

## MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

October 16, 2017

### I. A. Call to Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:04 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; Mrs. Elizabeth Nagarajah, METCO Representative to the School Committee; Jack Mullany, Student Representative to the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Mrs. Pamela Bator, Assistant Superintendent of District Advancement; Dr. Abbie Lareau, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning; and Mrs. Cynthia Mahr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Also in attendance were Mr. Anthony Parker, Weston High School Principal; Mr. John Gibbons, Weston Middle School Principal; Ms. Marla Schay, Grade 6-12 Guidance Department Head; Ms. Kathy Baker, K-12 World Language Director; Ms. Ashley Lopes, Budget Analyst; and Ms. Lisa Reitano and Mr. Keith Johnson of the Finance Committee.

Mrs. Black welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced members of the School Committee and Administration, and reviewed the evening's agenda. She noted the election of Jack Mullany.

I.B. Chairman's Report – Mrs. Black reminded everyone of the upcoming PAC meeting on Friday, October 23 at Case House. She reported that the superintendent review process is underway, noting that she would meet with the superintendent's direct reports as part of the review.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly highlighted recent events in the district. She reported that more than 20 Weston High School students competed in their first Science Olympiad of the year, all performing in the top twenty, under the guidance of teachers Ms. Liu and Ms. Chiodo. Dr. Connolly reported on the successful Pumpkin Festival last weekend that raised more than \$22,000 for Camp Sunshine. She noted the students were featured on NBC news on Saturday night and congratulated event chairs Glennie LeBaron and Ariel Silverman who worked diligently for many months to make this event happen. Other student committee chairs were Melissa Barbosa, Andrew Black, Alex Chiocca, Natalie Cutter, Kelcie Levin, Will McNamara, Devon Parker, Cameron Schluter, Whitney Sins, and Avery Tomaso.

Dr. Connolly informed the Committee that Girls Volleyball, Girls Soccer, and Football have qualified for post season play, Boys Soccer and Field Hockey on the cusp of clinching tournament berths, and both Cross Country teams will run in States in two weeks. She noted that this will be the second time in the last four years that all our fall teams qualify for the MIAA Tournament.

Dr. Connolly reported that artwork by members of the K-12 Art Faculty is on exhibit through October 28 at Lasell College's Wedeman Gallery. She noted she attended the exhibit and saw great work on display. Dr. Connolly highlighted the upcoming WHS Theater Company Production of *Ether Day*, an original play devised by the acting ensemble, will be performed at the Ninth International Symposium on the History of Anesthesia on October 26 at the Westin Copley Hotel in Boston and performed at Weston High School on October 27 & 28 at 7:30 pm.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – Mrs. Black reported on discussion at the recent SAC meeting regarding beverages in the classrooms. She said the students will discuss with Mr. Parker. She said the School Committee will revisit its policy if changes are warranted. She also indicated that Jack Mullany will provide her with topics for future meetings.

I.E. Open Forum – No comments.

### II.A. Discussion of 2018-2019 School Calendar

Dr. Connolly, noting that the draft calendar had been shared with parents and staff, reported on feedback she has received. She indicated that most feedback was in regard to the proposed professional development days of November 26, the Monday after Thanksgiving break, and January 23, the Tuesday following Martin Luther King holiday. She said people indicated a

preference for a Friday professional development day, a day in March, and did not see the advantage to the Tuesday in January. Mrs. Black noted that the schools must be closed on Monday, November 12 to observe Veterans Day. Dr. Connolly noted the impact of the November date on the first day of winter sports and said coaches will delay tryouts so as to not penalize students who may be away that day. The Committee decided to postpone its approval of the calendar until December 5 in order to evaluate the timing of this year's November professional development day.

#### II.B. FY18 Census, Enrollment Information and FY 19 Enrollment Projections

Mrs. Mahr presented the annual student census and enrollment report, a comprehensive report that will contribute to discussions and decisions in upcoming FY19 budget work. She reported a PreK-Grade 12 enrollment of 2,104 students, a decrease of 53 students from last year. Mrs. Mahr reviewed distribution by residency. The Committee discussed the foreign exchange, I20, and J1 visas and requested further clarification. It was agreed to have as an agenda item in the spring. Mrs. Mahr reviewed placement data and presented Table F, classes at the Middle and High School with enrollments of less than 12 students and more than 25 students.

Much discussion ensued as to the reasons there are so many classes with low enrollments. Mrs. Black noted a Middle School Mandarin class of only nine students which had not been approved by the Committee. Mr. Gibbons reported that class originally had 13 students, but two students dropped the course and two students did not attend the school. The Committee indicated it would have further discussion in December 5 as to the minimum threshold for classes before Committee approval is required. Much discussion took place regarding scheduling of classes, number of classes in which students are allowed to enroll, and the timing of the drop process. The Committee indicated the current way is problematic for budget purposes. Mr. Cobb noted his concern that the district is offering too many languages. Mr. Johnson expressed his surprise that there is not technology used to schedule classes. Ms. Schay indicated she would be meeting with Infinite Campus soon to try to incorporate technology into the scheduling process.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to receive the 2017-2018 Enrollment Report and Projections and adopt Table K, K-12 Enrollment History and Projection, for Fiscal Year 2019 budgeting purposes.

#### II.C. FY18 Adjusted Budget

Mrs. Mahr presented the FY18 Adjusted Budget and summarized changes. She noted a significant salary surplus primarily due to the extra sections of kindergarten and class size reserve that were budgeted and not needed. She indicated a surplus of \$193,228 to be returned to the Town and an additional \$129,023 surplus to be retained on the school side for now.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the FY18 adjusted budget as presented and return \$193,228 to the Town.

Mrs. Black noted Mr. Henry would attend November Special Town Meeting and present the adjusted budget in her absence.

#### Human Resource Update

Mrs. Mahr reviewed the need to have an in-house Human Resources Director. She noted the position was posted but Weston was not able to meet the salary demands of the candidates. She said they would be filling the vacant administrative assistant position in HR and will work to bid contractual services to fill the current void. Mr. Cobb requested the job description.

#### II.D. FY19 Budget Projection (Budget A)

Mrs. Mahr presented initial estimates for the FY19 budget, a preliminary budget review exercise, referred to as Budget A. She noted this budget includes the base budget as a level service budget, taking into account contractual agreements and mandated services and is a preliminary budget amount of \$40,438,848, an increase of 3.07% over FY18. Dr. Connolly indicated that budget conversations with principals and curriculum leaders have begun. Dr.

Saini requested “below the line expenses” for the Town-side be included. He thanked Mrs. Mahr for all the data she provided.

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

II.E. Update on Visioning and Planning Committee

Mrs. Black reported on the formation of the Weston Public Schools Visioning and Planning Committee, noting that she, Dr. Connolly, Ms. Bator, Dr. Lareau, and Mrs. Mahr are on the Visioning and Planning Committee, chaired by Dr. Connolly. She noted the committee held its initial session on October 5 and plan to meet with faculty, students, PTO community members, and other stakeholders to get as many constituencies involved in the visioning process to develop a district strategic plan. Dr. Connolly noted that Administrative Council will prioritize where we need to go and form an action plan. She indicated she anticipates a strategic plan, which will be a living document, to be ready in February. Mrs. Black said she would share the visioning presentation with School Committee individually and requested they send comments to Mrs. Bator. Mrs. Nagarajah asked about involving Boston parents as well, noting the BWMPO would be meeting on Thursday. Dr. Connolly noted that she appreciates how involved people are. No action taken.

II.F. Policy Review/Discussion

Mr. Henry requested the Committee approve the Section J policies presented at the last meeting that had undergone no revisions.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller the School Committee voted unanimously to approve revised Policies JI Student Rights and Responsibilities, JIB Student Involvement in Decision Making, JICCA Emergency Student Bus Discipline Procedure, JICE Student Publications, JICF Gang Activity, JICFA Prohibition of Hazing, JICFB Bullying Prevention, JICH Alcohol, Tobacco, and other Drug Use by Students, JICHA School System Policy on Drug Use, JICHB Alcohol Consumption on School Trips, and JIE Pregnant Students.

Mr. Henry presented revised Policy JCA Assignment of Students to Schools, noting the changes.

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

Mr. Henry requested the Committee approve Policy JFBBA, Admission of Interdistrict Students Transfer Students (Enrollment of Boston Students in the METCO Program) noting changes

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

Mr. Henry requested the Committee approve Policy JIC Student Discipline, noting it was a new policy. He noted the changes as recommended by Mr. Parker and Mr. Gibbons.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve Policy JIC as presented.

Mr. Henry presented for a first reading Policies JIH Searches and Interrogations, JJ Co-Curricular and Interscholastic Programs, JJE Student Fund Raising Activities, JJF Student Activity Accounts JJH Student Travel, JJH-R Student Travel Regulations, JJIB Interscholastic Athletics, JIBA Adding or Dropping a Sport, JJIF Concussion Management Policy, JJIF-R Sports Related MTBI Protocol, JK Student Conduct, JKA Corporal Punishment, and JKAA Physical Restraint of Students. He noted that number have been recently reviewed and/or have not material changes. He indicated that most of these will undergo a second reading for approval at a future meeting, with the exclusion of the Student Fundraising and Student Activity Accounts policies that may require further discussion. A discussion regarding fundraising took place. Mr. Cobb suggested School Councils include the topic in their reports in the spring, and Dr. Connolly said she would speak to principals. Mrs. Mahr said she would review the Student Activity Accounts Policy, to be revisited at the next meeting.

II.E. Facility Projects Update (Proctor Field, Case House, Case Complex) – Proctor Field/HS Track – Mr. Cobb noted progress on the track, turf, fences, goalposts and building. He said they are still confident of a Thanksgiving target. Some discussion of senior night. He said Field 1 has a few punch list items remaining and said they are looking at contingencies, considering a storage shed if possible.  
Case House – Mrs. Black said the PBC would meet on Tuesday night and will discuss the project budget, noting estimates are much higher than expected, with some costs due to historical commission requests.  
Case Complex – Dr. Heller reported that light poles are up but the heads have been recalled. He indicated that paving was scheduled to take place late October, then temporary signage.

II.F. Reappointment to Permanent Building Committee  
Mrs. Black informed the Committee that the Town Manager’s Office has requested the School Committee approve the reappointment of Jim Polando to the PBC.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the reappointment of Jim Polando to the Town of Weston Permanent Building Committee.

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 25, 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. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$1,829,822.10 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Approval of Contract - Purchase of School Buses

Mrs. Mahr reviewed the bid process for the purchase of school buses and requested the Committee approve the purchase of two new 71-passenger buses from O’Connor Bus Sales and the purchase of one 20-passenger bus from New England Transit Sales, Inc. She acknowledged the work of Charlie Young, purchasing agent for the Town, during the process. Dr. Saini inquired about seat belts on buses. Mrs. Mahr noted that the bid was for non-seat belt buses, but should the decision be made in the future to have seat belts, these buses could be retrofitted accordingly. Mrs. Black indicated seat belts on buses would be an agenda item in December.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to accept the bid from New England Transit Sales, Inc. and award the contract for the purchase on one 20-passenger school bus in the amount of \$45,468 and accept the bid from O’Connor Bus Sales and award the contract for the purchase of two new 71-passenger buses in the amount of \$147,994

IV. Executive Session

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller at 10:14 PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session for purposes of discussion of collective bargaining issues with multiple bargaining units, with the intent to not return to Open Session, with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Dr. Heller voting aye; Mr. Henry voting aye, Dr. Saini voting aye, and Mrs. Black voting aye.

V. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Saini and seconded by Mr. Cobb, at 10:30 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.