

## MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

June 5, 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, Dr. Ed Heller, Mr. John Henry, and Dr. Sanjay Saini 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.

Also in attendance were Dr. Lee McCanne, Director of Technology and School Libraries; Ms. Jennifer Truslow, Director of Student Services; Mr. Anthony Parker, Weston High School Principal; Ms. Jen Faber, Woodland School Principal; Mr. John Gibbons, Middle School Principal; Ms. Marla Schay, Grade 6-12 Guidance Department Head; and Ms. Katharine Odell, Elementary Literacy Curriculum Specialist.

Mrs. Black welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced members of the School Committee and Administration, and reviewed the evening's agenda. Noting the agenda includes student presentation, she asked for and received assurance that all students present had parent waivers signed to allow for video of their presentation. Mrs. Black noted that neither the student or METCO representatives would be in attendance.

I.B. Chairman's Report – Mrs. Black spoke about the recent Class of 2017 graduation. She acknowledged the work of the buildings and grounds staff and expressed appreciation to all members of the schools and community for their contribution to the success of the graduation ceremony.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly spoke about the graduation ceremony, her first opportunity to participate in a Weston graduation. She said it was a wonderful ceremony and celebration, with cooperative weather and terrific student speakers. Highlighting other recent events and achievements in the district, she reported that students have been taking MCAS throughout the spring, and Freshman will take the Physics MCAS over two days this week to complete this year's assessment. She reported that Grade 8 students returned from a very successful Washington, DC trip.

Dr. Connolly informed the Committee that four Weston elementary students won awards at the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association poster contest, the first year Weston entered. Woodland third grader Grant Hanser won the main award for the K-5 elementary division; receiving honorable mentions were Sofia Graupera, Grade 3 (Woodland), Aditya Mehta, Grade 2 (Country) and Ally Giebutowski, Grade 4 (Field). Dr. Connolly reported that Woodland Grade 2 students participated in "Experiencing the World Through Henry David Thoreau," two days of STEAM challenges for the students that brought together all three Elementary Curriculum Specialists, Technology Integration Specialist, Librarian, and Grade 2 teachers to collaborate.

Dr. Connolly reported that the WHS Theater Company has been commissioned by the Anesthesia History Association to create a new play about the first uses of ether and will perform the play as the opening event of the Ninth International Symposium on the History of Anesthesia October 26 at the Westin Copley Hotel and on October 27 and 28 at Weston High.

Dr. Connolly noted that the Boys Tennis Team was still competing in the State Tournament and reported that the Varsity Baseball team had been defeated in a very close game earlier in the day, ending their post-season play. She reported that Middle School eighth grader Connor Lehman won the State Championship in the 800 Meter Final at last weekend's track meet.

Dr. Connolly updated the Committee on administrative personnel searches, noting that the finalist for the Field School Interim Principal position would be spending tomorrow in the district, with two forums for parents scheduled as well as opportunity for faculty and administration to meet the candidate and provide important feedback. She informed the Committee that the search for

Middle School Assistant Principal would be reopened as the finalist had withdrawn to remain in her current position in Boston. Dr. Connolly indicated the screening process would be conducted during the summer with different the search and interview committee members.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – None.

I.E. Open Forum – Resident Dr. John McKenzie asked the Committee to provide background information on School Improvement Plans, who requires them, etc.

II.A. Middle School Student Presentation on Start Time Research

Middle School students presented research data from “Wake Up Call,” their Project Based Learning Project on start times. Dr. Chun Lim, cognitive neurologist and a parent member of the School Start Time/Scheduling Innovation Steering Committee (SSTSISC), presented information on the science of adolescents and sleep. The students and Dr. Lim shared data on the benefits of later start time and concerns about chronic sleep deprivation. Mr. Henry noted that there would be a Superintendent Coffee with members of SSTSISC on Thursday at the public library with a presentation by Dr. Lim and public discussion. He noted that districts all around the state are exploring the issue, and the goal of SSTSISC is to do “what is best for kids.” He said they will be conducting surveys, getting information out, holding forums, and will want feedback and two-way communication. The Committee thanked Dr. Lim and the students for their presentations. No action taken.

II.B. High School Learning Commons Update

Mrs. Black noted that the Committee had reserved funds in the budget to be used toward the High School Learning Commons Project. Mr. Parker provided an update on the project, noting the plan for the next year is to make modifications in the library to provide a quiet study area and a collaborative learning lab. He presented estimated costs, which include removing built-in furniture, repairing floors, electrical work, and paint. He said if there are funds remaining, these would be used to purchase study carrels for the quiet study room. Dr. McCanne noted there may be a \$3,000 shortfall in funds for the study area, but they would not know for sure until work is completed. Mr. Parker indicated the collaborative learning lab would have flexible folding tables, stackable chairs and white boards and projected \$24,000 of unmet furniture needs not funded this year. He also noted they have already removed some stacks to make the library more of a learning commons. Mrs. Mahr discussed funding and indicated some furniture may be located elsewhere in the district, at least temporarily for the collaborative space, if there are not sufficient funds to purchase new ones.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the release of budgeted funds for infrastructure and carrels for the High School Learning Commons.

Mr. Parker provided a brief update on June Academy, noting it would begin on June 7. He said the process had been an interesting endeavor and commended Mrs. Mahr on the work she has done to make June Academy possible. He said she has gone “above and beyond” and expressed appreciation to her. He noted that other districts, including Winchester, Concord-Carlisle and Waltham have sent teams of teachers to Weston and are exploring similar programs. Mrs. Black indicated she looks forward to an update on June Academy after it is completed.

II.C. WestonPAC Update

Mrs. Christen Lacey provided an update on the activities and work of WestonPAC this year. She acknowledged members of the PAC board present and expressed gratitude to all in the district who have worked since 2014 on improvements to Special Education Programs. She discussed some of the changes in Special Education, noting the new Phonics program, Foundations, to be implemented next year, Team Chairs at all the schools, and early screening. Mrs. Lacey, though acknowledging improvements, said there is still much work to be done. She encouraged the district look at ways to reduce student stress. She thanked the community for their support, including Dr. Connolly, Ms. Truslow, and prior Superintendent Tremblay for their support of WestonPAC. She expressed best wishes to retiring staff members Beth Harrington, physical therapist, and school nurses Kathy

Becker and Pat Hoban, and to Aidan O'Hara, Matt Lucey and Karen Hillman as they transition to other districts.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to receive the WestonPAC report.

Mrs. Black thanked Mrs. Lacey for all her work done on behalf of students.

II.D. WEEFC End of Year Report

Mrs. Allison Abrams, WEEFC Chair, presented the annual report of WEEFC, reporting a 16% increase in donors as well as an increase in volunteerism and participation at events. She said that WEEFC remains committed to offering enrichment opportunities. She reviewed fundraising efforts this year, noting the successful, new elementary Kids Art event, donor matches at the Middle and High Schools, and receipts from STAR Awards. Mrs. Abrams reported that 55 grants were awarded this year but noted that they did not award Inspiration Grants this year but hope to resume next year. She thanked all the volunteers for their work this year.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to receive the report

Mrs. Black reported she and Mr. Henry would review WEEFC's rules and regulations, which have not been reviewed in recent years, and bring to the Committee for discussion if changes are warranted. Mrs. Bator expressed appreciation to WEEFC on behalf on the faculty.

Approval of WEEFC Slate 2017-18

Ms. Abrams presented the recommended slate of the WEEFC Board for 2017-2018. She noted that Todd Rassiger and Jon Lake will be leaving the board this year and Katie Dickie, Kelly Gordon, and Meredith Taylor have been nominated to the Board for 2017-18. At Mr. Cobb's request, she reviewed their credentials and qualifications. Mrs. Black indicated the School Committee had approved an additional member at the last meeting but not the slate.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to appoint Katie Dickie, Kelly Gordon, and Meredith Taylor to the WEEFC Board and approve the WEEFC slate for 2017-2018

II.E. Approval of School Improvement Plans (SIPs)

Mrs. Black indicated that school councils had presented their School Improvement Plans to the School Committee at five separate meetings. She noted that School Councils are required by law, with a composition of parents and faculty, and the High School Council must include a student. Mr. Cobb said the SIPs are very meaningful documents and excellent presentations but noted that morning times are difficult to attend. He suggested that Weston Media record the presentations and that the presentations be better publicized for increased attendance by the PTO and others. Mrs. Black said they will continue discussion as to when presentations are made. Dr. McKenzie said SIP presentations are "one of the most valuable things to attend" but noted there is too much variation among the reports. He suggested having a summary of the prior year's SIP included in the reports.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve Proposed 2017-2018 School Improvement Plans for Country School, Woodland School, Field School, Weston Middle School, and Weston High School.

II.F. Policy Review

Second Reading of Food Allergy Policy

Mr. Henry presented a revised Food Allergy Policy and requested Committee approval. He noted no changes had been made to the guidelines since last meeting. The Committee discussed. There was much discussion regarding food and snacks outside of the school day, on school buses, particularly after school athletic events, and food served in the schools after concerts. Ms. Denise Joutras suggested that there be a presentation on food allergies for students and parents at the

sports meetings. Mr. Henry said he would speak with Patty Wright, Nurse Leader. Student Andrew Black said that bus drivers should be in habit of wiping down the buses.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve revised Policy EFAB, Food Allergy Policy and its Guidelines.

#### First Review of Restraint Policy

Mr. Henry presented proposed Policy JKAA, Physical Restraint. He said revisions to the existing policy were to such an extent that it was basically a new policy and noted he used MASC model but would be sure it is in compliance with existing regulations. He said the Committee would have a second reading at the June 19 meeting and requested that any suggested changes be emailed to him. No action taken.

#### II.H. Facility Projects Update (Proctor Field, Case House)

Proctor Field – Mr. Cobb said a construction kick off meeting would take place next Wednesday. He noted that funds are not available until July 1. They are hoping to get construction fencing up in June. He indicated the expectation is that Field 1 will be completed in the summer, ready for fall. Mrs. Black reported that Dr. Connolly would meet with Athletic Director Mike McGrath to discuss contingency planning for fall sports.

Case House – Mrs. Black reported a kick off meeting was held earlier today. She said that Jim Polando and architect Neil Levitt will be meeting with the group again in July. She reported the architect is reviewing systems, programs, code, compliance accessibility and has conducted interviews with people in Case House. No further updates expected until July.

Case Campus Master Plan– Dr. Heller said some drone photos had been taken during school events to help show usage and that more would be taken in the fall. Discussion occurred regarding elementary pick up and safety concerns.

#### III.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve minutes of May 22, 2017.

#### 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. Saini, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$1,851,386.78 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

#### IV. Executive Session

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Mr. Henry, at 10:00 PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session for purposes of discussion of Non-Unit Salaries, with the intent to not return to Open Session, with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Dr. Heller voting aye; Mr. Henry voting aye, and Mrs. Black voting aye.

No action taken during Executive Session.

#### V. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Mr. Cobb, at 10:39 PM, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn from Executive Session with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Dr. Heller voting aye; Mr. Henry voting aye, Dr. Saini voting aye; and Mrs. Black voting aye.