



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

School Committee Meeting
Buker Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room
Wednesday, February 5, 2020
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Present:

Tai Pryjma
Gene Lee
Michelle Horgan
Michelle Bailey, Vice Chairperson
Stacey Metternick, Secretary
David Polito, Chairperson (late arrival)
Peter Wolczik (late arrival)

Also Present:

Julie Kukenberger, Interim Superintendent
Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent to Finance & Administration
Thomas Kaine, Student Government Representative

1. Call to Order

7:00 PM

Michelle Bailey, Vice Chairperson, calls the meeting to order at 7:01 PM, noting that the meeting is being recorded by HWCAM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All in attendance rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Citizens' Comments

Christine Lee, 165 Cherry St, Wenham: Appears tonight to voice her support for continuing the School Resource Officer to remain in the schools for the safety and well-being of the students. Ms. Lee has 2 students in the schools, and favors the local officer filling the SRO roll, opposed to the State Trooper.

Tom Starr, 41 Pleasant St, Wenham: Appears this evening to voice his appreciation for the handling of the budget this year. He states that if the problems are not addressed in the FY21 Budget, they will only continue to worsen. He notes that not returning the schools to their excellent reputation will negatively impact property values of Hamilton - Wenham homes, and therefore not save taxpayers any money.

4. New Business

A. FY20 Budget Transfers

[Exhibit](#)

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 OPERATING BUDGET EXPENSES TRANSFERS OF \$296,112 FROM OTHER TEACHING SERVICES TO TEACHERS, ALSO \$104,000 FROM ADMINISTRATION TO INSURANCE RETIREMENT AND OTHER.

**MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.
Unanimously approved by 5 members present.**

B. Superintendent's Search

[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Bailey provides an update regarding the Superintendent Search: the Screening Committee has been notified and will be trained next Monday. The School Committee will need to decide who is attending which visits. Ms. Presser, MASC, has informed Ms. Bailey that the members should plan to arrange for commitments between March 12-20 during the hours of 9:00 AM -1:00 PM

C. Discuss Paper Packets

Discussion regarding paper School Committee packets, including average number of pages (80), cost per page (\$0.06/page), staff labor involved, copier maintenance, etc. Discussion regarding environmental impact, potential obstacles including the need for supplemental materials, minutes, annotated agenda, etc.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO MODIFY OUR PAPER PACKETS AS DISCUSSED TO INCLUDE THE AGENDA ONLY FOR ALL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AND A MODIFIED PACKET FOR THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE SECRETARY TO INCLUDE THE AGENDA, SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION PERTAINING TO MOTIONS, AS WELL AS PRIOR MEETING MINUTES.

**MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.
Unanimously approved by 5 members present.**

5. Superintendent's Report

a. Enrollment Report

[Exhibit](#)

Dr. Kukenberger reviews the enrollment report in the attached [Exhibit](#), walking the School Committee through the process of locating these reports on the district's website: district home page → district information → superintendent → reports → [enrollment report](#). Dr. Kukenberger explains some of the trends from this report, PreK has been increasing, as well as overall district enrollment. For the most part this is pretty steady throughout the year. This is accessible to the public and updated consistently. Discussion regarding "out-of-district" versus "choice in" language.

b. School Choice Numbers In and Out

Dr. Kukenberger states that there was a question last week regarding the number of Hamilton-Wenham students lost from 5th grade to 6th grade. She notes that there were 2 less students for the current year, 10 less students for the year prior, and 20 less students the year before that. Discussion regarding cross-checking numbers, potential implications, state guidelines, funding and budgeting, etc.

c. HW Goes Green

Dr. Kukenberger notes that the subcommittee is still considering a name for this initiative. They have started taking inventory of current actions, and had a productive brainstorming session. Plan to align a kick-off with Earth Day and raise awareness through a variety of outlets including trivia around the schools as well as social media campaigns.

6. Chair's Report

In the absence of Chairperson David Polito, Ms. Bailey explains the process of running for the vacant School Committee position.

7. Committee Reports (continued)

A. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee

- FY21 Budget Refinement Progress

[Exhibit](#)

David Polito and Peter Wolczik enter the meeting.

Mr. Lee thanks Dr. Kukenberger and the District's Leadership Team for their hard work and the difficult decisions involved in the FY21 Tentative Budget. The Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee is putting forth a request of \$958,00 for capital expenses. Mr. Lee reviews the process of refining the FY21 tentative budget, a total reduction of \$469,462; reducing utilities and maintenance costs; increasing revenue from tuitions/reducing out-of-district placements; increasing user fees. The refinement brings the budget down by \$1 million. Ms. Metternick adds that the high utility costs in the budget reflects the reality of these costs, as these costs have consistently been over budget.

Dr. Kukenberger reviews the Student Opportunity Act, additional funding that has been earmarked for public schools across the Commonwealth. She explains that the district will be required to submit a 3- year Student Opportunity Plan. Hamilton-Wenham is anticipating Chapter 70 funding increase in the amount of \$254,461 (minimally). Dr. Kukenberger reviews 3 potential options for what this could offer to the FY21 Budget.

Discussion regarding proposed reductions, eliminations, and deferments.

Mr. Polito states that it is important for The School Committee to stick to their ideals. He believes that prioritizing the SRO over teachers and social workers is not in line with the best interests of the district or the students. Mr. Polito adds that he will vote in favor of the budget, but does not agree with keeping the SRO position while removing teaching and social work positions. Peter Wolczik agrees that it is concerning to see teaching positions removed.

Dr. Kukenberger explains that the decisions that had to be made were incredibly difficult to make. She further notes how fortunate Hamilton - Wenham is to have such an amazing SRO in the schools.

Mr. Pryjma notes that other districts have relied on social workers to fill the SRO position, noting that enacting a similar strategy would meet a range of social/emotional needs.

Ms. Bailey and Ms. Metternick express disappointment in the lack of community participation in tonight's meeting. Community members are urged to attend meetings in order to voice their opinions.

The Capital/Financial Subcommittee will attempt to schedule another joint meeting with the Town BOS and Fincom during the last week of February.

- *Next Meeting date:* Tuesday, February 11, 2020 @ 7:00 PM day before the final vote

B. Policy Subcommittee

- Policy Subcommittee has not met; no updates.
- *Next Meeting Date:* Tuesday, February 11, 2020 @ 4:45 PM

C. Negotiations Subcommittee

- Subcommittee met on 02/04/2020 to review upcoming contracts.
- *Next Meeting Date:* Tuesday, March 3, 2020 @ 4:30 PM

8. Consent Agenda

A. Warrants

[Exhibit](#)

- Voucher No. 17
- Voucher No. 1034
- Voucher No. 1035
- Voucher No. 1037
- Voucher No. 2861
- Voucher No. 2862
- Voucher No. 2863
- Voucher No. 2867
- Voucher No. 2868

B. Vote to approve prior meeting minutes:

- December 4, 2019

[Exhibit](#)

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS STATED; THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER CHANGES TO THESE DOCUMENTS.

**MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.
Unanimously approved by 7 members present.**

9. Other

A. Topics for Future Meetings

- Scheduling future Joint Committee meeting;
- Responding to emails from community members;
- Budget communication plan;
- National Honors Society babysitting for Town Meeting;
- Approval of User Fees;
- Adopt final budget;
- “Get out the Vote” strategy;
- SOI process - Tom Geary, *Director of Maintenance, Facilities, Operations*;
- Committee Reports

10. Vote to Adjourn

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN AT 8:41 PM.

**MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Gene Lee.
Unanimously approved by 7 members present.**

Respectfully submitted April 8, 2020 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.