

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
January 7, 2019

I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:07 PM at Weston Middle School by Mr. John Henry, Chair. In attendance were Mrs. Danielle Black, Mr. Alex Cobb, and Dr. Ed Heller of the School Committee; Jeff Beaudoin, Student Representative to the School Committee; Ms. Onika Jenkins, METCO Representative to the School Committee; Ms. Sheri Matthews, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations; and Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning. Not present: Dr. Sanjay Saini of the School Committee.

Also present were Dr. Lee McCanne, Director of Technology and School Libraries, Mr. Mitch Finnegan, Director of Health and Physical Education, and Ms. Allison Abrams, WEEFC Chair.

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 noted that Superintendent Midge Connolly was unable to attend the meeting due to family circumstances and indicated that both the Update to District Initiatives and Presentation of the Superintendent's Proposed FY'20 School Budget would be presented at a future meeting.

I.C. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Carter highlighted recent events and accomplishments in the district. He reported that the district's administrative offices were relocated during break in preparation for Case House renovations. He said the Superintendent's Office and Office of Teaching and Learning are at Field School with visitor access by an outside door with doorbell near the rear of the public library so that visitors do not need to go through the school; the Office of Student Services, Business Office, Human Resources, and Bookkeeping are at Woodland School; Technology and District Advancement are at Country School; and Facilities is at the Fiske Law Office building. All telephone numbers remain unchanged. Dr. Carter indicated these will be the office locations for the duration of the Case House Renovation Project and he expressed appreciation to the Facilities Department for all their hard work during these relocations.

Dr. Carter informed the Committee that during holiday break, Kerry Dunne, Grade 6-12 History Department Head, traveled to Qatar and Oman with a group of American teachers sponsored by the Qatar Foundation International and GEEQ. She reported that it was an amazing opportunity and she learned a lot about the history, geography, culture, and current political situations on the Arabian Peninsula.

Dr. Carter congratulated DECA for a successful District W Competition, where 30 Weston High School students competed, along with 600 students from 12 schools, and those who finished in the top 5 of their events qualified for the State DECA competition in March. Finishing in first place were Neil Malur (Business Finance) as well as the teams of Harry Tager and Ben Zeng (Hospitality Team event) and Ben Goldstone and Patrick Rhatigan (Management Team Event).

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – None presented.

I.E. Open Forum – Ms. Dana Christianson spoke about parent concerns regarding the shortage of bus drivers and the resulting elimination of elementary bus routes. She mentioned the low wage rates for Weston bus drivers and the lack of communication from the schools to inform parents in a timely manner about the shortage and route cancellation. Mr. Henry addressed her concerns, noting the situation is challenging and that other towns are facing same dilemma. He said work is needed to improve communication. Mr. Henry also noted that while the hourly pay of Weston bus drivers is now comparable to area towns, Weston drivers also receive benefits that include layover pay, vacation pay, and health care. Mrs. Black noted that the bus drivers signed a new agreement with increased compensation retroactive to December 4. Mr. Henry indicated the need, if Weston is unable to hire more drivers, to look at other solutions which could include fewer and longer

routes as well as more bus stops in neighborhoods rather than at homes. Mrs. Black said we will work harder on communications.

II.A. Proposed Revisions to Grade 6-12 Program of Studies 2019-2020

Mr. Finnegan presented proposed revisions to the high school physical education curriculum. He said the proposal would have freshmen continue to meet two out of eight days with a set curriculum and grades 10, 11, and 12 would have physical education one semester per year on four out of the eight days, with students selecting which semester. He noted physical education would no longer be by grade but would be mixed with students in grades 10-12. Mr. Finnegan proposed students be able to sign up in order of their preference of four significant offerings including 1) Lifelong activities (i.e., golf, fitness walking, personal fitness, yoga, mindfulness); 2) Competitive Teams (i.e., flag football, flag rugby, basketball, floor hockey, handball, softball, etc.); 3) Recreational Activities (i.e. tennis, pickleball, ultimate frisbee, recreational swimming); or 4) Personal Fitness Planning (extensive fitness assessment and variety of activities such as strength training, weight training, cardio, resistance bands, etc.). Mr. Finnegan said there would be no effect on FTE's or curriculum time. Dr. Carter noted the new physical education model will give students more flexibility on scheduling. The Committee briefly discussed. Mrs. Black thanked Mr. Finnegan for this "exciting" proposal.

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

Mr. Finnegan, in response to Committee inquiry, discussed where vaping and juuling are addressed in the curriculum. He said Middle School health teacher Carrie Rainville has introduced the "Catch My Breath" curriculum to 6th and 7th grades and there is a freshman guidance unit on substance abuse that addresses the addition potential of vaping and marijuana use. He noted that sophomores have an expanded unit, but the adjustment to the later start time is still being figured out. Mr. Finnegan also spoke about submitting a grant to WEEFC for a curriculum to be run as a pilot for sophomores and noted that all of substance use is addressed junior year but not extensively. He noted the need for additional health education. He presented statistics from the 2017 Youth Behavior Survey that compared Weston to the state.

II.B. Weston Education Enrichment Fund Committee Mid-Year Report

Ms. Allison Abrams presented the mid-year report for WEEFC, noting the new logo rolled out this year. She reported that WEEFC did not conduct a fall campaign this year and instead focused on a larger December campaign and April fundraising event. She noted the December mailing yielded disappointing results with only 7% of families donating \$16,000. Ms. Abrams indicated that they may need to launch a June campaign depending on the results of the April fundraiser. She reported WEEFC has approved 23 grants, including 11 new ones totaling \$60,000 this year. Ms. Abrams expressed appreciation to WEEFC Board members, to Dr. Carter, and to Mr. Henry for serving as liaison.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to receive the WEEFC Mid-Year Report.

II.C. Update on District Initiatives (postponed)

II.D. Presentation of the Superintendent's Proposed FY'20 School Budget (postponed)

II.E. Presentation on Solar Panels

Personnel from Solect Energy and Power Options presented information regarding proposed solar panel installation on school property, the roof of the Middle School pool and gym and the roof of Field School, the only school buildings with roofs not in need of repair. Solect Energy would pay for all materials and installation with the school obligated to buy power from them for 20 years. Members of the PBC were also present. Dr. Heller expressed concern about the aesthetics and requested a visual of what Field School would look like from the road. The Committee discussed

and will require more information prior to a vote on the issue at a future meeting. Mr. Cobb said he would also like to see more data on cost benefits. No action taken.

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

Case House – Mrs. Black reported that Case House Construction Meetings with the contractor and owner’s representative would be on Tuesdays at 8:30AM. No action taken.

II.G. Approval of Agreement Between the Weston School Committee and Weston School Bus Drivers Association (WSBDA)

Mr. Henry reported that the subcommittee of the School Committee has successfully negotiated a new collective bargaining agreement with the WSBDA and seeks School Committee approval. He also requested approval of a Memorandum of Agreement impacting the compensation rate in the current contract.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mrs. Black and seconded by Dr. Heller the School Committee voted unanimously to approve a Memorandum of Agreement with a change in compensation effective December 4, 2018 of the current contract with the Weston School Bus Drivers Association and to approve the Agreement Between the Weston School Committee and the Weston School Bus Drivers Association, July 1, 2019-June 30, 2022.

III.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve minutes of December 11, 2018, regular and Executive Session.

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. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$3,685,547.90 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Appointment to Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee

Mr. Henry requested the Committee approve the appointment of Charlie Hipwood to the Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee as the designee of Weston Little League President Hank Lawler. He noted the Board of Selectmen would be approving as well.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Charlie Hipwood by Weston Little League President Hank Lawlor as the president’s designee on the Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee.

IV. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, at 9:16 PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.