on class size to determine if the class size recommendations have changed. No action taken.

II.H. Facility Projects Update

Case House – Mrs. Black had no updates on the Case House project since the last meeting but indicated the presentation had been made to the Finance Committee.

Proctor Field – Mr. Cobb reported they are in the final stages of the Proctor Field Project, with work remaining on the parking lot and some other small items.

III.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve minutes of September 17, 2018.

III.B. Business Actions

Certificate of Warrant

Ms. Matthews presented a Certificate of the Secretary, approval of warrants for payment.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$959,248.91 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

IV. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, at 8:20 PM, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.