



HAMILTON-WENHAM
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
5 SCHOOL STREET, WENHAM, MA 01984 • TEL. 978-468-5310

School Committee Meeting
Zoom Virtual Meeting
Zoom Webinar ID: 850 0606 8608
Meeting Password: 679579
Wednesday, June 10, 2020
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Present:

David Polito, Chairperson
Gene Lee, Assistant Secretary
Michelle Bailey, Vice Chairperson
Michelle Horgan, Secretary
Peter Wolczik
Stacey Metternick
Tai Pryjma

Also Present:

Julie Kukenberger, Interim Superintendent
Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent to Finance & Administration
Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary
Mary Beth Banios, Incoming District Superintendent
Thomas Geary, Director of Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations

1. Call to Order

6:00 PM

David Polito, Chairperson, calls the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

2. Motion to Adjourn into Executive Session

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ADJOURN INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION PURPOSE #3: TO DISCUSS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO ALL COLLECTIVE BARGAINING GROUPS AND LITIGATION, AND RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ADJOURN INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION PURPOSE #2: TO CONDUCT STRATEGY SESSIONS IN PREPARATION FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH NONUNION PERSONNEL OR TO CONDUCT COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SESSIONS OR CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH NONUNION PERSONNEL, TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION.

HOLDING SUCH MEETINGS IN OPEN SESSION WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE DISTRICT'S NEGOTIATION STRATEGY.

MOTION by David Polito; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey.

Gene Lee	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
Peter Wolczik	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;

Michelle Bailey YES;
David Polito YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously by roll call vote of 6 members present.

Open Session reconvenes at 8:20 PM. Mr. Polito thanks everyone for their patience.

3. Citizens' Comments

None.

4. New Business

A. Superintendent Transition Plan

[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Banios introduces herself to the community, remarking how excited she is to come aboard. She provides an overview of her communication plan with both the community and district staff, detailed in the attached [exhibit](#). Ms. Banios explains that current circumstances require a great deal of flexibility, but assures the community that she will be engaged in preparing for the opening of schools this fall. Ms. Banios will begin having open office hours, and welcomes everyone to share their thoughts with her.

B. SideBar Agreement HWRSC and AFCME and Municipal Employees

[Exhibit](#)

Thomas Geary, *Director of Facilities, Maintenance, and Operations*, explains the changes proposed in the [attached](#) sidebar letter. Notably, should the School Committee accept the Sidebar, the maintenance team will resume working full-time tomorrow. Mr. Geary offers clarification on the SideBar Agreement details, including the pay schedule, terms of contract, and professional development completed.

Ms. Bailey states that the SideBar Agreement was not linked to the agenda this evening, nor was the item discussed during tonight's Executive Session meeting. Mr. Polito apologizes numerous times for his error in signing the letter prematurely, without the full School Committee's review.

Mr. Geary provides the most recent version of the Agreement, which is subsequently linked in the agenda for review by the School Committee.

Further discussion regarding Cares Act; normal shift for maintenance team; anticipated challenges in returning to work; pay rate; process for requesting time-off; preparations needed for reopening; state guidelines/mandates; etc.

The School Committee appreciates the Maintenance Team's commitment to a unified, safe, and well-functioning community. Mr. Geary and his team have been willing and able to collaborate with the district while remaining dedicated to the students' best interests.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVE THE SIDEBAR AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY, AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO, COUNCIL 93, LOCAL 2905, REPRESENTING THE CUSTODIAL AND MAINTENANCE EMPLOYEES.

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Stacey Metternick.

Peter Wolczik YES;
Gene Lee YES;
Tai Pryjma YES;
Michelle Bailey YES;
Michelle Horgan YES;

Stacey Metternick YES;
David Polito YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

C. Honor Retirees

- *Ann Burnham, 2001-2020, Food Service Worker*

Ann Burnham spent many years as a dedicated Food Service Worker at Buker Elementary School. Thank you, Ann, for your dedication to the district and for encouraging students to explore different foods! Best wishes for a happy and safe retirement!

D. National History Day 2020: HWRHS Student Participants

Kristen Borges acknowledges the Hamilton - Wenham students who participated in the National History Day 2020 Competition. Ms. Borges congratulates those students whose projects moved forward, noting the extraordinary climate and unique challenges students were able to navigate this year.

E. Roadmap to Re-entry

[Exhibit](#)

Dr. Kukenberger begins the presentation noting that a photograph that some found insensitive and/or offensive was removed from the presentation slide deck.

Dr. Kukenberger and Mr. Geary explain the guidelines from State and local authorities, which aim to increase the safety and prioritize the health of staff, students, and families during school reopening. Discussion regarding responses from other districts,; mandates from the State; local guidance; adequately preparing for uncertainty; safety supplies (previously known as PPE); and other considerations for schools reopening (social distance/safety precautions while eating/ staggering schedules/remote learning, etc.). Dr. Kukenberger recommends implementing a one-to-one technology program, providing each student with their own IPAD. This will not only decrease the spread of COVID-19 and other communicable germs, but also ensure equitable access should remote learning become a reality again.

F. FY21 Budget Discussion

[Exhibit](#)

The Hamilton Board of Selectmen (at least 3 of the members) will attend the next School Committee meeting to discuss Town Meeting and warrant structure. They have agreed to this joint meeting for the sake of unity and with the hopes the district and Town can work together to identify areas for collaboration and resource sharing. Dr. Kukenberger notes that this meeting would be a great opportunity to discuss whether the Town of Hamilton is willing to help with students' technology needs.

Mr. Polito shares a rough draft of the 1-page information sheet to be distributed to Town Meeting attendees. Discussion regarding timeline in finalizing the document; options in printing/dissemination; information to be communicated; best approach for communicating information; consolidating complex budget ideas to easily understood infographics; other suggestions/requests to refine information.

Discussion regarding potential staffing cuts resulting from FY21 budget reductions, with Dr. Kukenberger clarifying that official written notice will be sent to all non-renewed staff. Dr. Kukenberger explains that no decisions have been finalized at this point. Ms. Bailey observed misinformation in public discussions, and would like to clarify: budget cuts are being made at every level across the board - not only to teaching positions.

Ms. Bailey notes that there was community feedback to consider reductions to the costs of transportation. She explains this does not appear to be an option for Hamilton - Wenham. The amount collected for transportation would end up being deducted from the amount provided by the State. As such, this would require a significant amount of administrative oversight for no cost savings.

Discussion regarding the School Committee's vote for FY21 budget reductions. Mr. Wolczik explains how detrimental each reduction is, particularly the cut to foreign language, as this has been instrumental in his life, and his bilingual family's life. Other members echo his concerns, explaining how difficult it is to even consider the budget reductions listed. Dr. Kukenberger reminds the School Committee and the Hamilton - Wenham community that the budget reductions are a ***crisis response***. She encourages continued conversations on how to best rebuild the schools and strengthen education. The discussion about budget reductions continues, with School Committee members speaking about the challenges presented, the commitment and dedication required for volunteering time and effort on the School Committee, etc.

Through the chat function, many community members begin asking questions about the budget cuts, making suggestions for cost savings strategies, and otherwise offering opinions on the district's financial crisis. Ms. Bailey explains that the School Committee has exhausted every possible option; there is absolutely nothing that they have not tried.

Mr. Lee reviews some of the mechanical components of the Town Meeting. He explains that the School District has been allotted a set amount of time for their presentation, and notes that he is happy to work with Dr. Kukenberger to finalize the presentation. There is no opposition to Mr. Lee and Dr. Kukenberger finalizing the presentation. In addition, Mr. Lee states that the Town Meeting moderator, Bill Bowler, has requested that all motions be submitted in advance of the meeting. Mr. Lee is able to revise the motion he made at Town Meeting a few years ago (to consolidate 2 warrants to 1), however he would first like the School Committee's feedback if this is indeed the approach they would like to take. If the meeting with the Hamilton BOS next week is not a productive/favorable meeting, Mr. Lee is concerned that the opportunity to make that motion will be lost.

Discussion regarding Town Meeting, including the structure of warrants; communication to voters; collaborating with Towns; etc. Ms. Bailey notes the moderator informed her of a community member who intends to make a motion that the school district operate on the 1/12 operating budget. Ms. Bailey believes it would be in the district's best interest to prepare a response to that motion, detailing the severe consequences of continuing to operate with such limited resources.

Discussion regarding strategy and next steps in preparing for Town Meeting. Tomorrow, Mr. Lee will ask moderator Bill Bowler for more information regarding presentations submitted in advance of the Town Meeting.

G. Resolution Regarding COVID-19 State Funding

[Exhibit](#)

Mr. Polito reviews the Resolution Regarding COVID-19 State Funding as detailed in the [exhibit](#). He explains that the Resolution asks for reimbursement for the extraordinary expenses associated with the COVID-19 response and reopening schools. Ms. Bailey adds that many surrounding districts have voted to approve this resolution, and many others are scheduled to approve it in future meetings. Brief discussion regarding adding the word "technology" to current resolution as well as possible alternative resolutions available.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE RESOLUTION REGARDING COVID-19 STATE FUNDING, AND SEND THE RESOLUTION TO STATE ADMINISTRATION.

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Gene Lee.

Peter Wolczik	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
David Polito	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

Mr. Polito will send this to Massachusetts State legislature/representatives, and will include typed signatures of the Hamilton - Wenham School Committee members.

5. Superintendent's Report

A. Kindergarten Registration

[Exhibit](#)

Dr. Kukenberger reviews the kindergarten registrations received, as detailed in the [exhibit](#). The total enrollment is lower than normal. Dr. Kukenberger explains that since Kindergarten is not required, the number of enrollments may fluctuate.

B. Enrollment by Town

[Exhibit](#)

Dr. Kukenberger reviews the district enrollment data, as detailed in the [exhibit](#).

C. Out of District Placement by School

[Exhibit](#)

Dr. Kukenberger reviews the information regarding the out-of-district placement by school, as previously requested by the School Committee, and as detailed in the [exhibit](#).

Ms. Metternick asks if there is data as to where students were placed. Dr. Kukenberger explains that this information is found in the exhibit linked to this evening's agenda. Discussion regarding anticipated out-of-district placements; enrollment data; actual enrollments; etc.

6. Chair's Report

None.

7. Committee Reports (Continued)

A. Capital/Financial Subcommittee

No update.

B. Policy Subcommittee

The Policy Subcommittee will meet next Tuesday, 06/16/2020 at 4:00 PM.

C. Negotiations Subcommittee

The Negotiations Subcommittee will next Wednesday, 06/17/2020 at 4:00 PM. They will continue to work with unions to negotiate contracts.

8. Consent Agenda

A. Warrants

[Exhibit](#)

- Voucher No. 29
- Voucher No. 1058
- Voucher No. 1057
- Voucher No. 2896
- Voucher No. 2897

- Voucher No. 2898
- Voucher No. 2901
- Voucher No. 2902
- Voucher No. 2903
- Voucher No. 2904
- Voucher No. 2905

B. Vote to approve prior meeting minutes

- May 14, 2020

[Exhibit](#)

C. Donations

- ~~Friends of Winthrop Gift/Donation~~

[Exhibit](#)

~~\$1,150 on Behalf of the 5th Grade Class to Purchase a Water Bottle Filling Station~~

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED ABOVE; THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER CHANGES.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE AMEND THE MOTION ON THE FLOOR IN ORDER TO EXCLUDE THE DONATION FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA.

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey.

Peter Wolczik	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
David Polito	YES.

MOTION TO AMEND PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

Original motion:

Peter Wolczik	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
David Polito	YES.

ORIGINAL MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

9. Donations

Friends of Winthrop Gift/Donation

[Exhibit](#)

\$1,150 on Behalf of the 5th Grade Class to Purchase a Water Bottle Filling Station

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE DONATION FROM THE FRIENDS OF WINTHROP IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,150 ON BEHALF OF THE 5TH GRADE CLASS IN ORDER TO PURCHASE A WATER BOTTLE FILLING STATION.

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey.

Discussion: costs of station/installation; potential inequities across schools; COVID-19 challenges and restrictions; etc. The School Committee will communicate with the Friends groups to ensure that there is equitable services and facilities across the schools.

Peter Wolczik	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
David Polito	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

Thank you to the *Friends of Winthrop* for this generous donation and ongoing support of students!

10. Other

A. Topics for Future Meetings

Next Meeting is June 17, 2020 at 6:00pm.

- Hamilton Board of Selectmen to join the meeting; discussion re: Town Meeting and warrant structure;
 - Ms. Bailey will extend an invitation to the Town of Wenham;
- Recognition of School Committee member, Gene Lee (last meeting)
- Recognition of Interim Superintendent, Julie Kukenberger (last meeting);
- FY21 Budget Reductions: Dr. Kukenberger and Mr. Leone will organize the FY21 Budget Reductions, organized by DESE category, to prepare for School Committee decisions:
 - A motion will be made to accept each reduction;
 - After a motion is made, there will be time for discussion;
 - There will be a roll-call vote with each motion;
- Approve 1-page communication to be distributed at Town Meetings;
- Discussion regarding chat function in Zoom meetings;

→06/20/2020: [Hamilton Town Meeting](#) in the morning and [National History Day](#) presentations in the afternoon.

→Ms. Bailey notes the extraordinary success of the Hamilton - Wenham graduating class parade, held this past Saturday, 06/06/2020.

11. Vote to Adjourn

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN THE 06/10/2020 MEETING AT 10:55 PM.

MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Stacey Metternick.

Peter Wolczik	YES;
Tai Pryjma	YES;
Stacey Metternick	YES;
Gene Lee	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES;
David Polito	YES.

MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of 7 members present.

Respectfully submitted August 5th, 2020 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.

Addendum 1 - Citizen Comments through Zoom chat:

From Kim Dietel to All Panelists:

9:40 PM

Hi. Have you considered applying for grant funding to help pay for some devices (computers) and the required PPE? Thank you. I do not want to speak

From Jennifer Jukano... to All Panelists:

9:43 PM

When will citizens learn what has been saved through collective bargaining and how that might impact the budget? It also seems that the district should be able to renegotiate healthcare costs as well. I know of many businesses and nonprofits who have had to do that. It just seems that there is nearly \$1 million that could potentially be saved in those areas before making programmatic cuts.

From Mrs. MacDougall... to All Panelists:

9:54 PM

Can you speak to how that teacher reduction will impact class sizes etc?

From Mrs. MacDougall... to All Panelists:

9:57 PM

why not eliminate buses for next year? Towns like Melrose don't have buses. Seems like a money saver and won't have to worry about social distancing challenges

From Mrs. MacDougall... to All Panelists:

Will a survey be sent out to parents and staff regarding preferences for fall?

From Reba Eaton to All Panelists:

Do we have any idea WHEN we will find out if we are doing 1. Remote learning 100% 2. Part time remote learning OR 3. NO remote learning?

From Anna Siedzik to All Panelists:

Can you clarify for the public what they will be doing?

From Maureen Lydon to All Panelists:

I'll miss you Ann!

From Reba Eaton to All Panelists:

Sorry..many of us don't know what you are talking about

About images

From Lana Saleh to All Panelists:

Are students mandated to wear a mask all day during the school day?

From land of confusi... to All Panelists:

That was the best part of the meeting

From Jeremy Coffey to All Panelists:

Would it be possible for the district to negotiate a group purchase rate for Chromebooks, and open that to parents? Families might be willing to purchase the equipment if it meant their student having his/her own unit. That might alleviate the burden on the district.

From Allison Spies to All Panelists:

Will there be a support plan for families that decide 100% homeschooling is the right decision for their family especially with kids that may be "high risk" with asthma and underlying health issues, etc.? And still feel that they can be included in the district?

From Jennifer Jukano... to All Panelists:

Is the State willing to negotiate around providing funds to districts to meet the standards they are making? Or is it all on the district to fund the needed changes?

From ann krantz to All Panelists:

So glad to see that creative thinking and flexibility are central to the districts thinking... considering things like classes outside...

From DeSimone to All Panelists:

Have other states rolled out their plans for the Fall yet?

From Julie Kukenberg... to All Panelists:

You also need to discuss the one pager

And Town meeting strategy

From Lawrence, Molly... to All Panelists:

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are all school votes "yes means yes" -if we want to pass the budget? I was confused by the way the questions on the sample ballots were worded

From Kim Dietel to All Panelists:

Hi. Have you considered applying for grant funding to help pay for some devices (computers) and the required PPE? Thank you. I do not want to speak

From Jennifer Jukano... to All Panelists:

When will citizens learn what has been saved through collective bargaining and how that might impact the budget? It also seems that the district should be able to renegotiate healthcare costs as well. I know of many businesses and nonprofits who have had to do that. It just seems that there is nearly \$1 million that could potentially be saved in those areas before making programmatic cuts.

From Mrs. MacDougall... to All Panelists:

Can you speak to how that teacher reduction will impact class sizes etc?

From DeSimone to All Panelists:

Thank you for looking into that, Michelle!

From Mrs. MacDougall... to All Panelists:

why not eliminate buses for next year? Towns like Melrose don't have buses. Seems like a money saver and won't have to worry about social distancing challenges

From Erin Wetson to All Panelists:

Stacey Bucyk was instrumental in developing special ed programs in Beverly to keep the children within district and make significant progress. Is she being consulted with to assist in making the same changes in this district? \$900,000 is a great deal of money that does not need to be spent...

From Lana Saleh to All Panelists:

Scientific Studies show that kids that are bilingual improve in math and science and analytical skills

We are going backwards!!!!

From Nancy MacGilliv... to All Panelists:

peter I could not agree more.

From Lana Saleh to All Panelists:

What are the different areas that there can be cuts in beside cutting teachers and other positions?

From Nancy MacGilliv... to All Panelists:

we

From Dina Coffey to All Panelists:

Was to go Peter! so many feel that way!

From Nancy MacGilliv... to All Panelists:

We should not ask our kids to sacrifice their education in any way, shape or form. Dave Polito, there has to be another way.

From Lana Saleh to All Panelists:

Can you name some of "the other places" the budget deficit can be made up for other than position cutting>?

From Allison Spies to All Panelists:

Well said Peter, thank you for speaking up! World language should begin in elementary school when language is being solidified. My kids became almost fluent in French in just 3 years in Montreal by starting in kindergarten.

From Sue Cooke to All Panelists:

10:07 PM

Could be a silly question- have we considered furloughs i.e. 25 vs 40 hrs week etc...?? This is what's happening in the private sector

From Lawrence, Molly... to All Panelists:

10:07 PM

Is there any option for private funding, given the loss or potential loss of state funding?

From Nancy MacGilliv... to All Panelists:

10:11 PM

OK so why, since you don't know, are you trying to figure this out now? why is your answer to ask the kids to sacrifice? start sifting through now!

From Kathleen O'Shea... to All Panelists:

10:11 PM

Has there been any consideration to selling the big white maintenance trucks, reducing some of the crew and having the DPW go back to plowing, mowing and maintaining the grounds?

From Nancy MacGilliv... to All Panelists:

10:12 PM

renegotiate!

From Sue Cooke to All Panelists:

I think about programs like CAD, Forensics, Mandarin. These are the programs these students come home and talk about- instead of potentially cutting them entirely would we not consider reducing hours and student access to at least make it attainable for some..understanding that this may not be feasible financially for some teachers to have their salary reduced significantly. However allows them to remain employed in the district during a fluid moment in time but does affect salary and benefit access I'm sure.

From Lisa Bial to All Panelists:

You need to be tougher in your CBA negotiations. Do not back down. Who negotiated out-of-district tuition increases? You must not take away from the children - why should they pay because we couldn't get the job done? Raise taxes if needed.

From David Polito to All Panelists:

Out Of District Tuition Prices are set by the state. Cal BRad Hill

****Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A § 20, the public will not be allowed to physically access this School Committee meeting. The School Committee reserves the right to implement additional remote participation procedures and will notify the public of these procedures as soon as practicable. Please [click here](#) to read the Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 20.****

***Zoom App Information:** If you plan to participate, download the [Zoom.com](https://zoom.us) application now. The option to download will also be available at the start of the meeting. When opening the Zoom App, select "Join Meeting" in the upper right corner and enter the meeting id: 850 0606 8608; password: 679579. The community should ask questions via the "chat" function within the Zoom application during the Citizen's Comments section. During the Zoom meeting, participants will be given instructions on how to provide their comments. Unfortunately, we must limit the in-person conversations to just the Committee members. However, for the benefit of all, the School Committee meetings will be available on our local cable channel, HWCam, and [HWCam.org](https://www.hwcam.org), for review a few hours after the meeting has ended. Members of the public can access the meeting via [YouTube HWRSD live stream link](#) the next day.