

April 4, 2012

A meeting of the Wareham School Committee was held on Wednesday, April 4, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the Wareham Middle School Auditorium. Present were Geoff Swett, Kenny Fontes, Cliff Sylvia, Rhonda Veugen, Michael Flaherty and Jessica Hanson as well as Superintendent Dr. Rabinovitch, and recording secretary, Mrs. Ruiz.

The meeting was called to order by Superintendent Rabinovitch.

Reorganization of Committee

Nominations were accepted for Chair. Dr. Sylvia stated that Mr. Swett became Chair midterm and moved that Mr. Swett continue as Chair for this next term, seconded by Mr. Fontes.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain - 0

Chair Swett recognized the service Rachel Gillette gave to this town and is still providing. He then welcomed Mike Flaherty to the committee.

Chair Swett opened nominations for Vice Chair. Dr. Sylvia moved to continue Rhonda Veugen as Vice Chair for the next term, seconded by Mr. Fontes.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain - 0

Chair Swett opened nominations for Secretary. Mr. Fontes nominated Dr. Sylvia for secretary, seconded by Mrs. Veugen.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain - 0

Executive Session – Legal Matter

There was a roll call vote to enter into executive session to discuss a legal matter and return to open session. Roll call vote:

Mr. Fontes – yea; Dr. Sylvia – yea; Mrs. Veugen – yea; Mr. Flaherty – yea; Mr. Swett – yea

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

(7:05 p.m. - 7:51 p.m.)

Ms. Hanson arrived at 7:53 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - None

GOOD NEWS

The following Good News was shared:

- Decas Community Build – April 14th 9AM – to work on the playground
- The students of DECA did an exceptional job this past Friday at Wareham Works with their presentation on the good programs offered at WHS - Lyndsie Pulsifer, Amber Ramos, Brian Williams. A letter will be sent to these students on behalf of School Committee.
- Color Guard is state champion
- Last Friday's Art Fair was successful
- One win today for the High School Honor Society Honor Bowl

- Mr. Wareham will be April 10th
- High School NY trip is next Friday

Minutes of the Meeting

Dr. Sylvia moved to approve the minutes of March 21, 2012, seconded by Mrs. Veugen.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain – 1 (Mr. Flaherty)

Dr. Sylvia moved to approve the minutes of March 28, 2012, seconded by Mrs. Veugen.

VOTE: yea – 3; nay 0; abstain – 2 (Mr. Fontes, Mr. Flaherty)

School Committee Reports

- Action Committee – still waiting on the Town Administrator for a date he will report on privatization in other communities.

- Designer Selection Committee – Master Plan Study – Award of Contract

Mr. Joel Seeley, Project Manager, SMMA was present. A master plan assists communities in understanding the conditions of their facilities and how well the facilities meet the educational curriculum. The plan presents options for solving potential issues.

Dr. Rabinovitch explained that a senior study walk thru of all our buildings was conducted by MSBA. MSBA stated that a master plan was the right step for Wareham. It has been at least 15 years since the last master study and funding for the study will come from the school choice account if the Committee votes to move forward.

There was discussion on whether to spend the \$40,000 now or wait until after town meeting.

Mr. Fontes moved approval to go forward with this process, seconded by Dr. Sylvia.

VOTE: yea – 2 (Mr. Fontes; Dr. Sylvia); nay – 2 (Mr. Swett; Mrs. Veugen); abstain – 1 (Flaherty)

Dr. Sylvia moved to go forward with this project after town meeting. He then withdrew his motion.

Superintendent's Report

- Dr. Rabinovitch announced to the general public that the Building Committee for the Minot Forest Elementary School needs to fill a slot with someone who has architectural experience. If interested please send your resume to Dr. Rabinovitch and he will get it to the Town Moderator to make the appointment.
- Parent Complaint Investigation - Dr. Rabinovitch read into the record the report after investigating the parent concern addressed during public participation at the last meeting (see document). Mrs. Veugen thanked Mrs. Barboza for coming forward to express her concerns and giving the administration a chance to respond. Because of the email security of the school department relative to foul language, Dr. Rabinovitch emphasized if a parent does not receive a response from an email, please call or go to the school.

FY'13 Budget Discussion & Vote

Chair Swett stated that he has been informed by the Chair of the Finance Committee that the school budget is still short of available resources by \$933,576. If no further cuts are made, \$26,074,370 would be in the warrant as the school department budget, but the Finance Committee

is the first one to amend the motion and would cut the school budget by \$933,576 to balance the town budget. In order for the school department to be part of a balanced budget in the printed warrant a vote must be taken today. The actual cuts can be discussed at a later time. Chair Swett recommended the School Committee reduce its net school spending budget by \$933,576 to \$25,140,794.

Dr. Rabinovitch stated that the schools have a good working relationship with the Finance Committee and if money was available, it would be added to our budget. He recommended a balanced budget and to ask the voters for approval of the debt exclusion and the override articles, which have the Finance Committee's support.

Dr. Sylvia stated that he found it hard to support this recommendation. It is not the School Committee's responsibility to balance the town budget. This action eases the sense of urgency to support the articles.

Mrs. Veugen stated that the Finance Committee supported all but one article to be further discussed. We should go into town meeting with the budget we are requesting but it is important to state the amount of money needed and to allow town meeting voters to decide.

Mr. Flaherty stated that if there was more money on the town's side, he would seek it but we need to work in good faith with a balanced budget, as terrible as this is.

Mrs. Veugen moved to reduce the school's net school spending budget by \$933,576 to bring the budget to \$25,140,794, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 3; nay – 1 (Mr. Fontes); abstain – 1 (Dr. Sylvia)

Mr. Swett informed the committee that the motion for the transportation article related to the revolving account will have a sum of money in it which will be permanently encumbered to replace vehicles in the transportation department. The dollar amount depends upon whether the debt exclusion is approved for the vehicles. If the debt exclusion is approved, the need will not be as much. If the debt exclusion is not approved, there will be a need to generate cash in the revolving account to purchase vehicles. This article would have to go before town meeting again if we want to reduce the encumbrance dollar amount.

Mrs. Veugen moved to approve the school department's FY13 Budget at \$26,482,446, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea -3; nay – 2 (Mr. Fontes; Dr. Sylvia); abstain – 0

Chair Swett asked for guidance from the committee on further cuts in

- Instructional Leader Program
- Cooperative School
- % of extracurricular activities & athletic teams

After discussion of the items on the list and the \$40,000 for the proposed master study, Chair Swett suggested the Superintendent meet with his principals and directors and with the Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee to find \$250,000 in cuts and report back to the School Committee with a solution.

Dr. Rabinovitch will come back with recommended cuts after town meeting votes the school budget.

Report on Winter Sports Season from Athletic Director

Marc Loranger, Athletic Director made the following report:

- 146 athletes competed in winter sports
- Each team completed community service projects in town
- Boys' Basketball team's record of 20-0 season, winning the South Coast Conference
- Girls' Basketball player, Alexis Silvia, scored 1015 points and Coach Rojik 300 career win mark.
- New programs instituted in honor of our athletes
- List of SCC All Stars, Honorable Mention, Sportsmanship awards
- Revenues raised and expenses for winter sports with a breakout by sport with # of athletes and records

Mrs. Veugen thought a comparison from last year would be helpful in the report. In order to increase gate receipts, she suggested promoting the events to the community. She also had concerns with the GPAs for two of the teams.

Mr. Fontes suggested holding a basketball tournament; having youth basketball play an 8 minute game during half time; and having the Varsity Girls Basketball games followed by Boys Varsity game to increase the fan base.

Chair Swett recommended Principal Palladino look into the cost per participant \$62 - \$850 range for past 2 seasons and having a co-op with another school system for more participants.

NEASC Reaccreditation Update

Dr. Sylvia recommended the NEASC report be a lengthy agenda item.

Mrs. Veugen moved to continue the meeting past 10:00 p.m., seconded by Dr. Sylvia

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

(Miss Hanson left meeting at 9:58 p.m.)

Principal Palladino stated that the full NEASC report and a summary were included in the packet. Wareham High School will have an accreditation at Level 3 with warning and a progress report must be submitted to NEASC by February 2013. One area of concern was the "Community Resources for Learning". He stated that his staff received the report; and after the May 9th meeting with the Committee, he will issue a press release and place the report on the school website. The cuts that could be made to the high school budget must be reported to NEASC within 60 days. This action would bring Wareham High School to Level 4 probation status for accreditation.

The Committee asked for the # of schools on probation and # on warning for the next meeting. It was also suggested to add the accreditation status to the superintendent's newsletter and the town meeting presentation.

Mr. Fontes moved to hold a School Committee meeting for April 25th to discuss NEASC and Mid Cycle Review of Goals as the only topics, seconded Dr. Sylvia.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain - 0

Kindergarten Proposal/Grant

Mrs. Rotella informed the Committee that Wareham has received a grant to study the feasibility of universal kindergarten. To change to a universal kindergarten, the School Committee must vote this in May to allow notification to parents. She handed out a brief overview. The grant helps fund a committee to examine full day Kindergarten to be cost neutral for our district by increasing grant funds and effecting Ch.70 aid. Instead of .5 per capita, with universal without tuition we receive a full 1.0 per capita and eliminate a mid day bus (include the loss of benefits to those drivers in the study). A brochure will be given to incoming Kindergarten students and we will survey incoming Kindergarten families and current Kindergarten families.

Proposed School Calendar for 2012-2013

Relative to the one year agreement with the town on election days, Dr. Rabinovitch stated that the town is trying to have a Saturday election and we will close school on one day. We are proposing no school on November 6th, the presidential election.

Dr. Sylvia moved to approve the 2012-2013 school calendar, seconded by Mrs. Veugen

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain - 1 (Mr. Flaherty)

Any other business

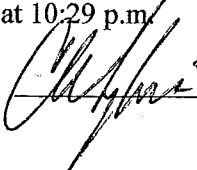
Ms. Miranda announced that the Color Guard will be performing their championship performance this Monday, April 9th at WHS at 6:30 p.m.

Chair Swett asked his fellow board members to email him as to their desires for representation on the Policy Review Committee and other advisory committees for the new term.

Dr. Sylvia moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Veugen.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

The meeting adjourned at 10:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: 

List of documents:

Agreement Town of Wareham contract for Designer Services
Memo Parent Concern – March 26, 2012
DRAFT Wareham Public Schools – School Matters
Wareham Public Schools Cuts to Education 2013 - Proposed Cuts to Level Funded
FY'13 Budget Allocation memo to Town Administrator
Mid-Cycle Goals Review
WHS Athletic Report Winter 2011-2012
NEASC Reaccreditation Report 2012 – Commendations and Recommendations Summary
NEASC Report of the Visiting Committee for WHS
Full-Day Kindergarten Proposal/Brochure/Power Point
WPS 2012-2013 School Calendar DRAFT

