

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

March 12, 2018

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, 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. Not present: Dr. Ed Heller of the School Committee.

Also in attendance were Mrs. Cheryl Antoine, Alternating METCO Representative, and Finance Committee members Ms. Lisa Reitano, Mr. Keith Johnson and Mr. John Sallay.

Mrs. Black welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced members of the School Committee and Administration, and reviewed the evening's agenda. She noted that Dr. Heller was ill and would not be present this evening.

I.B. Chairman's Report – None.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly highlighted some recent events in the district. She reported that on March 7 Weston hosted Jessican Minihan, who presented to parents in a session on Reducing Anxiety in Children and at an all-faculty professional development afternoon on Reducing Anxiety in the Classroom. Dr. Connolly expressed appreciation to the Office of Student Services and Weston PAC for arranging this. Dr. Connolly reported that Kwame Alexander, author of the Newbery-Award winning novel "The Crossover," held a book conversation with Middle School students and parents on March 9. She noted that Mr. Alexander is a poet, New York Times Bestselling author, and winner of the 2015 John Newbery Medal for the Most Distinguished Contribution to American literature for Children and that his visit was sponsored by the Ben Sandalls' Scholarship Fund (and in part by the Friends of Weston METCO as part of the celebration of Weston METCO's 50th anniversary). Dr. Connolly acknowledged the Sandalls family, WEEFC and METCO for making this special event possible.

Dr. Connolly informed the Committee of upcoming events to celebrate 50 years of Weston METCO. She reported on March 23, there would be the Film Premier of the *Weston METCO Celebrates 50 Years!* at 6:30 p.m. in the WHS Media Center, a look back at how the program came to be and to celebrate the future. The film viewing will be followed by the Weston METCO annual potluck supper in the WHS cafeteria. On Wednesday, April 25, there will be an evening of entertainment and education for the community hosted by the Black Student Union in the High School Auditorium from 6:00 – 8:00 PM.

Dr. Connolly reported that students and community members from Weston, Wayland and Sudbury competed in the annual League of Women Voters Civics Bee. She noted that the Weston team, coached by Kerry Dunne, came in a close second behind Wayland. Weston team members included High School students Bharathi Subbiah, Haley Wims, Kimberly Nicholson, and Margot Berman; Middle School students Will Houston, Jessie Yuan, and Ben Carpenter; and Community members Tom Seldorff, John Fiske, and Danielle Black.

Dr. Connolly highlighted other student achievements. She reported that Weston hosted the Mass Educational Theater Guild's Theater Celebration this past weekend and several students, including Student Representative to the School Committee Jack Mullany, were recognized with awards for their contributions. Dr. Connolly noted that all names are posted on website. Dr. Connolly reported that a WHS Student Art Exhibition will be at the Weston Council on Aging through March. She highlighted that WHS Junior Stella Alphas won the Girls Slalom and Overall Combined Alpine Ski State Championships. Dr. Connolly congratulated the students who competed in the Massachusetts DECA 59th annual Career Development Conference, noting

that 27 Weston students went to the conference and had the best finish ever. Four groups - Cameron Brisky and Arianne Dhar for Buying and Merchandising Operations, Arda Cataltepe for Financial Consulting, Ella Davis for Start-Up Business Plan, and Preston Wong and Alex Tager for Hospitality Services Team Decision Making - qualified to compete in the International Competition in April. This will be the fifth time in seven years that Weston students have qualified for the International Competition.

Dr. Connolly congratulated Mr. Mitch Finnegan, Director of Health & Physical Education, recently named the 2018 Honor Award recipient by the Massachusetts Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (MAHPERD). He is being recognized for making significant stride in the fields of Health, Physical Education, Recreation or Dance and will be presented his award at a reception in May. She also reported she had made the decision that Weston schools would be closed on Tuesday due to the impending snowstorm.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – Mrs. Black noted that last week’s School Committee/SAC meeting was cancelled due to school closure.

I.E. Open Forum – No comments

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

Dr. Lareau presented WEEFC grant proposals for Committee approval. She highlighted the proposal for Career Day to be held at Weston High School on April 4 which will feature keynote speaker Connor Blakey, age 18, a writer and founder of Youthlogic. Some discussion occurred regarding the two \$3,000 stipends for faculty members. Mr. Henry noted the stipends were reduced this year and that, although WEEFC was supporting this year’s proposed grant, it is likely that Career Day will take a different direction in the future. It was noted that the proposed grant for Kindness Rocks was not being presented for approval as an alternate source of funding was used.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve WEEFC Career Day grant in amount of \$11,500.

II.B Public Hearing on School Choice

Mrs. Black noted that under state law, if the School Committee does not to participate in School Choice, it is required to hold a public hearing and take a vote rejecting such participation and to so notify the Commissioner of Education by June 1 of each year. Dr. Connolly recommended that the district not participate in School Choice for reasons cited in prior years.

MOTION: Upon motion by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry the School Committee voted unanimously that Weston Public Schools not participate in the 2018-2019 Massachusetts School Choice Program.

II.C. Policy Review - Proctor Field Tower Lighting Policy

The Committee discussed the updated draft of the Proctor Field Lighting Policy. They also briefly discussed fields use and prioritization. These policies were tabled until the next meeting.

First Reading

Mr. Henry presented revised policies from Section I for a first review: IA Instructional Goals, IB Academic Freedom, IC-ICA School Year/School Calendar, ID School Day (a new policy), IGA Curriculum Development, IGD Curriculum Adoption, IHA Basic Instructional Program, and IHAM Health Education. Mr. Henry said most have no changes and others are brought in line with MASC recommendations. He indicated that these would be presented for a second reading at the next meeting. Mrs. Nagarajah asked that there be sufficient publicity regarding later times that the buildings doors would be unlocked. No action taken.

II.D. Discussion of Proposed FY19 School Budget

Dr. Connolly noted the FY19 proposed budget is at 2.61% over FY18, noting that it reflects some retirements and includes estimated costs of new start time schedule. Mrs. Mahr does not anticipate changes to the utilities cost that would impact the budget significantly.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the FY19 proposed school budget, at 2.61% over FY18.

Mr. Henry expressed appreciation to Mrs. Mahr for her assistance with the budget.

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

Mrs. Black noted that the PBC voted to request construction funds for the Case House renovation in November. She indicated they would have a better sense of cost estimates at that time. Mr. Cobb reported plans are ongoing for a celebration of Proctor Field opening.

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 February 26, 2018.

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 \$1,850,252.61 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

IV. Executive Session – None needed.

V. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, at 7:46 PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.