

August 8, 2012

A meeting of the Wareham School Committee was held on Wednesday, August 8, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the Wareham Middle School Auditorium. Present were Geoff Swett, Kenny Fontes, Cliff Sylvia, Michael Flaherty, and Rhonda Veugen, as well as Superintendent Dr. Rabinovitch, and recording secretary, Mrs. Ruiz.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Swett at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

GOOD NEWS

Dr. Rabinovitch announced a CARE Program Fair at the Middle School tomorrow at 9:30 a.m. as part of the Century 21 Grant.

Minutes of the Meeting

Mrs. Veugen moved to approve the minutes of June 27, 2012, seconded by Mr. Flaherty

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Mr. Fontes moved to approve the minutes of July 25, 2012 as recorded, seconded by Mr. Flaherty

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Mr. Fontes moved to approve the minutes of August 1, 2012 as recorded, seconded by Mrs. Veugen.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Modification of Physical Structure at WHS

Principal Palladino requested modification to the library for a partition area where students can work and display their projects. He received quotes for a partition from three vendors ranging from \$3,166 - \$11,000. He recommended having a permanent wall in the library area for a quote of \$950.

Dr. Sylvia moved approval of the modification as presented, seconded by Mr. Fontes.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Mr. Palladino presented a second proposal to utilize an area at the top of the second floor window area as a teacher work station. There is a special education student who needs an area alone for down time as part of an IEP and the area will be used by teachers as a work station. This area was originally designed for an office. Mr. Palladino will obtain three bids not to exceed \$2,500.00 to complete the modification.

Dr. Sylvia moved to approve the proposal to do the work not to exceed \$2,500.00, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

School Committee Reports

- Transportation Action Committee- Mr. Swett reported on the two meetings held by the Action Committee focusing on the McKinney Vento money. There was a vote 3-1-1 in favor of recommending to the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee that the McKinney Vento money be available to the school district as part of its non net school budget. There was a fuller explanation of the McKinney Vento money at the second meeting but no revote was taken. The

member from the Board of Selectmen was not present. The McKinney Vento and Ch.70 funds are on the August 21st meeting of the Board of Selectmen to ask for its support. The Action Committee will meet again when the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen representative are ready. The long-term capital funding of the aged fleet was not addressed.

- Request for Member to be on Town Trash Committee – Chair Swett stated that there is a belief that trash is a worsening problem for the town. The Chair asked for a volunteer for this committee to represent the School Committee. Mr. Flaherty volunteered.
- Finance Committee Meeting – Chair Swett announced that the School Committee just completed a presentation this evening to the Finance Committee. The two areas of money we hope to come to the school district are additional Ch. 70 funding and McKinney Vento money. No votes were taken by the Finance Committee.

Chair to Release Executive Session Minutes to Public

- August 3, 2011
- June 27, 2012

It was announced by Chair Swett that these minutes are now released to the public.

Superintendent's Report

- Chapter 70 Funding – Dr. Rabinovitch explained the required net school spending to provide an adequate education is made from Ch. 70 aid and the required district contribution. He explained the terms Foundation Budget; target local contribution; municipal growth factor; excess local effort; effort reduction percentage of 15%. There was a Chart from DESE determining Wareham's Total Required Contribution FY13 and one giving the Apportionment of Local Contribution for Wareham and Upper Cape. Also provided was the FY13 Chapter 70 Summary for Wareham

The Committee discussed the increased costs of health care and special education in communities and specifically Wareham's problem because of our demographics with 50% property value and 50% income. Reimbursements from the state have gone down, e.g. transportation.

- Last Day to Submit Articles for Fall Town Meeting
September 7th is the last day to submit warrant articles. Chair Swett asked to take the articles after the discussion on the FY13 budget.

FY13 Budget

Dr. Rabinovitch reviewed the budget timeline and votes taken on the budget including the minutes of March 8, 2012 budget discussion with the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee, which included the administrative cuts made and facilities recommendation to close Hammond School.

Chair Swett recused himself from the discussion since it involved cuts to athletics as he is a coach and donates his salary to the Wareham Athletic Association.

Mrs. Veugen, Vice Chair, chaired the meeting.

The cuts to the athletic department were reviewed which included those sports undersubscribed.

- Ethel E. Hammond School

Dr. Rabinovitch reported that he has had preliminary conversations with the Director of CEDA interested in becoming the site manager as an educational/business center for Onset, offering evening programs. Grant funds available to CEDA, and not available to the town and school, can be obtained for

handicapped accessibility. Our Kindergarten classes will move to Minot Forest School and by closing Hammond School we will gain \$56,000 to bring back staff. This came about because of the July ballot vote.

Due to the rifting of teachers and higher class sizes, Dr. Rabinovitch recommended hiring back four people by reducing sports \$38,000; closing Hammond School \$56,000 and adding new Ch.70 funds \$120,053 for a total of \$214,053.

- Chapter 70 Funding

Dr. Sylvia stated that he would support the recommendation if it is tied into the proposed town meeting article with Ch. 70 increased funds for staff and/or buy materials.

Mr. Flaherty had his priority for textbooks and technology first.

Dr. Rabinovitch stated that the administrators are looking creatively where other funds may be available for texts, i.e., gift account for literacy.

Dr. Sylvia moved the superintendent's recommendation to close the Ethel E. Hammond School for the purpose of savings to rehire staff, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

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

Dr. Sylvia moved to reduce sports by \$38,000 for the purpose of savings to rehire staff, seconded by Mr. Fontes for discussion.

There was discussion on the reduction in the number of games being played with home games in basketball and football generating money and increasing the user fees instead.

Principal Palladino stated that the cut was across the board and Wareham will play the required conference games only.

VOTE: yea – 3; nay - 1(Mr. Fontes); abstain – 1 (Mr. Swett)

Discussion on Articles for 2012 October Town Meeting - \$120,053 additional state educational aid

Dr. Sylvia moved to amend the article as presented to specifically state that the \$120,053 be used to add staff, seconded Mr. Fontes for discussion.

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

Mr. Swett took over as Chair.

Mr. Flaherty asked where the \$250,000 cut in the budget came from?

Dr. Rabinovitch explained that he recalculated the specific staff cuts and took the remaining cut of \$118,958 in the sped tuition account to be placed back when additional funds would be coming from Ch. 70 state aid.

Mr. Flaherty stated that he had a problem with Dr. Rabinovitch not coming back to the School Committee for the additional cuts. He read an excerpt from the April 4th minutes and stated that if we re-visit the

budget, he was sure we could find funds for textbooks and technology. He was upset that everything we discussed was taken off the table and unilaterally made.

Chair Swett explained that the budget allocation is up to the Committee and, after the vote, the use of the funds by contract and law are up to the Superintendent. Dr. Rabinovitch coming back to the Committee was a courtesy.

Transportation Proposal to Reduce Services

Chair Swett stated that at the July 25th meeting it was noted that without additional resources we would be deficit spending in FY13. Since that time the McKinney Vento money has become available to the town.

Proposed Article for 2012 October Town Meeting - vote to increase non net school budget by \$125,000, the sum from the state for McKinney Vento as reimbursement of costs for homeless students (in district spending was \$167,000).

The discussion was to provide administration direction for this school year tonight; and if funds are not received, whether changes would be made mid-year.

Dr. Rabinovitch was not recommending voting to reduce services since the McKinney Vento funds can cover current services and continue to work for a long term plan to replace the vehicles.

Dr. Sylvia moved approval of the article but that the article indicate to maintain the current level of service, seconded Mr. Fontes.

Chair Swett stated that by not voting to change the level of services, we are giving the Superintendent guidance.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay - 1(Mrs. Veugen); abstain - 0

(Mrs. Veugen apologized but had to leave early - 9:24 p.m.)

Public Participation Discussion

Mr. Flaherty was seeking to have public participation on deliberate agenda items. He asked if it was appropriate to place items in the packet on the website before the meeting.

It was agreed that:

- a) A section on the website is made for the documents.
- b) If someone asked for public comment on an item, the board can ask the chair to take the item out of order for public comment.
- c) The Chair will discuss, in preparation of the agenda, which items are to be placed on the website.

Status of the Minot Forest School Project

Dr. Rabinovitch prepared a letter to Mr. Lawson of MSBA acknowledging the town's decision not to fund a feasibility study for the Minot Forest School Project and that the town does not intend to bring it back for a vote within the eligibility period.

Mr. Fontes moved to authorize the Chair and the Superintendent to sign the letter as presented, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain - 0

Acceptance of a Gift

Dr. Rabinovitch recommended acceptance of a \$200 gift from parent Amy Goodwin for the purpose of purchasing textbooks.

Mr. Flaherty moved the recommendation, seconded by Mr. Fontes.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain - 0

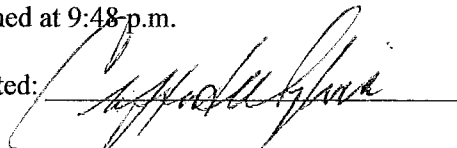
Any other business

- Dr. Sylvia proposed to ask the Superintendent to have legal review of an article for the October Town Meeting to appropriate or transfer from available funds \$125,000 to repair the WHS gymnasium roof. This would be considered as extraordinary circumstances. Dr Rabinovitch stated that an article for the High School Roof has gone through the Capital Planning Committee and was approved at Town Meeting already. He will bring this forward at the meeting of September 5th.
- At the next meeting Dr. Rabinovitch will report on Mr. Flaherty's question as to the legality for use of choice funds.
- Dr. Rabinovitch asked the Committee to schedule a 6PM executive session for two grievances with our attorney on August 22nd. The Committee agreed.

Dr. Sylvia moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain - 0

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: 

List of documents:

Library Wall Proposal
Teacher Work Room Proposal
Process for Calling A Town Meeting
School Finance: Chapter 70 Program
Proposal to Reduce Transportation Services
Policy: Public Participation at School Committee Meetings
Power Point Budget 2013 and Chapter 70 Explanation
FY13 Budget – July 3, 2012
Proposed Articles for 2012 October Town Meeting
Letter to Michael Lawson MSBA RE: Minot Forest School Project, Wareham

