

July 29, 2013

A workshop meeting of the Wareham School Committee was held on Monday, July 29, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. in the Wareham Middle School Library. Present were Geoff Swett, Michael Flaherty, Rhonda Veugen and Ken Fontes as well as incoming Superintendent Shaver-Hood, Business Manager Michael MacMillan, and recording secretary, Mrs. Ruiz.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Veugen at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Flaherty called for a point of order and notified the Chair that he would be recording the meeting.

#### **Pupil Transportation for 2013-14**

Budget – Mr. Tatro distributed a Transportation Department Budget for years ending FY12, FY13 and FY14.

Chair Veugen reported that previously a recommendation was made by Mr. Tatro and Dr. Rabinovitch for a three tier transportation system to save money and would cut services (1 mile elementary and 1.5 secondary). Dr. Rabinovitch discussed staying with a two tier system and providing monitors on the buses. The main parental concern was with fifth graders riding on the same bus as high school children.

Tier System – Mr. Tatro felt it was too late for a three tier system at this point. No votes were taken from this board.

Mr. Swett mentioned that he was never aware of a deadline in which to remove the option. We will not have the capital to buy new buses if we run a deficit in this year's budget. A three tier transportation system may be necessary at some point in time.

The FY14 transportation revolving account has \$189,701 and a hold of \$150,000 for vehicles.

(Mr. Fontes arrived at 6:14 p.m.)

Mr. Tatro explained that he plans on 1) cutting at least one bus by reducing the number of buses needed at the elementary level; 2) decreasing maintenance costs with three newer vehicles; and 3) having no more major repairs since the body repair damage is done and the tire problem is solved. He is projecting a \$200,000 revolving account balance at end of this fiscal year. If we have a three tier system, there would be additional savings in driver payroll of \$40,000-\$50,000 and maintenance on the buses not being used.

Members of the Committee expressed concern with the lack of communication to parents with a two tier system.

Ms. Shaver-Hood asked for a copy of the survey and the results sent out to parents. The survey resulted in 218 students not taking a bus, which we would normally account for.

Chair Veugen asked for a discussion on the security/safety of fifth graders on the buses.

Mr. Tatro stated that he had never made a comment on putting monitors on buses at a cost in payroll of \$9,000-\$10,000 per monitor. The history of discipline on buses is that most problems are with grades 5-8 kids. We will sit them by grade working back. The most cost effective solution is to have portable cameras on the buses to record audio and video or a more expense model if live monitoring. Every bus driver has a two-way radio. The cost would be approximately \$10,000 for 25 cameras and taken from the transportation revolving account. The cameras can be installed and ready to go for the opening of school.

Chair Veugen stated that there needs to be a communication to parents of fifth graders explaining what is being done with additional training for bus drivers in regard to cameras.

There was no vote taken, we will continue with status quo. The Chair will speak with the Superintendent regarding the cameras and possible vote at the next meeting. The procedure in the past is if there is a problem on a bus, a monitor is placed on that bus and we will continue with this procedure.

**Discussion on Future Budget Meetings with Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee**

Chair Veugen informed the members that a few weeks ago she went to a Board of Selectmen meeting with the Finance Committee Chair and talked about conversations starting sooner than right before town meeting. It's the boards' desire to continue to work together in this next budget cycle. She suggested that the first meeting be with the Town Administrator, the Superintendent, the Accountant or Director of Finance and the School Business Manager. The Town Administrator and the Superintendent will set the agenda for the boards.

After further discussion it was decided to schedule a meeting with each board chair, the Town Administrator and the Superintendent.

**Any other business**

Mr. Fontes and the committee members wished the best to Robert Louzan on his retirement and his expertise will be solely missed.

Superintendent Shaver-Hood stated that Mr. Louzan has agreed to stay on temporarily to assist the district as a part-time contracted service staff member.

Mr. Swett moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Fontes

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain - 0

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

**List of documents:**

Transportation Department Budget History

