

# MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

November 19, 2018

## I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:00 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; Ms. Onika Jenkins, METCO Representative to the School Committee; Jeff Beaudoin, Student Representative to the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; and Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning;

Also present were Mr. Anthony Parker, High School Principal; Ms. Marla Schay, Grade 6-12 Guidance Department Head; Dr. Kerry Dunne, Grade 6-12 History Department Head; and Mr. Nick Pezzote, WHS Student Activities Coordinator.

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. He indicated there would be no Policy Review and anticipated an Executive Session to discuss Collective Bargaining.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly reported that Weston High School's Math Team, coached by Alison Langsdorf and Mary Liu, was the highest scoring medium-sized school at the recent November meet at which Junior Ezra Gordon achieved a perfect score, and senior Sasha Shashkov and sophomore Anthony Cui missed just one problem each. Math Team members Ezra Gordon, Jeff Liu, Josh Li, Ben Chen, Daanish Qureshi, and Neil Malur competed at the November Harvard-MIT Mathematics Tournament and placed 29th out of a field of 151 teams from around the country and world. The team's performance guaranteed Weston an entry to next year's contest.

Dr. Connolly updated the Committee on recent performing arts student accomplishments. She reported that three Weston students were selected into the National Association for Music Education All-Eastern Honors Band and Orchestra. Selected for Orchestra were Juniors Joanne Lee (Violin) and Sanghoo Lee (Viola), and selected for Band was Senior Michael Aisin-Gioro (Baritone Saxophone). They will prepare challenging music and perform under the leadership of prominent conductors in this biennial event in Pittsburgh in April. Dr. Connolly reported Weston music students also did very well at the Senior District Festival auditions, again being one of the top schools in the Eastern District in terms of number of students selected, with 31 students accepted and 13 recommended for All State. Dr. Connolly noted that WHS Theater Company presented *Dark of the Moon*, the first production with new drama director Anne Slotnick. She said the well-attended play was performed Friday and Saturday evenings with a matinee on Saturday that had originally been scheduled for Thursday night.

Dr. Connolly noted that Fall sports season is over except for the Thanksgiving Day Weston-Wayland football game and reported it was a great fall season for Weston Athletics.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – Mr. Henry noted the joint PTO/BWMPO meeting that was cancelled due to the snowstorm had been rescheduled to December 4.

I.E. Open Forum – No comments.

## II.A. High School Report

(Guidance Report on Class of 2018, Student Performance & Achievement, AP Program)

Mr. Parker indicated the School Committee had received the report in advance of the meeting and he would address any questions. He said that Weston High School is strong and prepares its students well for success as they move on. The Committee discussed the report and asked questions about student attendance, notably the increase in number of cuts reported, and how the Committee might offer support. Mr. Parker said that having someone on patrol outside would be helpful, and noted many cuts are due to students returning late to campus as a result of open campus. He noted campus patrol was not a duty he could assign staff under current collective

bargaining agreements. Dr. Saini suggested students be sent text message when classes are ending/beginning as a reminder. The Committee discussed class distribution by gender, noting 17 boys and one girl enrolled in AP Physics. Mr. Parker noted it is a continuing concern, which Mr. Cobb requested be looked at closer. Audience member Mr. John McKenzie noted the STEM Council has observed the trend begins in Middle School and should be addressed. Dr. Connolly said that coding is now starting at the elementary level to help students have that experience at lower levels and may lead to increased enrollment of girls in STEM classes. The Committee discussed lack of time for student activities and possible adjusting advisory blocks. Mr. Henry suggested Mr. Pezzote gather data.

Mr. Cobb mentioned the report follows the same format it has for many years and suggested a more analytical approach to increase the report's relevance. He suggested the HS Statistics class might analyze the data. Ms. Schay asked the Committee let her know what they are most interested in. There was brief discussion of AP courses and option to take exams and question about continuation wrestling as a sport since the enrollment is so low. Dr. Heller inquired if clubs are eliminated when new ones are added. Mr. Pezzote noted that not all proposed clubs are added.

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

II.B. 2019-2020 Grade 6-12 Program of Studies

Mr. Parker presented recommended changes to the High School Program of Studies, which he said are exciting. He noted the proposed changes in History are due to both student requests and the strength of teachers. Mr. Parker highlighted the proposed dual enrollment Economics Course with Syracuse College that will carry Honors weight and, with payment by the student, can earn Syracuse college credits, Ms. Schay said the proposed English course is the result of a successful June Academy course. Mrs. Black said she would like a current visual arts course to be offered every other year to try to reduce low enrolled courses. Dr. Carter reflected on the thoughtful process of development undertaken.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Saini the School Committee voted unanimously to approve proposed changes to the 2019-2020 Grade 6-12 Program of Studies.

II.C. Approval of School Calendar

The Committee discussed the proposed 2019-2020 academic year calendar. Mr. Cobb expressed concern about the school year ending so late in June and requested the administration look at innovative ways to have days count when school is cancelled. Dr. Connolly said Administrative Council will discuss snow days and hopes that by next year a plan will be in place. There was brief discussion of coordination of professional development days and no homework weekends.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the 2019-2020 School Calendar.

II.D. Policy Review (None presented)

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

Case House – Mrs. Black said the recent Open House was well attended. She reported that current estimates for the renovation are at \$8.4 million, bids are in hand, and a PBC meeting is scheduled for the next evening. She said that there is a narrow range between high and low bidders. No action taken.

Sustainability Committee – Dr. Heller said he addended a solar presentation by Soltec that would require no investment of capital but would have a 20-year commitment. He said there is enough preliminary interest to see if feasible for Middle School and Field School roofs. Mr. Cobb suggested the committee check with Michael Harrity who had reviewed the idea in the recent past. Mr. Cobb also noted the new Recreation Master Plan Committee will be studying changes to Middle School pool, so the roof there could be affected.

Case Complex – Dr. Heller shared a new sign design that will be used on the campus.

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 November 5, 2018.

III.B. Business Actions

Certificate of Warrant

Dr. Carter 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 \$1,749,971.51 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

IV. Executive Session

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller at 8:20 PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session for purposes of - Discussion of Collective Bargaining, with the intent to not return to Open Session, with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Dr. Heller voting aye;, Dr. Saini voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye.; and Mr. Henry voting aye.

No action taken during Executive Session.

V. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, at 8:40 PM, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn from Executive Session with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Dr. Heller voting aye, Dr. Saini voting aye; Mrs. Black voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.