

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

March 25, 2019

I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:00 PM at Weston Middle School by Mr. John Henry, Chair. In attendance were Mr. Alex Cobb, Mrs. Danielle Black, Dr. Ed Heller, and Dr. Sanjay Saini of the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Ms. Sheri Matthews, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations; and Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning.

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 reported that Ms. La Toya Rivers, Director of Weston METCO, attended this year's METCO Advocacy Day along with WHS senior Eche Onwuama and some of our Boston Weston METCO Parents. She said Eche performed a rap he wrote in honor of the program and was featured on the front page of the Metro section of last Wednesday's *Boston Globe*. Eche has been attending METCO Advocacy Day (formerly METCO Lobby Day) since he was in elementary school and his being able to perform was very special.

Dr. Connolly highlighted some of the many district events happening in the next two weeks. She reported that MCAS testing begins this week at the high school, noting is the first time all MCAS testing will be done on computers, although Weston students did previously in 10th grade. Dr. Connolly highlighted the upcoming Middle School Arts & Technology Festival, High School Chorus Pops Concert, Field School Wax Museum, METCO Family Friends Potluck Dinner, High School Band & Orchestra Pops Concert, Field School Art Show, and Weston Wingding WEEFC Fundraiser on April 6.

I.D. Subcommittee Reports – None presented.

I.E. Open Forum – No comments.

II.A. Weston Education Enrichment Fund Committee

Dr. Carter presented ten proposals for Committee approval, highlighting three performances by Ball in the House A Capella group at Country/Woodland, Field and Middle Schools; a choreographer and costumer for the spring high school musical production; writing program for the Middle School, music performances for the preschools, funds to support Middle School Science Club, two math and science presentations at Middle and High Schools, and a visit to all schools by an anthropology primate expert.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Saini, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve WEEFC grants as proposed in memo of March 19, 2019 totaling \$17,667.63.

Agenda items B and C were taken in reverse order.

II.C. FY19 Budget -- Third Quarter Review

Ms. Matthews provided updates of the FY19 budget with an overview by location and reported that staff have been notified about the process for end of year expenditures. Ms. Matthews indicated that FY19 funds would be used for the Responsive Classroom professional development summer workshop, and Dr. Connolly noted that new reading books may also be funded with FY19 funds. Dr. Carter indicated they are close to adopting the new curricular program and he talked about ways in which it will be rolled out. Some discussion about remaining expenses for the year and ways in which the budget might be planned or controlled. Dr. Saini suggested "seasonalizing" expenditures as a way to better plan. No action taken.

II.B. Discussion and Vote on Proposed FY20 School Budget

The Committee held a brief discussion of the proposed FY20 school budget. Mr. Cobb asked about offsets. Ms. Matthews noted the final proposed budget includes seven sections at both grades 4 and 5 for next year.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mrs. Black and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the FY20 school budget of \$41,441,391, a 3.35% increase over FY19.

The Committee discussed a proposed letter to be included in the town's budget booklet. Mr. Henry noted that Mr. Cobb had drafted the letter, shared with Committee members, and requested they reply individually with feedback. Mr. Henry noted the letter reflects that the School Committee unanimously recommends the proposed budget, follows guidelines, and explains the drivers behind budget change. Mr. Cobb requested any additional suggestions be sent to him only, and he will share the letter with the Committee prior to submission. He noted the deadline is March 27 for inclusion in the booklet.

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

Case House – Mrs. Black reported the PBC, on which she serves as a voting member for the Case House project, will vote on Wednesday night to approve color selections for Case House and requested the School Committee to review the proposals. She shared proposed samples for roof shingles, tiles for lobby, runner for grand staircase, carpet tiles for conference room, colors for elevator walls and floor, and colors for interior walls and offices. Mrs. Black noted the samples were selected by consultant with historical expertise and adhered to what a country house in the period might have. Mr. Cobb questioned the dark, somewhat monochromatic, colors proposed for the lobby and main areas of the house and asked that Mrs. Black share that with the PBC. Resident Lisa Green questioned the need to recreate what was done in the past while undergoing such a costly renovation and asked if others are reviewing the colors of the offices. Leila Hooper suggested someone create a virtual mock up of the rooms rather than just seeing color samples. No action taken.

II.E. Discussion of Sustainability Grant Application

Dr. Heller reported that the Town of Weston Sustainability Committee has the opportunity to participate in a grant for Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) on behalf of the Town and needs each of the key committees to sign off. Mr. Henry noted a draft letter of support was included in the packet, which he proposed editing slightly to remove one paragraph.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mrs. Black and seconded by Dr. Saini, the School Committee voted unanimously to authorize John Henry to sign the letter to support the Town of Weston Sustainability Committee's grant application, subject to edits Mr. Henry suggested.

III.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of March 11, 2019.

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 Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$1,946,098.54 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Acceptance of Gift

Fifth Grade Tree – Dr. Connolly shared a request from the Weston Tree Advisory Group that the School Committee vote to support the planting of two trees of the Field School/Case campus. She noted the trees, with a value of \$2,000 would be donated by Eversource, with one being the class

gift from the current fifth grade as part of Arbor Day festivities. The Advisory Group indicated that both Principal Dan Green and Fields Coordinator Ben Polimer had approved the location of the two trees, which would provide needed shade, along the road past the Community Center on the right. Mr. Henry expressed concern about a long-term plan for trees, noting there was a gift last year of one tree. Dr. Heller indicated this proposal might be in a danger zone encroaching on utilities and the playing field, noting there is not a good place for shade trees whose roots could affect the leaching field. He said discussions should take place with Jerry McCarty and Gary Jarowski regarding the Master Plan. Mrs. Black also expressed concern that this has become an annual gift and is not inclined to accept two trees. She suggested alternative means of providing shade on the hardscape be considered. Mr. Henry said they would table for now and requested more information prior to the next meeting, well in advance of Arbor Day. No action taken.

V. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller at 8:17 PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session for purposes of discussion of Collective Bargaining, not to return to regular session, with Dr. Heller voting aye, Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, Dr. Saini voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

During Executive Session, the Committee discussed negotiation strategies for WEAAA and WEA Collective Bargaining Units. No action taken during Executive Session.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, at 9:02 PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn from Executive Session, with Dr. Heller voting aye, Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, Dr. Sainin voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.