

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

August 29, 2016

I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:01PM at Case House by Mrs. Danielle Black, Chair. In attendance were Mr. Alex Cobb and Mr. John Henry of the School Committee; Mrs. Elizabeth Nagarajah, METCO Representative to the School Committee; Dr. Robert Tremblay, Superintendent; Mrs. Pamela Bator, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; and Mrs. Cynthia Mahr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. Not present: Dr. Ed Heller, Dr. Sanjay Saini.

Also in attendance was Mrs. Kathy Baker, Director of World Languages.

I.B. Chairman's Report – Mrs. Black welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the academic year and introduced members of the School Committee and Administration. She noted that neither Dr. Heller nor Dr. Saini were able to attend this evening's meeting. Mrs. Black noted that much professional development occurred during the summer in preparation for the new year and reviewed the evening's agenda.

I.C. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Tremblay said it has been great to get to know the community the past few months. He noted that Opening Day for staff took place earlier in the day, district leadership met in a two day workshop last week, and that school would open for students on Wednesday. He indicated he looked forward to the excitement of a new school year and thanked all for a warm welcome to the community.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – Mrs. Black reported that WestonPAC would hold its first meeting on September 9, the PTO would meet on September 14, and there would be a first SAC breakfast on September 15.

I.E. Open Forum – No comments.

MAJOR BUSINESS

II.A. Enrollment and Staffing Updates

Mrs. Mahr presented Table A of the Enrollment Report and updated the Committee on enrollment and staffing. She reported a total enrollment of 2,122 students, 46 students over projection. At kindergarten, she indicated there are 126 students, with an average class size of 18 students. She summarized move-ins during the summer by grade and noted that class size of grade 4, was now anticipated to be at 24 students in all sections, with one possible section of 25 students. The Committee discussed. Dr. Tremblay reported that Field School Principal Matt Lucey would like to hire two learning assistants for Grade 4 in order to help mitigate issues of a large class size, The administration noted the difficulty of adding a section at this late date, considering the class composition, disruption, and availability of qualified teachers. Mrs. Mahr said the cost would be approximately \$65,000 for two learning assistant compared to \$88,000 for a 1.22 additional faculty FTE that an additional section would require. Dr. Tremblay indicated he would request Mr. Lucey attend the next School Committee meeting to discuss his plans for how the enrollment and class size issues are being addressed.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the hiring of two Field School learning assistants to offset the unexpected increase in enrollments at Grade 4.

II.B. Proposed High School Student Trip to Cuba

Mrs. Baker presented a proposal for a high school student trip to Cuba to take place in June 2017, during June Academy. She noted the trip would be two weeks, one week to travel and one at the high school. She also noted that a trip in June would allow athletes who are

otherwise unable to travel during the school year the opportunity to participate. Mrs. Baker presented two proposed tour company options, noting she was unsure at this time which tour company she would select. She requested the Committee approve the trip so it could be advertised and indicated she would return to a future meeting with an updated proposal. The Committee discussed. They raised questions about safety and possible Zika virus concerns. Mrs. Bator noted that she would present an update on student travel at the September 12 meeting that would depict all travel opportunities during the school year.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve trip to Cuba during June Academy 2017 as proposed, with further discussion to take place on itinerary, tour company and costs.

II.C. Appointment to EDCO Board

Mrs. Black noted that as Weston had an Interim Superintendent last year, Dr. Heller served as the EDCO Board voting member for the year where as typically the Superintendent serves as voting Board member with a School Committee member as a liaison

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the Weston School Committee voted unanimously to appoint Superintendent Robert Tremblay as voting member of the EDCO Board.

II.D. Discussion of School Start Time Committee

Mrs. Black reported that many school districts are studying school start time, noting some have revised and some have not. She indicated it is a timely discussion to have and would like to have a scope, timeline and committee composition discussed on September 12. Mr. Henry indicated he would do some preparation prior to that meeting. The Committee discussed the need to publicize the study taking place. They noted that Newton conducted a study and has relevant information on its website. An audience member (a cognitive neurologist) noted he was head of a Late Start Chapter in Weston, indicated they would be willing to assist with publicity. He encouraged the committee to implement a late start as soon as possible. Mrs. Black noted the timing issue of budget and the potential budget impact of changing start time. PTO President Alix Campbell noted that Dr. Judith Owens would be a speaker on the topic at a PTO Parent Education Event on October 27. No action taken.

II.E. Policy Review/Discussion – first reading

Mr. Henry presented proposed policy changes for Committee review, noting that the Massachusetts legislature passed a new opioid bill that requires the new language in the policies. He reviewed policies of MASC and several other districts to develop revisions and/or new Policy GBEC – Drug Free Workplace, IHAMA – Teaching about Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs; JICH – Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use by Students Prohibited (a new policy that combines the prohibition on Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs into one); JICHA – School Policies on Drug Use (a new name for the previous policy that reflects other changes); and JLCD – Administering Medicines. Mr. Henry indicated that Nurse Leader Patty Wright provided input and Mr. Finnegan, Director of Health and Physical Education, would review. Mrs. Black requested the policies be posted on the website for public review prior to the second reading and approval on September 12. No action taken.

II.F. Facility Project Updates (Case House, Proctor Field)

Mrs. Black reported that a RFP for Case House renovation project went out and proposals were being reviewed by the PBC. She noted they would rank the responses and interview some. Mr. Cobb noted that an RFT had also gone out on the Proctor Field/High School Track project and that the working group would meet this week to review the responses and select some to interview. No action taken.

II.G. Weston Education Enrichment Fund Committee Proposals

Mrs. Bator presented one proposed project grant for Committee approval, an anti-bullying initiative at Weston High School.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the WEEFC grant proposals as presented, totaling \$4,480, per memo of August 10, 2016.

III.A. Approval of Minutes –

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of June 20; July 22; and August 3, 2016.

III.B. Business Actions –

Certificate of Warrant

Mrs. Mahr presented a Certificate of the Secretary, approval of warrants for payment.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$3,511,205.69 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Boosters Gift Report

Mrs. Mahr and Dr. Tremblay reviewed the report prepared by Mr. McGrath, noting some items did not require Committee approval.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee unanimously to approve all items donated by Boosters to the Athletic Department valued at \$1,000 or greater, per the report of August 2016.

IV. Executive Session

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, at 8:15 PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session for purposes of discussion of Personnel Issues, with the intent to not return to Open Session, with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mr. Henry voting aye, and Mrs. Black voting aye.

No action taken during Executive Session.

V. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, at 9:22 PM, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn from Executive Session with Mr. Cobb voting aye; Mr. Henry voting aye; and Mrs. Black voting aye.