

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee

February 28, 2008

Minutes

CALLED TO ORDER: R. Boroff called a duly posted meeting of the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee to order at 7:05 p.m. The meeting was held in the Multipurpose Room of Buker Elementary School.

PRESENT: Denise Bisailon, Richard Boroff, Donald Gallant, Catherine Harrison, Lisa Gaquin, Alexa McCloughan, Jack O'Keefe, and Laurie Wilson.

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Marinel McGrath, Superintendent, Paul Szymanski, Asst. Superintendent and Charlotte Karlsson-Willson.

ABSENT: Bill Martin

Motion to add items to the agenda: L. WILSON MADE A MOTION THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO AMEND THE FEBRUARY 28, 2008 AGENDA AS FOLLOWS:

UNDER NEW BUSINESS ADD:

5. B. *School Calendar Change – March 21, 2008*

5. C. *Center School Roof Recommendation*

UNDER ADJOURNMENT ADD:

8. *Adjournment: Add Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters pertaining to FY 09 contract negotiations.*

D. GALLANT SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

RECOGNITION: Dr. McGrath recognized boys' basketball team and read a letter from MIAA regarding the excellent management of the last game recognizing Ian McCracken, Dan Curran, and Don Doucette.

STATEMENTS OF GUESTS: None

INFORMATION/ COMMUNICATION:

Rotary Exchange: Win Dodge, Hamilton-Wenham Rotary Club, gave an update on the Exchange program. Caridad Amoroso and Dasha XXXX gave presentations about their countries. The school committee asked the girls a few questions about their countries. Win thanked Bob Krol and Frank Sullivan for helping the girl's adjustment to the school district. There are four students from Hamilton Wenham that are out on foreign exchange programs.

Chapter 70 Presentation: Catherine Harrison introduced Roger Hatch from the MA Department of Education who gave a presentation on Chapter 70 state aid formula for funding education. They give out about 4 billion dollars a year. It has four basic steps: foundation budget, foundation enrollment, each town amount to pay, and the difference between the two. They take 3.75% of total enrollment for special education in district and 1% of total enrollment to determine out of district kids. He explained how to determine how much each town should pay. This is a new formula that is being phased in. To determine wealth in the town they use property values and income. Hamilton and Wenham is responsible for 82.5% of the budget. Hamilton is about at their target and Wenham is below the target. The final step is calculating the state aide. Hamilton-Wenham is a minimum aid

community. R. Boroff thanked him for his presentation. C. Harrison stated that this formula was devised since ed reform but not much has changed since then. The Superintendents Association has worked to change the formula and they have raised it by 18% - 20%. D. Bisailon the beauty of Hamilton-Wenham is that our district is small so you can see all the money and where it goes. Regional transportation is not part of the foundation budget. L. Wilson stated that many of the mandates are not covered in the foundation budget. D. Gallant stated that our out of district costs are a million more than what the state is giving in aide. A. McCloughan wanted to know what the process is to look at these metrics. She also wanted to know can they look at the regions of the state and balance out to covers the costs. R. Hatch stated that they have a wage difference category. D. Bisailon stated that the mandates have changed, and the standards have changed but the state has had the same formula for the past to 15 years. They need to correct the inequities. R. Boroff stated that the wage adjustment factor at 100% applies to greater Boston. The average salary is \$58,000 which is adjusted for inflation. J. O’Keefe asked if all cities and towns have the same percentages. He stated that half is from income and half from property.

Questions:

Lynette Fallon, Hamilton, asked on the appropriation side of it, how change is going to happen. She said do we need to convince the dept. of education or the governor and legislature. Mr. Hatch said the dept. of education does not need convincing and he believes it does need to change. Laura Park, Hamilton, focused on the word “adequate” stating that the education we want for children is not just adequate. All the money raised is being used to cover the mandated costs. The students who are not in special education are being forced to deal with cuts and that is clearly not adequate. Jeff Hubbard, Hamilton, asked why is the formula seemingly skewed to benefit urban communities and why is there such a disparity? The range is based on the percentages.

Subcommittee Minutes:

The following minutes were enclosed in School Committee packets:
 1. Communications Jan. 7, 18 & Feb. 7
 2. Facilities Jan. 10 & Feb. 7
 3. Finance Feb. 11

REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

Subcommittee Reports:

Communications:

A. McCloughan reported that the subcommittee is working on the Connection publication and the articles for the Chronicle.

Finance:

C. Harrison reported that the subcommittee has met several times and is still working on the budget. She reported that (1) we have received 1.175% from the towns and (2) the subcommittee has not made any decisions yet regarding what is in the budget and what would be on the override. The presentation for budget recommendations will be on March 11th and the public hearing is March 19th. L. Gaquin asked why the school district only received 1.175% from the towns. C. Harrison said that question is best to ask the towns. Wenham enrollment is higher so they have to give a higher amount this year. This is the biggest shift in a long time.

Legislative:

J. O’Keefe reported that the subcommittee is planning to hold the Legislative Breakfast on either Monday, April 7th or Monday, April 14th. He should know within a day or two when it will be.

Negotiations:

R. Boroff reported that the subcommittee met with the custodians and will continue negotiations with them over the next few weeks.

- Policy: D. Bisailon reported that the subcommittee has not met.
- Leadership Team Reports:
Cutler: J. Clifford announced the Open House on March 12th at 5:30 -7 and 2 term report cards go out the week of March 17th.
- Winthrop; C. Vaich reported that the Brown Bag concert series was very successful. They had a work weekend and painted the gallery. Their focus is Read across America for the whole school. The Books Alive program will go on as well.
- Buker: B. O'Donoghue reported that the teachers will continue professional development work with Jerry Goldberg on March 14. MCAS will begin the end of March. Buker parents have been working on an auction to beheld on April 4th.
- High School: B. Krol stated that the preliminary round for One Act Plays starts soon. The Science Fair is on March 5th. Acapella night and Friends Spaghetti night are also March events. Students will begin to sign up for courses next year. They will meet with eighth grade parents and students on "Step Up" Night.
- Curriculum/Student Services: M. Duffy stated that the Leadership Team is looking at curriculum for next year, teachers' needs, and looking at 5 year tech plan. They are working on a few grants. Student Services is having a focus group on special education for summer programs in their office tomorrow at 9:15 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS:*2008-2009 High School Portfolio**Requirement:*

B. Krol reviewed the Portfolio process for the high school. He explained that each faculty member is responsible for 10 students not 100. The regional exit portfolio is a student selected collection of works, reflections and achievements in academic studies, personal growth and extra curricular activities. He reviewed the purpose of the regional exit portfolio. It is not a project but it is a collection selection and reflection of their time at the Regional. There are three sections of the portfolio: introduction (completed in the senior year), mastery of L.E.A.R.N., and supporting evidence... Dolores Redman spoke briefly about the portfolio. D. Bisailon stated that this is a wonderful process. Currently, only half of the faculty is participating because they started with the freshman class. The faculty is also working on senior assessment/exhibition initiative. Some of the areas of concern are getting enough time to work on these, training staff, and getting the whole school up and running. This is a work in progress. L. Wilson very exciting to see this get underway. C. Harrison asked are there enough opportunities for each student to have enough pieces to put into the portfolio. M. Krol stated that there are enough projects to pick from. The school committee feels it is a good idea to get more information out to the parents.

School Calendar Change-March 21,2008:

L. WILSON MADE A MOTION THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO MAKE FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2008 BE A NON SCHOOL DAY WITH THE DAY TO BE ADDED TO END OF SCHOOL YEAR TO MAKE JUNE 23RD. 2008 THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IF ALL SNOW DAYS ARE USED. DON GALLANT SECONDED THE MOTION. Dr. McGrath stated that the district has insufficient coverage to hold school on March 21, 2008 to keep the students safe. Therefore, Dr. McGrath recommends that the day be a non-school day and that this be issue sent back to the Policy Subcommittee to review this policy. J. O'Keefe stated that last year we were caught off guard but

this year there was a month notice. When asked, Dr. McGrath stated that the high school would be missing half of the faculty, a third of the middle school staff, and at the elementary schools 6 people are off and three are taking a half day. D. Bisailon stated that they will go through and review the policy again and speak to different groups again. L. Gaquin asked what input did the faculty have in moving to the Federal Holiday schedule. The leadership team did recommend that they move to that schedule. THE MOTION PASSED WITH ONE PERSON AGAINST (7-1-0).

Center School Roof Recommendation:

L. WILSON MADE A MOTION THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL VOTE TO INCLUDE THE ESTIMATED REPLACEMENT COSTS OF THE CENTER SCHOOL ROOF IN THE FY09 OPERATING BUDGET CONTINGENT UPON A REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL AGREEMENT. D. GALLANT SECONDED THE MOTION. C. Harrison stated that the Facilities subcommittee recommended that the district fund the cost to repair the roof in the FY09 operating budget. They reviewed many different ways to cover the cost of the roof. The finance subcommittee decided to include it in the operating budget. There is a question to see if it is possible to get funds through the CPA act. P. Symanski stated to be cautious because they still need to look into the regional agreement to assure that a capital item to be treated in consistent within the regional agreement as a separate line item. THE MOTION PASSED WITH ONE PERSON AGAINST (7-0-1).

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADOPTION:

None at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

LAURIE WILSON MADE MOTION THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 31, 2008. DONALD GALLANT SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH (8-0-0)

ADJOURNMENT:

LAURIE WILSON MADE A MOTION THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADJOURN AT 9:40 P.M. TO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING MATTERS PERTAINING TO FY09 CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND NOT TO RETURN TO OPEN SESSION. DONALD GALLANT SECONDED THE MOTION. A VOICE VOTE WAS TAKEN:

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| Richard Boroff – yes | Denise Bisailon-yes |
| Donald Gallant – yes | Jack O’Keefe - yes |
| Lisa Gaquin – yes | Alexa McCloughlan - yes |
| Catherine Harrison – yes | Laurie Wilson – Yes |

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (8-0-0).

Respectfully Submitted,
Jacqueline Cooper
School Committee Secretary