

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
May 21, 2018

I. A. Call to Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:02 PM at Case House by Mrs. Danielle Black, Chair. In attendance were Mr. Alex Cobb, Dr. Ed Heller, and Mr. John Henry of the School Committee; Mrs. Elizabeth Nagarajah, METCO Representative to the School Committee; Jack Mullaney, Student Representative to the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Mrs. Pamela Bator, Assistant Superintendent of District Advancement; and Mrs. Cynthia Mahr, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. Not present: Dr. Sanjay Saini of the School Committee.

Mrs. Black welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced members of the School Committee and Administration. She noted that Dr. Lareau was out of district. Mrs. Black reviewed the evening's agenda. She said that presentation of the Special Education Report would be postponed to June 4 and the Sectioning Discussion would take place Thursday morning at the High School's School Improvement Plan presentation.

I.B. School Committee Reorganization

Mrs. Black noted that School Committee Reorganization typically occurs after Town Meeting. She congratulated Mr. Cobb and Mr. Henry on their reelections.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mrs. Black and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Henry as Chair for one year.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to appoint Mrs. Black as Vice Chair for one year.

I.C. Chairman's Report – None presented.

I.D. Superintendent's Report –

Dr. Connolly highlighted recent events and achievements. She extended congratulations to the WHS Math Team for their first-place finish at the New England Medium-Size Schools Championship playoffs, noting that advisors Larry Davidson and Alison Langsdorf report it was all very much a team effort and also recognized outgoing co-captain Jeff Liu for achieving the team's highest individual score. Dr. Connolly reported that ten 8th grade Latin students participated in the recent National Latin Exam, which World Language teacher Kim Uyen Dang thinks may be the first time Weston Middle School has participated. She reported that Jessie Yuan and Dora Yang earned Gold Medals for summa cum laude; Brooke Nye, Jessy Wang, and Olivia Yun received Silver Medals for maxima cum laude; and Eunice Lee received magna cum laude. In Athletics, Dr. Connolly reported that Boys and Girls Tennis Teams qualified for States.

Dr. Connolly informed the Committee that Country School went to Drumlin Farm today for their whole school field trip. She indicated that it was a great success where students learned about biomimicry and animal and plant adaptations. She noted Country was the only school there and therefore had the whole farm to themselves.

Dr. Connolly reported that Woodland School first grader Olivia Kirmelewicz won an award from the Massachusetts School Building Authority's "My Ideal School" contest. She indicated the purpose of the contest, which is open to first graders attending public schools across the Commonwealth, is to promote discussion as to how thoughtful design and construction of a school promotes student engagement and 21st century learning. She noted thousands of drawings are submitted each year and Olivia was one of 13 students honored at the State House.

Dr. Connolly read a statement regarding school safety. "As safety continues to be a significant priority for all schools including ours, we have spent just over \$200,000 dollars in the last few months improving a number of safety elements of the schools. Although, as has been seen in the

last two major school shootings, there may be no amount of safety put in place that can fully protect our children, if an individual is so determined to cause harm. That will not impede us from continuous improvements. For the protection of our students, teachers and schools I will not be sharing the details of what we have put in place but know that working with the Weston Police and Fire, the School Committee and school administration, faculty and staff we continue to work to improve the safety of our schools as the safety and wellbeing of our students remains paramount.”

I.E. Subcommittee Reports –

EDCO – Dr. Heller updated the Committee on the search process to replace Executive Director Colleen Dolan, who is retiring. He reported there are two finalists from a field of 20 applicants, with a decision expected later in May.

Start Time/Scheduling Committee – Mr. Henry said they are working on transitional arrangements for morning care and will be heavily publicizing the new school times this spring to be sure parents are aware of the changes.

I.F. Open Forum – No comments.

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

Dr. Connolly presented a WEEFC grant proposal for June Academy additional funding for Committee approval, noting the proposed funds would be used for Project Impact Self Defense Training and Earthquakes in New England.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve WEEFC grants in amount of \$9,400 as proposed in memo of May 11, 2018.

II.B Special Education Program Report – postponed to June 4.

II.C High School/Middle School Sectioning Discussion – postponed to May 24.

II.D PTO I Report

PTO Chair Attia Linnard presented the Weston PTO’s annual report. She noted the PTO had updated its Mission Statement this year to reflect all that the PTO does. She reported that 64.5% of enrolled families are members, but only half that amount at high school level. Ms. Linnard reviewed the work of the school chairs, noting that this year’s focus at the elementary schools was on family and community events. She indicated the PTO will again offer printed directories/calendars to those who pre-order them with their memberships. Ms. Linnard thanked the Weston Public Schools and Jane Shay for hosting and helping with the PTO’s website, noted the work of PTO Parent Education and Community Outreach efforts, updated the Committee on the PTO’s Green initiatives, and indicated the PTO remains excited to assist at faculty and staff appreciation events. Ms. Linnard said it was “a joy” to work with Dr. Connolly this year and thanked PTO past presidents Alix Campbell, Barbie Cobb and Danielle Black for their assistance and guidance. No action taken.

II.E Discussion of Irrigation Wells at High School/Middle School

Mr. Cobb informed the Committee that Fields Coordinator Ben Polimer had a report prepared regarding irrigation wells and water conservation needs. He noted the high cost of water purchased from the MWRA. Mr. Cobb reported that Weston Field Steering Committee voted unanimously to support drilling three test wells at a cost of \$5,000-6,000 each, noting a total project would be about \$300k. He indicated the consultant estimates a 5-6 year return on investment. He requested the Committee support finding funds for the tests and noted Mr. Polimer would spearhead the initiative.

MOTION: Upon motion by Dr. Heller and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to explore funding options to identify \$24,000 to fund construction of test wells, to continue facilitating the feasibility study of adding wells to irrigate fields at the High School/Middle School complex.

II.F. Discussion of Margie Ross Memorial at Proctor Field

The Committee discussed a proposed memorial to Margie Ross, a WEEFC board member and active lacrosse parent who passed away last summer, on Proctor Field. Mr. Cobb described the proposed memorial bench and its location. He noted that a landscaping plan was being developed by resident and parent Michele Fronk Schuckel and Weston Youth Lacrosse will pay for everything.

MOTION: Upon motion by Mrs. Black and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to accept proposed memorial to Margie Ross at Proctor Field, noting that the School Committee has ability to relocate the memorial, dependent on future needs.

II.G. Policy Review –

Mr. Henry presented revised Section I policies for a second reading and approval and described the revisions to Policies IHAM-R Health Education (Exemption Procedure), IHAMA – Parental Notification, IHAMB – Teaching About Alcohol Tobacco and Drugs, IHB – Special Instructional Programs and Accommodations, IHBA – Programs for Students with Disabilities, IHBEA – English Language Learners, IHBF – Homebound Instruction, and IHBG – Home Schooling. He noted changes reflect input from Director of Student Services Jen Truslow and Director of Wellness Mitch Finnegan.

MOTION: Upon motion by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve Policies IHAM-R, IHAMA, IHAMB, IHB, IHBA, IHBEA, IHBF, IHBG as proposed.

Mr. Henry presented revisions to two policies reviewed previously this year, Policy JB - Equal Educational Opportunities and JFBB - School Choice, noting changes to the law require the addition of “pregnancy and pregnancy related conditions” to the policies.

MOTION: Upon motion by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller the School Committee voted unanimously to approve revised Policies JB and JFBB.

Mr. Henry presented Policy IKB – Homework Policy for a first read, noting it represents the work of the Homework Committee and is basically a total replacement of the existing policy. Mrs. Bator indicated the implementation guidelines would be developed during the summer.

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

Case House - Mrs. Black updated the Committee on traffic pattern concerns that the PBC and Traffic and Sidewalk Committee were reviewing.

Proctor Field – Mr. Cobb reminded everyone of the Grand Opening Celebration to take place Wednesday, with games and a ceremony at 6:45PM. He said the concession and bathrooms would be open. Mrs. Black noted the necessity of developing protocols for use of the snack shack, a requirement of the Board of Health. Mr. Cobb indicated a few punch list items remain. Mr. Henry thanked Mr. Cobb and Mrs. Black for their perseverance and hard work on the Proctor Field Project, noting the speed with which the well-done project was completed.

Case Complex – Dr. Heller reported that one portion of the project remains not done but should be covered by what was not paid to contractor. He said that the Field School field is still an open item regarding irrigation. Mr. Cobb requested that newly planted trees receive irrigation too, if possible.

Mr. Henry noted that a tent on the field on Friday evening was a private event, a memorial service for former WHS student Ash Baird.

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 April 9 and April 24, 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 Dr. Heller and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$2,542,719.54 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Exception to Policy BCB

Mrs. Mahr requested the Committee approve an exception to Policy BCB, Committee Member Conflicts of Interest to allow the hiring of Benton McCanne, son of Director of Technology Lee McCanne, as lunch monitor at Field School through the end of the school year. She noted he would be supervised by Principal Joe Russo and not Dr. McCanne.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve an exception to Policy BCB to allow the hiring of Benton McCanne through the end of the school year.

Memorandum of Understanding with WEA

Mrs. Mahr requested the Committee approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) reached with the Weston Education Association (WEA) regarding impact of school start times next year at the elementary schools from 8:10am to 8:00am and middle and high schools' later start.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the MOU as proposed.

IV. Executive Session – None needed.

Noting that this was his last meeting, the School Committee acknowledged and thanked Jack Mullany for his attendance and participation at School Committee meetings as student representative and wished him well at college next year.

V. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, at 8:15 PM, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.