



HAMILTON-WENHAM

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

5 SCHOOL STREET, WENHAM, MA 01984 · TEL. 978-468-5310

**School Committee Meeting
Buker Elementary School Multipurpose Room
Wednesday, February 12, 2020
6:30 PM - 9:00 PM**

Present:

Gene Lee

Michelle Horgan, Assistant Secretary

Tai Pryjma

David Polito, Chairperson

Stacey Metternick, Secretary

Peter Wolczik

Michelle Bailey, Vice Chairperson

Also Present:

Julie Kukenberger, *Interim Superintendent*

Vincent Leone, *Assistant Superintendent to Finance & Administration*

Thomas Kaine, *Student Government Representative*

Thomas Geary, *Director of Maintenance, Facilities, and Operations*

6:30 PM

1. Call to Order

David Polito, Chairperson, calls the meeting to order at 6:34 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All in attendance rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Citizens' Comments

None (numerous comments later in the meeting).

4. Public Hearing on FY21 Budget

Mr. Polito states that the meeting will begin with a review of the FY21 Budget before opening the floor to citizen's comments. Later this evening, the School Committee will adopt the FY21 Budget.

Mr. Lee, *Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee* Chair, thanks Dr. Kukenberger, Mr. Leone, and the District Leadership Team for their work on the FY21 budget. Mr. Lee reviews the approved budgets from FY19 (\$27 million), FY20 (\$29 million), as well as the FY21 proposed operating budget (\$31 million).

Ms. Horgan reviews what the FY21 Budget allows the district to accomplish: educate 1,835 PreK-12th grade students; retain and support 307 professional staff members; respond to student needs with individualized services and programs; maintain adequate class size (20-24 students per class); maintain existing district-wide programming; maintain athletic programs (when current fields are unplayable); address growing social/emotional needs of students; and expand elementary language-based support programs.

Mr. Lee states that the *Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee* is proposing a \$31.6 million budget, which is approximately \$1 million less than the tentative budget initially proposed this past February. There are a number of needs that have therefore been left out of the FY21 Budget, through deferments, eliminations, and/or reductions. *Deferred*: 7 Kindergarten Teaching Assistants; district licensed social worker. *Eliminated/ reduced*: some professional development costs; Leadership Team memberships costs; curriculum materials; contracted services; maintenance contracts; reduction in tuition; reduction in district-paid user fees; etc.

Ms. Metternick reviews the 10-year Capital Budget, as presented in prior meetings by Thomas Geary, *Director of Maintenance, Facilities, and Operations*. The *Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee* carefully reviewed his proposal, and made decisions which prioritized the district's overall safety needs. Ms. Metternick reviews the 10-year Capital Budget, which includes increasing security infrastructure across all schools; implementing ALICE; embarking on the elementary school facilities study; replacing Middle School sidewalks; addressing athletic fields (Turf Fields); and improving the network infrastructure. The *Capital Financial/Planning Subcommittee* recommends approving the Capital Budget, a total investment of \$958,000.

Mr. Lee reports that the *Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee* is recommending that Chapter 70 funding (\$254,000) be applied to offset operating expenses. Mr. Lee reviews debt services, total assessments, town shares, etc.

Mr. Polito opens the floor to citizens' comments. He reminds everyone that comments are limited to 3 minutes and the School Committee does not typically respond to citizen comments.

Lori Bouchard, 202 Moulton Street, Hamilton: Appears this evening to speak about the FY21 Budget, specifically the district's School Resource Officer (SRO). She is not in favor of replacing the SRO with a social worker. Ms. Bouchard highlights the numerous benefits of keeping the current SRO, Kent Richards: the district, schools, and most importantly, the students, are all better off because of Officer Richards' presence in the schools. In addition to the numerous ways Officer Richards has been involved in the schools and community, he has established a foundation of trust with the students. Finally, Ms. Bouchard argues that the presence of an officer within the schools is a much safer option should a situation arise that requires officer intervention.

Lindsay Whitman, 28 Mayflower Drive, Wenham: Asks for clarification about the difference between the budget's deferred items and eliminated items. Dr. Kukuenger explains that deferred items are priority investments for the district, and are likely to reappear in future budgets; whereas eliminated items have either been reallocated or removed based on the district's assessment of student and programmatic needs.

Lindsay Whitman continues, explaining that she has worked in the educational sphere for over 20 years. She therefore analyzes the district's proposed budget through the lens of return on investments. She explains that the greatest return on investment would include the most significant student impact as well as the best long-term financial return. Ms. Whitman believes that the greatest return on investment in the district's budget would be the 7 full-time kindergarten teacher assistants. She points to the plethora of research showing early intervention in young ages results in the maximum benefit to both students and the community. This would cost the district far less in the long run. Ms. Whitman states that removing the 7 TAs from the FY21 Budget is detrimental to students' success, as well as the district's overall financial health.

Patrick Waddell, 105 Great Pond Road, Wenham: Appears this evening to speak about the Turf Field design. He notes that the FY21 proposed budget includes the amount for the Turf Field study, and is the exact amount approved 4-5 years ago for the Gale Study. The Gale Study laid out the location of the fields while considering wetlands and other aspects. Given that this was already approved years ago, Mr. Waddell believes that the FY21 study is redundant. He asks why the district is redoing work that was already completed. Finally, Mr. Waddell states that he is in favor of the Turf Fields.

Jen Caulfield, 25 Juniper Street, Wenham: Ms. Caulfield asks for further clarification on the FY21 Budget estimated percentile increase. Dr. Kukenberger and Mr. Leone explain the increases from prior year budgets, stating that the FY21 Budget increase is 4.63%. Ms. Caulfield posits that from a messaging perspective, it is important that the School Committee highlight that the district received a negative checkbook this year. She believes that the community needs to understand this crucial information in order to vote in favor of the FY21 budget.

Susan Mehlin, 18 Burnham Road, Wenham: Ms. Mehlin discloses that she served on the Wenham FINCOM board and was liaison to the School Committee about 10 years ago. She encourages the School Committee to consider Wenham's financial situation: if the district moves forward with the budget as proposed, Wenham's tax rate will increase to \$21.50/\$1,000.00. Ms. Mehlin further elaborates that there is a significant percentage of economically disadvantaged students in the district (7.1%, or 130 children) who will be burdened with the \$1,200- \$1,500 tax rate increase. This may result in families having to leave town, and cause property values to plummet. Ms. Mehlin explains that she has invested a considerable amount in education, and is not anti-school. However, she would like to encourage the School Committee to consider the impact the budget will have, particularly on economically disadvantaged Wenham residents, should it be passed.

Anna Siedzik, 227 Highland Street, Hamilton: Ms. Siedzik thanks the School Committee for their work developing the FY21 Budget as well as their dedication to keep the community informed. She notes that different students require different approaches, and though an SRO law enforcement officer will be ideal for some students, an SRO social worker will be ideal for others. Ms. Siedzik praises the School Committee for maintaining community awareness regarding the district's Social/Emotional needs. She agrees with Ms. Whitman that early intervention is important for students and to prevent higher costs in the future. Ms. Siedzik appears this evening to comment on the district's plan to improve the athletic fields. Based on her experience as an athlete, coach, and parent of athletes, she would like to remind the School Committee to keep Title 9 in mind. She states that, unfortunately, the community holds a bias about women and girls playing sports; women and girls continue to be categorically ignored despite the fact that Title 9 has existed for almost 50 years. Ms. Siedzik believes our community can and should do better both from a moral and legal standpoint. She thanks the School Committee members for their hard work and commitment in giving the schools what they need. Ms. Siedzik would vote for this budget.

Lorraine Miller, 31 Knowlton Street, Hamilton: Ms. Miller thanks everyone for their hard work on the FY21 budget. She feels the proposed FY21 budget is reasonable, forward-thinking, and may alleviate future cost burdens like out-of-district placements. She appreciates that the budget demonstrates that people are beginning to think realistically about the future of the district. Ms. Miller appears this evening to comment on the security system and the SRO, Kent Richards. She

believes Officer Richards is an incredible asset to the district. She also believes that everyone would feel safer if cameras were installed both inside and outside school buildings. This not only allows people to feel more secure, but is also a good investment to deter vandalism.

Thomas Starr, 41 Pleasant Street, Wenham: Appears this evening to present a different perspective regarding the budget's perceived tax burden. Although he realizes that this budget does create a tax burden, he believes that if we fail to properly maintain the schools, and fail to keep high student achievement, property values will decline. Should this happen, Mr. Starr notes that it will not matter what the taxes are.

Margaret Sue (phonetic spelling), 49 Bridge Street, Hamilton: Ms. Sue thanks the School Committee for their work on the proposed FY21 budget. She appears this evening to speak about Special Education and out-placing costs. She would like to advocate for our Special Education students, and encourages the School Committee to consider what the district is missing *in-district*, such as life skills programs, language-based learning, etc.

Mr. Polito thanks everyone for attending the FY21 Budget Public Hearing and for providing their comments and feedback. He notes that the work of the School Committee is challenging, but is always conducted with the community's best interests in mind.

Ms. Bailey notes that the number of people in the room this evening is not a sufficient number to pass the budget. She encourages everyone attending tonight to return to the Town Meetings on 04/04/2020 with 10 of their friends, as at least 150 people from each town will be needed to pass the budget. Ms. Bailey reiterates that the School Committee has presented the best budget possible this evening.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE AMEND THE AGENDA FOR TONIGHT'S MEETING TO REFLECT THE ADDITION OF AGENDA ITEM #10, EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PURPOSE #1: TO DISCUSS THE REPUTATION, CHARACTER, PHYSICAL CONDITION, OR MENTAL HEALTH RATHER THAN PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF AN INDIVIDUAL; OR TO DISCUSS THE DISCIPLINE OR DISMISSAL OF, OR COMPLAINTS OR CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST A PUBLIC OFFICER, EMPLOYEE, STAFF MEMBER, OR INDIVIDUAL.

MOTION by Michelle Bailey; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

Discussion: Ms. Bailey explains that the Executive Session did not appear on the printed 02/12/20 meeting agenda, as the School Committee did not anticipate this until earlier today.

Unanimously approved by 7 members present.

5. New Business

A. Superintendent's Search

[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Bailey reports that the Superintendent Search Committee had their first meeting last night. They will make their final decision by 03/11/20, which will require the School Committee to hold a meeting that same day for the purpose of hearing that decision. After the decision, Ms. Bailey explains that visits to each of the candidates' districts will need to be arranged. These visits will be scheduled over 3 days during the week of 03/13/20-03/19/20. Discussion regarding scheduling and members' availability due to travel, work, and other arrangements. Discussion regarding

maintaining confidentiality of candidates during the interview process, specifically ensuring candidates are welcomed and guided in a way that bypasses the other candidates.

B. Approval of FY21 User Fees

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO APPROVE THE DISTRICT'S FY21 USER FEES TO BE FIFTY PERCENT (50%), INSTEAD OF THE CURRENT USER FEE PERCENT, 60/40.

MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

Discussion: Ms. Bailey states that although the School Committee agreed to split the user fees 50/50, the motion inadvertently split the user fees with the District paying 60% and families paying 40%. She believes that tonight's motion is simply correcting this error and reflecting the agreed 50/50 share of user fees. Ms. Metternick agrees that the motion was made incorrectly. She adds that she has pushed this issue for many years. Ms. Horgan agrees with Ms. Bailey and Ms. Metternick, and states that the 50/50 share is reasonable. Mr. Lee points out that the recommended FY21 budget is predicated on the reduction of the district's share of user fees.

Patrick Waddell, 5 Great Pond Rd. Wenham: Encourages the School Committee to explore and consider what surrounding districts are doing with respect to user fees. School Committee members explain that they have obtained this information, and analyzed it at length. Mr. Waddell believes that the School Committee's decision was a "knee-jerk reaction". A discussion and disagreement about the School Committee's decision making process follows.

Unanimously approved by 7 members present.

C. Adopt FY21 Final Budget

[Exhibit](#)

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ADOPT THE FY21 TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES BUDGET OF \$36,799,883. THIS AMOUNT INCLUDES GENERAL FUND OPERATING EXPENSES (AFTER OFFSETS) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$36,386,630 AND GENERAL FUND DEBT SERVICE EXPENSES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$413,253. FURTHERMORE, THE GROSS OPERATING EXPENSES OF THE DISTRICT (BEFORE OFFSETS) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$38,297,952 HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED TO THE DESE DEFINED CHART OF ACCOUNTS ACCORDING TO THE "SUMMARY BY DESE CATEGORY" CHART INCLUDED IN THIS BUDGET PRESENTATION DATED 02/12/2020.

MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

Discussion: Reason for the amounts in the motion above differing from amounts communicated earlier in the presentation. Discussion regarding tax rate increases, impact on taxpayers, Town Budgets, etc. Discussion regarding SRO Kent Richards and potential cost savings if SRO took on responsibility of directing morning HS/MS traffic. SRO is on site at the school to greet students in the morning, and his continued presence here is important. Furthermore, the officer currently responsible for directing traffic is paid about \$70/day, which is funded through parking fees at the High School. To require SRO to direct morning traffic would be detrimental to the foundation of trust established with students, and offer cost savings to the operating budget.

Ms. Bailey asks for further explanation regarding the maintenance reductions (\$250,000). She believes the fogging machines would be a good use of E&D funds. Thomas Geary, *Director of Maintenance, Facilities, and Operations* explains the maintenance reductions reflected in the revised budget: when equipment is replaced (before equipment failure versus end of life-cycle

imminent failure); foregoing contracted services such as roofing boilers and HVAC systems; reducing/ eliminating some aesthetic improvement costs (such as landscaping); reducing maintenance costs associated with athletic fields; deferring bathroom cleaning machine costs; etc. Ms. Bailey points out the ADA accessibility issues in the school buildings, specifically the issues she has confronted at Buker Elementary School. Discussion regarding ADA accessibility; costs associated with accessibility; long-term approach; etc. Dr. Kukenberger notes that substantial investments such as these warrant in-depth conversations to explore “the future we want to create”.

Discussion regarding E&D funds including the process of using these funds and the amount included in the FY21 Proposed Budget (\$217,000). Discussion regarding Special Education transportation reimbursement; current legislation; impact on district; communication with Representative Brad Hill; next steps; etc.

Discussion regarding district strategy adding more FTEs to FY21 Budget; overspending/ over-expending approved amounts; ongoing challenges faced when attempting to reduce FTE costs; consequences of strategies/approaches; projected out-of-district placements in FY21; potential stabilization fund; contingencies for out-of-district placement; community perception; future budget strategies; etc.

Upon Ms. Bailey’s inquiry, Mr. Leone confirms that the School Committee would be able to vote to use more E&D funds in the event that the budget does not pass at the 04/04/2020 Town Meeting.

Discussion regarding FY21 budgeted amount for Superintendent salary, with a brief discussion about comparable salaries in the area. Discussion regarding .6 FTE assistive technology special education position. Dr. Kukenberger explains that the district is trying to rebrand and re-categorize the position as they determine the best recruitment strategies and other approaches to attract high-quality candidates needed. Discussion regarding current (FY20) funding for TA positions; grant funding received with restrictions and eligibility criteria; FY21 deferment of 7 TAs; inequities based on schools, population, and other criteria in funding requirements; additional challenges with part-time TA positions; next steps; etc.

Unanimously approved by 7 members present.

This vote meets the $\frac{2}{3}$ voting requirement.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO ASSESS THE TOWNS OF HAMILTON AND WENHAM A COMBINED TOTAL OF \$32,088,532 AS THE AMOUNT NECESSARY TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN THE DISTRICT, AS WELL AS PAY DEBT SERVICE FOR FY21. THE DISTRICT'S ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT SHALL DETERMINE THE AMOUNT APPORTIONED TO EACH TOWN, AND THE DISTRICT'S TREASURER SHALL CERTIFY SUCH AMOUNTS TO THE RESPECTIVE TREASURES OF EACH TOWN WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THIS DATE.

MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

Discussion: Clarification offered that the motion is approving only items previously discussed this evening: the breakdown of amounts per-town.

Unanimously approved by 7 members present.

This vote meets the $\frac{2}{3}$ voting requirement.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT HEREBY APPROPRIATE THE AMOUNT OF \$958,000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING COSTS OF VARIOUS FY21 “SECURITY & TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS: ELEMENTARY FACILITIES STUDY, ATHLETIC CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT STUDY UPDATE, SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT, AND CLASSROOM FURNITURE” CAPITAL PROJECTS WITHIN THE DISTRICT AS OUTLINED IN THE DISTRICT'S TEN-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN DATED FEBRUARY 12, 2020, INCLUDING THE PAYMENT OF ALL COSTS INCIDENTAL OR RELATED THERETO. TO MEET THIS APPROPRIATION THE DISTRICT IS AUTHORIZED TO BORROW SAID AMOUNT, UNDER AND PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 71, SECTION 16(D) OF THE GENERAL LAWS AND THE DISTRICT'S AGREEMENT, AS AMENDED, OR PURSUANT TO ANY OTHER ENABLING AUTHORITY. ANY PREMIUM RECEIVED UPON THE SALE OF ANY BONDS OR NOTES APPROVED BY THIS VOTE, LESS ANY SUCH PREMIUM APPLIED TO THE PAYMENT OF THE COSTS OF ISSUANCE OF SUCH BONDS OR NOTES MAY BE APPLIED TO THE PAYMENT OF COSTS APPROVED BY THIS VOTE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER 44, SECTION 20 OF THE GENERAL LAWS, THEREBY REDUCING THE AMOUNT AUTHORIZED TO BE BORROWED TO PAY SUCH COST BY A LIKE AMOUNT.

MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

Discussion: Mr. Polito addresses the concern brought up earlier this evening that the Turf Field study is repeating work already completed by the Gale study. The study is not repeating the Gale study, but rather it is a new study necessary to address the number of changes that have significant impact on the Turf Field project. There have been a number of changes to the scope, need (e.g. loss of tennis courts), costs (e.g. increased construction costs), support, and execution of the project. Additionally, the study will need to ensure the project complies with the Title 9 requirements.

Discussion regarding capital budget approval: Town Meeting vote, ballot vote, anticipation of debt exclusion, bond anticipation, etc.

Discussion regarding furniture costs appearing in the FY21 Capital Budget. Dr. Kukenberger explains that the furniture is a component of more intentional classroom design that will allow for in-district programming in the future. Discussion regarding previous funding for furniture provided by the EdFund.

Mr. Lee states that the Capital Budget is *just as* important as the Operating Budget, noting that the projects outlined are essential components of the district's safety, security, and compliance. **Unanimously approved by 7 members present.**

This vote meets the $\frac{2}{3}$ voting requirement.

I MOVE THAT THE THAT WITHIN SEVEN (7) DAYS FROM THE DATE ON WHICH THIS VOTE IS ADOPTED THE SECRETARY IS HEREBY INSTRUCTED TO NOTIFY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN OF EACH OF THE MEMBER TOWNS OF THE DISTRICT, AS TO THE AMOUNT AND GENERAL PURPOSES OF THE DEBT HEREIN AUTHORIZED, AS REQUIRED BY THE DISTRICT AGREEMENT AND BY CHAPTER 71, SECTION 16(D) OF THE GENERAL LAWS.

MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

Discussion: Responsible parties for signing and delivering this information to the towns.

Clarified: School Committee Secretary will sign; District Treasurer will deliver to Towns.

Unanimously approved by 7 members present.

This vote meets the $\frac{2}{3}$ voting requirement.

Dr. Kukenberger notes that tonight's presentation, along with additional presentations and documents can be found on the district website, www.hwschools.net, under the "[District Budget Information](#)" tab (located on the left sidebar).

D. Approve FY21 Annual Report & FY21 Budget Book

[Exhibit](#)

Review FY21 Annual Report & FY21 Budget Book, as detailed in the [Exhibit](#). Dr. Kukenerbger reviews the significant changes made from the previous years, including increasing the readability, navigation, and accessibility; conversion to Google Docs; including photographs, highlights from school events; format changes; quantitative data to show return on investments; etc. Dr. Kukenberger hopes to limit the printing of this document, and focus instead on ensuring online accessibility. Discussion regarding requirements, deadlines, etc. in submitting the Fy21 Annual Report & FY21 Budget Book.

Dr. Kukenberger asks for feedback and approval of these documents, with School Committee members approving and praising the format. Most members are impressed and are grateful for the changes. Ms. Bailey believes a bit more narrative is needed in the introduction.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 ANNUAL REPORT AND THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET BOOK AS SHOWN IN THE EXHIBIT WITH CHANGES TO COME ON THE BUDGET BOOK WITH FINAL NUMBERS VOTED IN THIS EVENING.

MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

Discussion: Final document publication and dissemination; annual report requirements; separating the documents moving forward; etc. Ms. Bailey and Ms. Metternick express concern about voting to approve a document that has yet to be finalized.

Discussion regarding the separate purposes of each document and why the Annual Report and Budget Book have been combined into one document. Discussion regarding the need for the School Committee to approve the document and whether it is a time sensitive motion. Dr. Kukenberger explains that she brought the document in front of the School Committee for their review because it was requested by members that she do so.

Further discussion regarding requirements in submitting Budget Book to towns. Discussion regarding State requirements in submitting the Annual Report, with Ms. Bailey noting that Massachusetts requires every municipality to submit an Annual Report for December - December to the official record. Dr. Kukenberger will reach out to the towns in order to clarify what exactly they need from the District, and when they need it by.

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE TO TABLE THE MOTION ON THE FLOOR.

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

E. Discuss “Get Out the FY21 Budget Vote” Strategy

Discussion surrounding strategic communication to the towns, including collaborative efforts with the Council on Aging, EdFund, and other civics groups. Discussion regarding printed flyers; Town Meeting schedule; potential scheduling conflicts; parents’ anticipated obstacles; childcare availability; encouraging student involvement (including voting); potential for zero waste event; other approaches to increase turnout; etc.

Town Meeting: 04/04/20, in the High School Auditorium

- **Hamilton 9:00 a.m.**
- **Wenham 1:00 p.m.**

The next *Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee* will address strategic messaging and communication regarding Town Meeting and FY21 Budget.

F. Approve Massachusetts School Building Authority 2020
Statement of Interest Submittal

[Exhibit](#)

Thomas Geary, *Director of Maintenance, Facilities, and Operations*, reviews the MSBA 2020 SOI application process, as detailed in his [presentation](#). He is seeking the School Committee’s approval of his recommendation to submit the SOI for all 3 Elementary Schools. Discussion regarding SOI strategy; Capital Budget items relating to the SOI; feasibility studies and potential reimbursement for study costs; messaging strategy; anticipated community resistance and/or support; likelihood of favorable decision; etc.

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
VOTE TO HAVE THE ADMINISTRATION'S STRATEGY TO PREPARE THE
STATEMENT OF INTEREST FOR THE BUKER, CUTLER, AND WINTHROP
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS UNDER THE MSBA CORE PROGRAM, OR SOI.**

MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.

Discussion: Elementary schools included in the SOI appear in alphabetical order, not by order of importance/relevance.

Unanimously approved by 7 members present.

6. Superintendent’s Report

a. HW Goes Green Update

Dr. Kukenberger reports that students are leading this advocacy group and have shown a remarkable passion and commitment to make the district more environmentally responsible:

- Mr. Geary and his crew installed a new filling station to replace a particular station that students were avoiding (appeared old, rusty, dirty);
- Members: Dr. Julie Kukenberger, *Superintendent*, Alan Taupier, *Director of Information Technology*, Thomas Geary, *Director of Maintenance, Facilities, and Operations*, Ben Schersten, *Buker Elementary School Principal*, Craig Hovey, *Miles River Middle School Principal*, Danielle Pertucci, *K-12 Wellness Curriculum Coordinator*, Johanna Wilson, *Technology Integration Specialist*, 4 HW students, 1 HW parent;
- Students expressed concern with the High School selling *Core*, which produced a significant amount of plastic waste. As a result, the product has since been discontinued;

- Next week, schools will begin offering boxed water. The team continues to consider options for compostable packaging;
- **EcoBricks Project - Nathan Gray** began the EcoBricks project, which consists of filling plastic bottles with leftover plastic waste and using them to build structures. Ms. Pertucci is working directly with Mr. Gray to coordinate building plans and ongoing collection efforts;
- Group continues to discuss mission, possibility of childcare, communication strategies, social media presence, and how to amplify the group's presence and their environmental concerns;

Discussion regarding environmental issues occurring in Elementary Schools. Discussion regarding possible solar energy project, including grants, feasibility study, potential offset to roof replacement capital project, etc.

b. School Visits & Recognition

Dr. Kukenberger visits a number of classrooms, and provides a monthly update to honor the incredible students, staff, and learning that she observes. She commends the educators in classes where she observed writing workshops and notes that students demonstrated a remarkable grasp on literary comprehension.

c. Student Opportunity Plan

Dr. Kukenberger provides an overview of the Student Opportunity Plan. Last Friday, 02/07/2020, SEPAC hosted a meeting which was very well attended with over 30 participants.. SEPAC will be detailing a final plan which will be presented in March to the School Committee, and then submitted to the Department of Education by 04/01/20. The 3-year plan considers what the district needs to do to deepen evidence-based programs to meet needs of student subgroups who are not achieving at the same high level as their peers. Dr. Kukenberger notes that Chapter 70 funds provide a remarkable opportunity for the district, and she appreciates local legislators who have provided their support.

7. **Chair's Report**

Mr. Polito does not have any information to report but would like to apologize to the rest of the School Committee members: he inadvertently updated tonight's agenda in the Google Doc instead of editing his own copy. He apologizes for any confusion this may have caused.

8. **Committee Reports (Continued)**

A. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee

- Update: Provided throughout tonight's meeting.
- *Next Meeting Date*: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

B. Policy Subcommittee

- Update: The Policy Subcommittee met yesterday, 02/11/20 to review Section G policies. MASC recommends approving policy dictating that the School Committee approve principals' contracts. Dr. Kukenberger explains that this policy gives the authority to the superintendent to negotiate the contract based on the School Committee's approval. Discussion regarding possibility of developing a "menu" of acceptable items to use going forward in negotiating contracts.

Discussion regarding charges of the Policy Subcommittee and Negotiations Subcommittee, and the subcommittee best equipped to handle this policy. Dr. Kukenberger states that she feels competent to make decisions on her own, but

recommends the School Committee establish a “menu” to serve as guidance in future negotiations.

Policy Subcommittee will develop the “menu”. Negotiations Subcommittee will determine how to implement the “menu”.

First reading: 03/04/20

- *Next Meeting Date:* Wednesday, March 4, 2020

C. Negotiations Subcommittee

- Update: (none)
- *Next Meeting Date:* Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.

9. Other

A. Topics for Future Meetings (next meeting: 03/04/2020)

- Scheduling Joint meeting on 02/26/20;
 - Discussion regarding joint meeting intention; challenges and successes in collaborating with towns/stakeholders; reception of School Committee’s invitations to attend meetings; communication received from towns, strategies moving forward, etc.
- 1st reading of Policy H (scheduled 03/20/20);
- Communication Plan
- Religious Observation: Policy Subcommittee will discuss this over the next two meetings, and it will be included in the 03/20/20 meeting agenda.

10. Vote to Adjourn into Executive Session

I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:39 PM FOR REASON #1: TO DISCUSS THE REPUTATION, CHARACTER, PHYSICAL CONDITION, OR MENTAL HEALTH RATHER THAN PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF AN INDIVIDUAL; OR TO DISCUSS THE DISCIPLINE OR DISMISSAL OF, OR COMPLAINTS OR CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST A PUBLIC OFFICER, EMPLOYEE, STAFF MEMBER, OR INDIVIDUAL; AND NOT TO RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION THEREAFTER.

MOTION by David Polito.

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

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

Respectfully submitted May 9, 2020 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.