

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

November 5, 2018

I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:03 PM at Case House by Mr. John Henry, Chair. In attendance were Mrs. Danielle Black, Mr. Alex Cobb, Dr. Ed Heller, and Dr. Sanjay Saini of the School Committee; Mrs. Cheryl Antoine, METCO Representative to the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning; and Ms. Sheri Matthews, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Also present were Ms. Onika Jenkins, Alternating METCO Representative to the School Committee; Ms. Jennifer Truslow, Director of Student Services; Mr. Anthony Parker, High School Principal; Mr. John Gibbons, Middle School Principal; Ms. Marla Schay, Grade 6-12 Guidance Department Head; Mr. James McLaughlin, Grade 6-12 Marth Department Head; Ms. Kate Lemons, Grade 6-12 English Department Head; Ms. Katharine Odell, Elementary Reading/Writing Specialist; Ms. Tracy Manousaridis, Elementary Math Specialist; Dr. Susan Erickson, Mr. James Polando of the Town of Weston Permanent Building Committee; and Ms. Lisa Reitano and Mr. John Sallay of the Town of Weston Finance Committee.

I.B. Chairman's Report – Mr. Henry welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced members of the School Committee and Administration, and reviewed the evening's agenda.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly highlighted recent student and faculty achievements. She informed the Committee that Jacob Ginga, Field School art teacher, was named "Exceptional New Art Educator of the Year" by the Massachusetts Art Education Association, and World Language teachers Alejandro Yegros (High School) and Danuta Bujak (Field) presented workshops at the annual Massachusetts Foreign Language Association conference. Dr. Connolly reported that, as part of the unit examining the Syrian Civil War, ISIS, the current situation in Iraq, and the overlapping refugee crisis, Kerry Dunne's High School Contemporary World Issues class interviewed 21 US veterans who served in this region in the 1990-1993 Gulf War era or post-2001 "War on Terror." She reported that 76 Weston students attended the Weston-Wayland Interfaith Action Group's screening of the Holocaust Remembrance film *Etched in Glass* on October 21; and noted that Ms. Dunne acknowledged the work of the social studies team for launching honors Modern World History in 10th grade and Civics in 8th grade, for developing an Economics Program, and moving on in a positive fashion.

Dr. Connolly informed the Committee that Intel's Tech Learning Lab would be at Weston High School November 6-9, one of six schools nationally selected for this opportunity and would include running Design Thinking, Coding with Drones, and Creating in Virtual Reality Workshops with faculty and students. Dr. Connolly reported that every fall varsity team qualified for State Tournament/Playoffs, with Volleyball still in the tournament.

Dr. Connolly noted she attended the recent Trunk or Treat at Country School for elementary students and said it was a "great community event." She also highlighted the past weekend's Middle School production of "Sunny Good Enough Celebrity Activist," noting more than 60 middle school students participated in some way.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – Mrs. Black noted that there would be School Committee/SAC meeting on Thursday.

I.E. Open Forum – No comments.

II.A. Appointments to Town of Weston Permanent Building Committee (PBC)

Mr. Henry reported that the PBC has appointed Laura Mintz to the PBC for a 3-year term and has requested the School Committee do the same. He indicated he packet included Laura

Mintz's application and credentials and that Laura would be replacing Joe Gazzola, one of the original PBC members. Mr. Cobb spoke in support of Ms. Mintz' appointment.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Saini and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to appoint Laura Mintz to the Permanent Building Committee for a three-year term expiring October 10, 2021.

The Committee was asked to reappoint Neil Levitt to the PBC to another three-year term.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mrs. Black and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to reappoint Neil Levitt to the Permanent Building Committee for a three-year term expiring October 10, 2021.

II.B. Appointment to Town of Weston Sustainability Committee

Mr. Henry noted the School Committee received the draft charge of the Sustainability Committee and applications of volunteers. He recommended The School Committee appoint Dr. Heller to this committee.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to appoint Dr. Ed Heller as the School Committee designee to the Sustainability Committee to serve at the pleasure of the School Committee.

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

Dr. Carter presented WEEFC grant proposals for Committee approval, noting the nine proposals included for Country and Woodland Schools a musician visit for preschoolers, a Kindergarten Biologist in Residence Program, an author visit for first grade, Discovery Museum Traveling Science Workshop, funds for K-5 STEM Night, and Valerie Tutson – Right to Liberty at Field School. Proposed for the Middle School were funds to support Andrew Peterson's visit and Code Combat and at the High School to bring National Geographic Explorers.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve WEEFC grants as proposed, per memo of October 23, 2018, totaling \$11,550.

II.D. Discussion of Roxbury Weston Pre-School Transportation

The Committee entertained comments from Weston community members concerning transportation for Roxbury/Weston pre-school students. Mr. Henry noted that the School Committee deemed it unsafe to transport preschoolers in school buses without seat restraints and had voted to discontinue the practice at the end of the 2016-17 school year. He acknowledged that Weston Public Schools had been providing transportation on Weston School buses for more than 40 years, but the current School Committee had not been aware of the practice until 2016 when safety issues were brought forward. Mr. Henry noted that children were not required to be restrained when the practice began, but current National Transportation Board regulations require preschoolers to be restrained and in booster seats. Mr. Henry indicated that safety of the children is the reason the Committee voted to discontinue transportation, and he voiced School Committee continued support for the Weston METCO Program. He noted also that Weston Public Schools does not provide transportation for any pre-school students other than those children on education plans that require private transportation, not school buses. Mr. Henry reported that he and Mrs. Black met with Millie Arbaje-Thomas, Director of METCO Inc., who expressed concern for the equity of access to the Weston Public Schools METCO Program for all Boston students, not just those who attend Roxbury Weston.

Many people spoke about the value of the Roxbury Weston Pre-School Program and requested the Committee reconsider its decision. Mrs. Antoine thanked the School Committee for their support of the METCO Program but asked the Committee to consider restoring the partnership with Roxbury Weston. Former School Committee members Katty Chace and Tony Nolan spoke in support of the program. Mrs. Elizabeth Nagarajah, former METCO Representative to the School Committee, noted that while Roxbury Weston should not be considered a "feeder program" to Weston METCO, it prepares its students for success in any METCO Program.

Resident Madelaine Kenyon presented the Committee with a petition signed by more than 560 people requesting transportation be provided. Several residents requested formation of a task force or subcommittee to review the matter. Mr. Cobb noted that the new buses will have 3-point restraints and suggested the Committee review the issue. Dr. Saini expressed a willingness to continue the dialogue. After much discussion and many comments from residents, parents and students, the Committee decided to continue its discussion with representatives from Roxbury Weston.

II.E. Student Performance and Achievement Report

Dr. Carter presented the annual Spring MCAS testing report, summarized his findings and relevant data, and discussed the new accountability system. Dr. Carter noted that this was the final year of two types of MCAS, the Legacy MCAS and Next Generation MCAS. He noted that Weston students perform very well overall when compared with state averages, but an achievement gap remains for students with economic disadvantage, disabilities, and race/ethnicity, significantly wider than the state's achievement gap. He also presented comparison with other nearby districts. Dr. Carter indicated there was mixed improvement in Math, Grades 3-8. In Science, he said there was significant improvement for Grades 9/10, flat for Grade 8 and a slight decline in Grade 5. He reported substantial improvement in ELA.

Dr. Carter discussed the new accountability system, noting there are more indicators to provide school and district information beyond the standardized test scores. These indicators include high school graduation rates, advanced coursework completion, chronic absenteeism, achievement, growth, and English proficiency.

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

II.F. FY 19 Census, Enrollment Information, FY 20 Enrollment Projections

Ms. Matthews presented the annual student census and enrollment report. She noted the Town has not yet provided the census data needed for Table K. Ms. Matthews reported that as of October 1, 2018, enrollment in the schools is 32 students over projection, with a K-12 total enrollment of 2103, one student less than 2017-18. Ms. Matthews presented data on secondary classes with more than 25 and fewer than 15 students, noting that the high school has no core classes with over 25 students and 16 classes with fewer than 15 students. At the middle school, she reported three core classes with more than 25 students and five core classes and 13 electives with under 15 students. The School Committee discussed and questioned the number of sections (9) in some of the middle school low enrolled courses.

The School Committee indicated it would wait to receive the report until Table K Projected Enrollment is complete with Town data. Mr. Sallay questioned the projected enrollment.

II.G. FY 20 Budget Projection (Budget A)

Ms. Matthews presented FY20 Budget A, which she noted is a preliminary or "rough cut" budget, with a lot of work to be done. She said this base budget is a level service budget, taking into account preliminary estimates for contractual agreements, salary step and lane changes, mandated services, supplies, and anticipated enrollment changes. Ms. Matthews noted that all six bargaining units would be in negotiations this year.

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

II.H. Memorandum of Agreement re: Faculty Work Hours

The Committee was requested to vote approval of the Memorandum of Understanding with the WEA regarding faculty work hours due to the change in school times.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Saini, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve Memorandum of Agreement with the Weston Education Association RE: Faculty Work Hours.

II.I. Policy Review

Mr. Henry presented revised Policy AC Harassment Non-Discrimination to bring into compliance (adding Gender Equity).

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

Mr. Henry presented revised Policy IJ Instructional Materials (and Regulations IJ-R Reconsideration of Instructional Resources), noted it had been reviewed with suggested edits by Dr. Carter.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mrs. Black and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve Policy IJ Instructional Materials (and its regulations, IJ-R).

Mr. Henry presented revised Policy IJL Library Materials Selection and Adoption and new Policy IJLA Library Resources for a second reading.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Dr. Saini, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve Policies IJ and IJLA.

II.J. Town Report – Initial Discussion

Mr. Henry said he would begin work on the Town Report with Dr. Carter. Both Mrs. Black and Dr. Connolly expressed interest in assisting.

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

Case House – Mrs. Black reported that construction bids were due on Wednesday, November 14 and there will be an open house at Case House for community members on Saturday, November 17. No action taken.

Case Complex – Dr. Heller said they would be putting in an order for signs. Dr. Connolly noted that some directional arrows painted in roadway incorrectly had been fixed.

Proctor Field – Mr. Cobb indicated that quotes came in high for handicap accessibility at the student lot and that it was being re-bid. He also reminded Dr. Connolly that a policy on use of the concession stand still needed to be developed.

Master Plan Update - Mr. Cobb reported that the CPC had approved administrative funds for the Master Planning study. He indicated that major items to be considered will be a larger indoor swimming pool with a diving well and more gym space for basketball.

II.I. EDCO Collaborative Articles of Agreement

Dr. Connolly indicated that EDCO has requested the School Committee approve the Articles of Agreement. She noted she had reviewed the changes and they were satisfactory.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Saini, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the EDCO Collaborative Articles of Agreement effective July 1, 2018.

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 October 15, 2018.

III.B. Business Actions

Certificate of Warrant

Ms. Matthews 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 \$4,197,137.37 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

IV. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, at 10:16 PM, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.