

Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee

June 6, 2013

Minutes

**CALL TO ORDER AND  
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Roger Kuebel opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m. in the Buker Multipurpose Room. The Committee and others present rose for the Pledge of Allegiance..

**PRESENT:**

Sean Condon, Bill Dery (7:57), Deb Evans, Roger Kuebel (chair), Barbara Lawrence, Sheila MacDonald, Melissa Evens Moore

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Dr. Michael Harvey, Superintendent; Dr. Celeste Bowler, Assistant Superintendent for Learning

**ABSENT:**

Jeanise Bertrand, Melissa Even Moore, Bill Wilson

**CITIZENS' CONCERNS:**

None

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

Dr. Harvey said he has accepted the resignation of Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration Peter Gray, effective June 30, and has advertised the position.

**CHAIR'S REPORT:**

None

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Minutes of May 16, 2013  
Minutes (Executive) of June 18, 2012  
Appointment of Superintendent to Board of Directors for the Greater Lawrence Collaborative

**DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE ALL OF THE REMAINING ITEMS ON THE CONSENT AGENDA. THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER DISCUSSION OR AMENDMENT OF THIS MOTION. SHEILA MACDONALD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-0-0-0.**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Negotiations

R. Kuebel said an organizational meeting took place and dates are being worked out for future meetings.

Policy

B. Lawrence said this group met with administrators and planned how to create an easily accessible online manual of policies.

Facilities

This working group is to meet June 19.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Retirees Reception/Proclamations

Prior to this meeting the School Committee hosted a reception for retiring teachers and staff. The meeting opened with 40 minutes of remarks by principals, who spoke appreciatively about the retiring employees and thanked them for their service, and by the 6 of the

retiring staff members who were present. Retiring at the close of 2012-13 are Patty Miller, Linda Arnold, Kevin O'Reilly, Linda Guerrette, Judy Naylor, Margaret Nolan, Nick Civitarese, and Barbara Moroney.

Update on Pirie Property from  
Scott Maddern

Hamilton selectman Scott Maddern updated the Committee about a study committee's assessment of potential uses of the Pirie property off Bay Road, should Hamilton voters approve its purchase at a special town meeting on June 11. He responded to members' questions about estimated impact on school enrollment under various development scenarios, and on the impact on tax revenue if the property transfers from private to municipal ownership.

Athletic Budget Plan

Dr. Harvey explained the athletic director's plan for waiving some athletic user fees for students who play three or more school-sponsored sports a year, and for families with multiple children who play a total of four or more. The Committee previously voted to contribute more toward the cost of extracurricular sports; the athletic director has laid out a structure for distribution of these additional funds. A separate scholarship program for families that need relief in general remains in place. (The user fee relief document is appended to these minutes.)

Personnel Policies—First Reading of Set 2

Dr. Harvey briefly explained 7 draft revised or new personnel policies proposed by the Policy Working Group (which are appended to these minutes). Most were uncontroversial. The Committee discussed the draft Staff Participation in Political Activities Policy, which would apply only to staff members' activities as they relate to school premises, hours, facilities, equipment and duties, and reached a consensus to eliminate a reference to pressuring students into campaigning so the language would be broader and more general.

BANS/Bonds Process—Don Gallant

District treasurer Don Gallant briefed the Committee on the technical process of bonding to raise funds for previously approved and budgeted repairs. (Financial documentation is appended to these minutes.) Points covered included these: each town's share of costs over 20 years; year by year payoff of principal; partial reimbursement of project costs by the Massachusetts School Building Authority; the legal process by which the Committee is to approve bonding at a future meeting.

Review FY13 Budget & Recommended  
Changes for FY14

Postponed

Review Line Transfers for the FY14 Budget  
*Middle School Assistant Principal*

Dr. Harvey asked the Committee to transfer funds to expand the part-time position of middle school assistant principal to full-time, or if necessary to pay for other administrative staffing given uncertainty about the health of the principal. He described this spring's short-term coverage of the principal's position while the principal has been on medical leave. The funds he proposed transferring are available in the

2013-14 budget because the position of a retiring employee is not being filled.

**DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$36,000.00 FOR THE FY14 BUDGET FROM TEACHERS TO INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP. SHEILA MACDONALD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-0.**

*Coordinator of Secondary  
Special Education*

Dr. Harvey asked the Committee to transfer a secondary administrative special education position to the instructional leadership section of the budget, to correct an error made at the time the budget was constructed.

**DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$98,605.00 FOR THE FY14 BUDGET FROM TEACHERS TO INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP. SHEILA MACDONALD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-0.**

*Technology Teacher at High School  
to Tech Staff*

Dr. Harvey explained the director of instructional technology's proposal to reallocate some budgeted funds to decrease the staff time dedicated to troubleshooting equipment issues, and create a new, more technical, position for a networking systems administrator.

**DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$76,636.00 FOR THE FY14 BUDGET FROM TEACHERS TO INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP. SEAN CONDON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-0.**

(More detailed rationales for the three budget transfers are appended to these minutes.)

*Review Grounds Maintenance  
Agreement Renewal*

Dr. Harvey asked the Committee to approve renewal of the district's grounds maintenance agreement with the Town of Hamilton, which expires June 30, 2013. Going forward the agreement (which is appended to these minutes) would not require annual renewal, but would remain in effect unless one of the parties cancels it. B. Dery inquired about an issue he said has arisen regarding overtime pay; Dr. Harvey said Hamilton is negotiating that point with its staff. D. Evans asked about CORI checks of town employees who work on school property when students are present; upon learning the agreement does not mention CORI checks, the Committee postponed a vote pending revision of the agreement to address this point.

Discussion of additional subcommittees

Brief discussion took place. M. Evens Moore reported Ann Minois has declined the invitation to serve as a legislative liaison. D. Evans asked for more time to consider how a communications group would best function over the coming year.

Announcement of Master Plan Finalists

Dr. Harvey announced that Symmes, Maini & McKee Associates (SMMA) is the first choice of a selection committee formed to review and rank proposals by consulting firms interested in designing on a master plan for the district. (His written report and a selection procedures document are appended to these minutes.) Speaking from the audience, Helen Allard of Hamilton, a member of the selection committee, encouraged the Committee to act quickly on the recommendation so work could begin while school is still in session. Discussion touched on topics including these: the selection committee members' unanimous agreement on the top 3 respondents, but somewhat different ranking of those 3; whether the district is required to award a contract by June 14; whether School Committee members should read the finalists' proposals before voting; whether the Committee should solicit public input about the three finalists before voting. R. Kuebel said the vote would select a vendor with whom the superintendent would negotiate a contract, but would not set a price, nor stipulate how the Committee wants the project handled. He said he wanted to read the proposals before voting.

**BILL DERY MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE SYMMES, MAINI & MCKEE ASSOCIATES (SMMA) AS THE DESIGNER FOR THE HWRS D MASTER PLAN AS RECOMMENDED BY THE DESIGNER SELECTION COMMITTEE. SEAN CONDON SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-1-0-0. (R. Kuebel voted no.)**

The proposals were content-based; the firms' financial proposal, which Dr. Harvey described as an invitation to start bargaining at a particular level, accompanied the proposals in separate sealed envelopes. Following the vote, Dr. Harvey opened SMMA's sealed financial, but did not share that information with the Committee during the meeting, because he said it would be unwise to do so before he negotiates with the firm. The Committee briefly discussed that if Dr. Harvey were unable to negotiate a satisfactory financial agreement with SMMA, then the district would pursue a contract with the firm the selection committee ranked as its second choice. Members agreed to schedule a brief meeting for a morning in the week following this meeting, to approve a contract if one transpires.

**SHEILA MACDONALD MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE SECOND AND THIRD CHOICES WHICH ARE HMFH ARCHITECTS**

**AND DESIGN PARTNERSHIPS OF CAMBRIDGE, IN THAT ORDER. BILL DERY SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 6-1-0-0.** (Roger Kuebel voted no.)

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**DEB EVANS MADE A MOTION THAT THE HW REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADJOURN. SHEILA MACDONALD SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 7-0-0-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

**DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS  
USED AT THIS MEETING:**

User Fee / Registration (3 pages)  
Draft personnel policies: Staff Participation in Political Activities, Evaluation of Professional Staff, Professional Development, Professional Teacher Status, Staff Complaints and Grievances, Personnel Security and Safety, Part-Time Professional Staff Employment (4 pages)  
Spreadsheets listing projected interest rate on 6/29/13 notes and 8/15/13 bonds through 2034, Hamilton and Wenham shares of project costs, tax rate impact, a bond anticipate note schedule, MSBA contribution to work in the district, and a debt service schedule through 2034 (4 pages)  
Bond certification text for future vote (1 page)  
Rationale for FY14 budget transfers (6 pages)  
Grounds Maintenance and General Cleanup Agreement Among the Towns of Hamilton and Wenham and the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District (3 pages)  
Memo to Committee from Dr. Harvey re Designer Selection for BHWRSD Master Plan, dated 6/6/13 (1 page)  
Designer Selection Procedures (5 pages)

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Sierks Smith, School Committee recording secretary