

January 30, 2013

A meeting of the Wareham School Committee was held on Wednesday, January 30, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. in the Wareham Middle School Auditorium. Present were Geoff Swett, Kenny Fontes, Rhonda Veugen, Cliff Sylvia, Michael Flaherty and Cindy Pham 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 shared the following good news:

- An invitation to parents/guardians and School Committee for a crock pot luncheon on February 15th at 12:30 p.m. prepared and served by students of the Wareham Cooperative Jr./Sr. High School
- Decas School had their 2nd induction ceremony into the National Elementary Jr. Honor Society and will be starting phase 2 of its playground.
- Minot School has new procedures for child drop off and parents feel this is safer; participation by students in Love Our Troops with valentines; Kindergarten participated in community point fundraiser for Wareham Hurricane Coalition
- Coat Drive recognition of Dr. Thornell for his donation of over 1,000 coats to coat drive over the last few years
- Wareham received additional 21st Century Learning Grant of \$61,000 for after school/summer school Gr.9-12 with focus STEM and Literacy
- Wareham district has been selected by the state as 1 of 12 districts for the Edwin Teaching & Learning System – online tool for teachers and students
- Current fifth grade power school elementary roll out to be opened to parents before the end of this year and next year for all grade 4 & 5 parents

(Mr. Flaherty arrived at 7:08 p.m.)

Mr. Flaherty shared that the Decas School had their band/chorus winter concert tonight and an excellent job was done by the Decas students.

Mr. Fontes gave kudos to the Wareham DECA students on their recent competition.

Mrs. Veugen congratulated Mr. Fontes as new Director of the Boys & Girls Club.

Minutes of the Meeting

Mrs. Veugen moved to approve the minutes of January 9, 2013 seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Mr. Flaherty moved to approve the minutes of January 12, 2013 seconded by Mrs. Veugen.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Mr. Flaherty moved to approve the minutes of January 16, 2013 seconded by Mrs. Veugen.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Mr. Flaherty asked to include Selectmen Alan Slavin as being present. Mrs. Veugen moved to approve the minutes of January 3, 2013 as amended seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Transportation Services

a. Presentation & Vote on Cost of Providing a K-8 and a K-12 Level of Transportation Services
Chair Swett announced that a vote tonight is premature for any change in the level of transportation services. There was a reluctance of taking a vote by the Action Committee without representation from the Board of Selectmen. The Town Administrator asked to insert benefits into the analysis, which is a change in the presentation as received in your packet.

b. Analysis of the Bus Transportation Bid – Mr. Tatro presented an analysis of the bid on 4 alternatives. Three vendors came in with bid packets – one with no bid and two companies only bid on Option A, current level of service:

- First Student \$2,255,578.20 with fuel from us for a total of \$2,395,578.20
 - Durham Bus Services \$2,159,655.20 with fuel from us for a total of \$2,299,655.20
- By adding the maximum benefits of \$28,000 per employee who have benefits now plus capital cost of \$115,000 makes our total cost at \$1,883,556.00. The difference in the lowest bid is \$416,099.20 per year. Athletic trips and field trips are not part of non net school spending transportation but part of net school spending so these were not a factored into the bid comparison.

Mr. Tatro then explained the Capital Vehicle Purchase - \$85,000 per new vehicle x 4 vehicles = \$340,000 less money generated from revolving account of \$225,000 = \$115,000 to be funded by town. He outlined a cost savings by eliminating runs (driver; bus usage; fuel) is \$23,289.60 per run to get to the \$150,000 difference in the Town's operating budget. Mr. Tatro explained the number of buses needed by imposing a walking distance. This savings would be minimal since 90% of our children live greater and 1 or 2 miles away.

Dr. Sylvia stated that by operating our own transportation system we have saved the town money over the last 25 years.

Chair Swett asked Superintendent Rabinovitch to consult with his administrative staff to see if perhaps there is another alternative. We cannot continue with the current level of transportation services and buy new buses with what town is giving us now. Privatization will not save us any money.

Dr. Sylvia stated that he did not want to compromise safety and felt it was presumptuous to state the difference was \$150,000 since we don't know the town's additional funding yet. He requested that the Action Committee give a recommendation regarding transportation services.

Mrs. Veugen asked that fees being charged should be part of any transportation presentation, even if minuscule.

iNECS and WHS International Student Program

Principal Palladino explained that foreign exchange programs have been in-kind in past whereby no funds were received but our students have had the experience of a foreign exchange student in the school. The number of students accepted has been capped at 2 students with the two companies we have been using.

iNECS would like to allow 3-4 foreign exchange students from China and they would reimburse Wareham at the high school tuition rate. The students would graduate from Wareham High School if our graduation requirements are met. These students come in with the knowledge of our culture, and language of English. iNECS allows stipends for families willing to house students. There is a \$2,000 cost for homeland security upfront and paid by iNECS and then the \$2,000 is taken off of the first student's tuition charge. All students must meet the local and state health regulations to attend.

Dr. Sylvia moved to approve the iNECS Chinese exchange program for the 2013-2014 school year, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

NEASC Progress Report

Principal Palladino announced that the NEASC Progress Report has been turned in and we are making strides. Wareham High School is fully accredited for the next 10 years and moving forward with the

recommendations from NEASC i.e., increase of computers, documented funding and fixing the gymnasium roof. Another report give the assurance of appropriate level of funding at high school is due in May.

Principal Palladino will be requesting an article at town meeting of \$500,000 to fix the remainder of the school roof once he receives approval of the application from Massachusetts School Building Authority to get on list at rate of \$0.60 on dollar.

Request for Pilot Clubs at WHS for 2012-13 School Year

Principal Palladino requested approval to have a Yu-Gi-Oh Pilot Club.

Mr. Fontes moved to approve the pilot Yu-Gi-Oh Club, seconded by Dr. Sylvia.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain - 0

Principal Palladino requested approval to have a WHS Global Education Team Pilot Club.

Mrs. Veugen moved to approve the Global Education Team Club as a pilot club, seconded by Dr. Sylvia.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

These clubs will replace two other clubs not being offered this school year.

Vote on FY'14 School Budget

Chair Swett explained that State Aid less Assessments gives Wareham an increase of \$50,000 using the Governor's numbers. The Cherry Sheet commitments are based on the Governor generating new tax revenue being passed. Circuit Breaker is expected to drop to 70% from 75% and the McKinney Vento reimbursement has been cut in half by the Governor about \$60,000 less for Wareham. State interest in early childhood education may be positive for Wareham.

Dr. Rabinovitch stated that the calculated increase in state aid may not affect Wareham due to the drop in student enrollment.

Mr. Flaherty moved to approve the non net budget of \$1,601,056, seconded by Mr. Fontes.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Mr. Fontes moved to approve the net school budget of \$27,018,325, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain - 1 (Dr. Sylvia)

Mr. Flaherty moved to approve the total FY14 Budget of \$28,619,381, seconded by Mr. Fontes.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Vote on Grade 5 Configuration for the 2013-14 School Year

Based on the best educational course of action and having space in Middle School, Dr. Rabinovitch recommended moving grade 5 students to Wareham Middle School for the 2013-14 school year.

If his recommendation is approved he may come back with a recommendation to change to a 3 tier bus system in order to save 3 runs.

Mrs. Veugen moved to move grade 5 students from the Decas School and Minot Forest School to Wareham Middle School for this fall, seconded by Mr. Fontes.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Acceptance of Gifts

Dr. Rabinovitch recommended the acceptance of the following gifts:

- \$10 John Walsh of Naples NY towards a field trip at WHS. Mr. Flaherty moved to accept the gift, seconded by Mr. Fontes.
VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0
- \$200 gift card from Target to Decas School resources to improve student success. Mrs. Veugen moved to accept the gift, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.
VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0
- \$20,000 gift from The Maurice and Anne Makepeace Family Foundation to Coop for alternative school. Mr. Flaherty moved to accept the gift with thanks, seconded by Mrs. Veugen.
VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

School Committee Reports

- Superintendent Search – Mrs. Veugen reviewed the superintendent's process to date. The document Superintendent Profile/Job Description needs to be completed by each member. She asked for a version on the website to gather feedback from the community. The next step is stakeholder meetings with groups and to hold open forums. She provided a listing of free advertising places and recommended paid advertising in Education Week at \$2,145. She then reviewed the suggested Timeline Stages 1-5 and the next steps.
- Policy Review – Dr. Sylvia reported that the Policy Review Committee divided the Library Selection Policy into two policies and recommended approval of Library Materials Selection and Adoption which conforms with new Library Standards.

Mrs. Veugen moved approval, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

Two policies remaining for discussion are Retention and Wellness for March meeting of Policy Review.

- Action Committee – Chair Swett reported that the Action Committee will be reconvening upon an appointment of a Board of Selectmen and once Dr. Rabinovitch has a specific proposal for services to be provided in a 5-8 middle school context.
- Budget Negotiations – Chair Swett reported that he, Chair Holmes, the Town Administrator and the Superintendent met today. The meeting was extremely constructive and cordial and progress was made on a conceptual level. The next meeting will be March 5th. The Superintendent and budget advisory committee will be working to bring down the budget as approved today to reduce the gap. We may need to schedule a workshop meeting after March 5th but before April town meeting. Chair Holmes felt a full Board of Selectmen and full School Committee meeting should take place before town meeting.
- Chair Swett stated that at our February meeting a presentation will be made by Mrs. Rotella on the Wareham MassCore student data on the DESE website.
- Chair Swett reminded that volunteers are needed to be on search committee for the Middle School Principal and one for Director of Operations/Finance.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Rabinovitch described the relationship the school department has with WCTV and its support of schools in 2012 - building a studio within the high school and funding a full-time teacher assistant, Christian Fernandes, and an after school video club; providing equipment loans; and beginning the

The school department was involved for the 5th year with the MLK Breakfast, a quality event.

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