

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

April 24, 2017

I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:03 PM at Case House by Mrs. Danielle Black, Chair. In attendance were Mr. Alex Cobb and Dr. Ed Heller of the School Committee; Jack Mullany, Student Member of the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Mrs. Pamela Bator, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; and Mrs. Cynthia Mahr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. Not present: Mr. John Henry, Dr. Sanjay Saini. Dr. Saini joined the meeting at 7:15PM.

Also in attendance were Mr. Anthony Parker, Weston High School Principal; Mr. John Gibbons, Weston Middle School Principal; and Ms. Marla Schay, Director of Guidance, Grades 6-12.

Mrs. Black welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced members of the School Committee and Administration, and reviewed the evening's agenda. She noted that Mr. Henry, as well as Mrs. Elizabeth Nagarajah and Mrs. Cheryl Antoine, Alternating METCO Representatives to the School Committee, would be present.

I.B. Chairman's Report – Mrs. Black said the upcoming week would be busy, noting the scheduled Tuesday night Proctor Field Presentation, a meeting with the Board of Selectmen on Tuesday regarding Town Meeting Warrant, a Saturday morning League of Women Voters Meeting and Proctor Field Presentation, and the Town Budget Hearing on Monday. The Committee discussed representation at the various meetings.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly, noting that the past week was school vacation week, said not much had occurred in the schools since the last School Committee meeting. She expressed the hope that everyone had opportunity to relax and spend time with family over break. Dr. Connolly reported that the three World Language student trips to France, Italy and China held over April vacation all returned safely.

Dr. Connolly shared Math Department news, noting that Freshman Andrew Yao competed in the USA Junior Math Olympiad, a test that consists of 6 questions completed over two days during vacation week. She reported that Weston students did extremely well on the National Latin Exam and two Weston students, Anissa Zhang and Brooke Rosenfeld, received the Gold Summa Cum Laude award (the highest award). Ten Weston students received the Silver Maxima Cum Laude, 19 students received the Magna Cum Laude, and six received Cum Laude.

Dr. Connolly informed the Committee that the WHS Theater Company would present *Les Miserables* in three performances next week and indicated that recent Country and Woodland Art Days were very successful and well attended. She reported that High School Theater Teacher John Minigan continues to receive accolades for his work as a playwright, with three of his plays being performed in various venues across New England.

Dr. Connolly invited the Committee to attend the May 3 Staff Recognition Program where staff who have served the district for 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35 years will be recognized along with staff who will be retiring at the end of this school year (HS nurse Kathy Becker, MS nurse Pat Hoban, Field School teachers Kate Brewer and Natalie Davis, physical therapist Beth Harrington, and Food Services staff member Kathy von der Heyde).

Dr. Connolly reported that all administrators and teacher evaluators have gone through three days of Professional development work on teacher evaluation with Research for Better Teaching (RBT). She noted that Jon Saphier, renowned educator of educators, was one of the day's professional development provider. Leaders worked on evaluation, objectives, rigor, and making student thinking visible.

Dr. Connolly encouraged attendance at Spring Fling this Saturday on the Town Green. She reported that she has held initial walkthroughs at all five schools, has begun to meet with students prior to graduation to discuss their experiences, sent a parent and staff survey out prior to vacation, and thanked everyone for their assistance this past month.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – None presented

I.E. Open Forum – No comments.

II.A. Discussion of Weston Education Enrichment Fund Committee Proposals

Mrs. Bator presented two proposals from the PTO Science and Math Council, one for an architecture workshop for Grade 9 Geometry students and one for scientist Dan Perlman to present a slideshow on Diversity for Grades 2 and 3.

MOTION: Upon motion by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve WEEFC grant proposals as presented in memo of April 11, 2017, totaling \$3,470.

II.B. High School/Middle School Sectioning Discussion

The Committee held a preliminary discussion on student enrollment and class size at the high and middle schools. Mr. Parker shared current enrollments of high school classes with under 12 students enrolled (Tech Theater, Conceptual Chemistry, French Novice I/II, and AP French) and noted that work is in progress regarding the overall reduction of 2.60 FTEs. He noted that FTE reductions would be primarily due to declining enrollment. The Committee discussed the possibility of running courses every other year rather than having small sections every year or eliminating altogether. The Committee requested more data on French enrollments, asked when students sign up for French I, and discussed the future of the program with declining enrollment. Mr. Cobb requested course enrollments for classes of 15 or less. The Committee discussed several options for holding small classes, including combining French II/III and dropping French I. It was noted that Department Head Kathy Baker had requested a year to implement the recommendations from the external program review. Ms. Schay indicated it would be another month before she had firm enrollment and class size data, after shifting singletons and arranging schedules. Mr. Gibbons shared enrollment data for the Middle School.

It was noted that parents and students would need to know well in advance if programs or classes would be eliminated or run every other year. Mr. Parker noted that some classes are not running next year (i.e. Poetry) that he hopes to bring back in future years. Mrs. Black requested the Administrative Team write something up for the Program of Studies and Budget development process. Mr. Parker suggested a time line or flow chart be developed. Mr. Cobb mentioned the need for longitudinal planning to allow for better decision-making for students and faculty. Dr. Connolly expressed appreciation for the work Mr. Parker and high school staff has done to present the preliminary data. No action taken.

II.C. Case Campus Master Plan Presentation

Dr. Heller presented proposed plan for Package 4, roadway and parking, which reflects feedback from the community. He shared the scope of the changes, shared budget and schedule. He noted that the funding request is \$1,450,000, and requires voter approval at the general election and Town Meeting (Warrant Article 19). Dr. Heller indicated the duration of the project would be May through October 2017.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Saini, the School Committee voted unanimously to support Article 19.

II.D. Update on Start Time/Scheduling Innovation Steering Committee

Dr. Heller reported the committee would meet on Tuesday, April 25 and would meet in subcommittees, with a break out of Elementary, Secondary, and Transportation. He noted they would soon start to publish information on the website. Dr. Connolly reported she had attended a meeting with DCL Superintendents and Athletic Directors, noting that most schools have

embarked on trying to change start times. Mrs. Black suggested holding a public forum or coffee to update people. Dr. Heller said that eventually that could occur but noted that current plan is that a public announcement of the committee's work will take place prior to the end of the school year. No action taken.

II.E. Facility Projects Update (Proctor Field, Case House, Case Complex)

Proctor Field - Mrs. Black indicated that the PBC had some question regarding the concession stand, noting the architect would make changes. Mr. Cobb noted the presentation to take place the following evening. He also discussion regarding a Wildcat logo on the field. Mrs. Black noted she would defer to the working group.

Case House – Mrs. Black reported things are moving slowly regarding Case House renovations. She indicated a review of the way building operates would be conducted.

III.A. Approval of Minutes

Under discussion Proctor Field Project, Mr. Cobb requested minutes be revised to indicate \$4.5 million combined cost of total project.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Dr. Saini, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve minutes of April 10, 2017, as amended.

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 Dr. Heller the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$1,910,309.52 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

IV. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, at 9:03 PM, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.