

# MINUTES OF THE REGULAR WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Monday, October 17, 2016  
Stella Library Media Center

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Hamilton, Chair called the Public Session to order at 7:01 PM.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Margaret Hamilton, Chair; Dr. Steve Fleischman, Vice Chair; Ms. Lisa Connor, Secretary; Ms. Karen Kravetz; Mr. Garrett Luciani (7:04 PM), Ms. Nancy Maasbach (7:04 PM), Ms. Keri Matthews, Ms. Emily Melnick and Ms. Lynn Piascyk.

**STAFF:** Mr. Robert Gilbert, Superintendent; Al Pullo, Director of Business Services/Operations; Gina Prisco, Principal; Analisa Sherman, Assistant Principal; and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** James Crawford, Joseph DePalma, Teresa Nakouzi, Anthony Taddei, Danielle Ulacco, Mary Vincitorio, Teachers; Maria Kayne, BOS Liaison; Pua Ford, Anthony Anastasio, community.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – None

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

Ms. Ulacco outlined the student selection process of the WBR Student News program as well as their production schedule.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **MOTION #1 – CONSENT AGENDA**

Move that we approve the consent agenda as presented.

Dr. Fleischman

Second by Ms. Matthews

**UNANIMOUS**

## **REPORTS**

**PTO Update** – No Report

**Superintendent's Report** – Superintendent Gilbert highlighted the Halloween Hoot, the Student Council bake sale, Massaro Farm Family Fun Day with the BRS Band, the after-school Math Olympiad and Poetry Clubs, completion of the “Listen and Learn” sessions, the work of the Cafeteria Task Force and the student environmental stewards. The hiring of a new part-time maintenance person was noted as well as the impending departure of the recently hired PE/Health teacher. On October 24, Frank Aveni will be recognized for his 49 years of service as a bus driver and in November the MAG program will be visited by educators from New Hampshire.

**BRS Update** – Ms. Prisco commented on a successful fall picture day, the PTO-sponsored Kindergarten Social, the outdoor summer read, the Harvest Hike, multiple field trips associated with Social Studies (*CT River Museum, Common Ground, the Derby Historical Society and the American Indian Museum*), fire safety month, the Halloween Hoot, parent teacher conferences, the upcoming bus safety evacuation drill and professional development activities.

**Superintendent Entry Plan** – Superintendent Gilbert described his observations during his first 100 days in district. Areas of focus included: Vision/Mission/Strategic Plan, Curriculum/Instruction, Organization/Leadership, Support Services, Community/Culture and Resources/Funding. Some of the reflections include: there is an existence of a strong sense of community, students are known as individuals with a high level of student achievement, the parent base is highly educated and engaged, there is a focus on cultural activities, a tremendous sister-school connection with China exists and the quality of services offered comes with high expectations. Given the current population, different funding / resources may be necessary to fulfill the educational needs of students. The primary emphasis in the short-term will be to enhance and promote creativity, build upon our current success and continue to move forward. More observations will be shared in January along with an outline of priorities. Board members extended sincere gratitude for the amount of listening that has occurred, involving staff in the full process and for creating a vision for continued growth.

Workshop Model Update – Ms. Prisco and Ms. Sherman presented an overview of the Columbia Reading/Writing Workshop model currently utilized by all teaching staff. The primary purpose is to build a firm foundation for students to be life-long independent learners. It is research driven and provides students with numerous opportunities to read/write at their level as well as target specific skill reinforcement with small group instruction. Assessments are conducted three times a year in addition to daily/weekly/monthly running records to monitor student progress. The common core standards are embedded into the units of study, content lessons and pacing guides. The classroom library provides additional support for student choice in selection of various reading materials. A similar structure is in place for math, however, it is in the beginning stages. The focus is slightly different in that students explain their thought process and the variety of ways they chose to solve a problem. It was noted that while we are achieving success and differentiate daily learning for students, we do not have a firm grasp on problem-solving skill development in math. It was suggested that exploration of different math consultants and resources, beyond the local area, be investigated.

Facilities Committee –Ms. Kravetz noted this Committee will meet on October 20 at 7:15 AM in the District Office Conference Room.

Finance Committee – Dr. Fleischman presented the Capital Budget request for approval. This budget request, while similar to past years, moves approximately \$100,000 of routine technology life-cycle maintenance into the operating budget. The Capital Budget includes paving for the North parking lot, repaving of the first responders access road, grounds/landscaping in the South playground area to prevent further erosion in the areas leading towards the South parking lot as recommended in the Fuss & O’Neil site assessment performed several years ago. It was proposed that this assessment study be updated in the coming months.

**MOTION #2 – 2017/18 CAPITAL PROJECT SUBMISSION**

Move that we approve the 2017/18 Capital Projects as submitted.

Dr. Fleischman

Second by Ms. Piascyk

**UNANIMOUS**

Policy Committee – Ms. Connor apprised the Board this committee met on September 28 to review policies regarding the Administration of Medication, Meeting Conduct and Video Surveillance. No changes were made to Video Surveillance, the Medication policy is still undergoing changes and the Meeting Conduct policy was presented for 30-day review under the Consent Agenda approved earlier in the meeting. The changes reflect current Board practice of not responding to Public Comment and additional language to be read prior to Public Comments.

CABE Liaison – Ms. Connor attended a workshop on legal issues last Thursday encompassing topics related to safe school climate/bullying, video recording, body cameras and evaluation of superintendents.

Upcoming Meeting Presentations

Math Update – are there additional needs related to implementation of the workshop model for math that should be included in the 2017/18 budget; are we actually using *Investigations*, what other resources are we investing in - is there something better suited to our needs; are there other professional development options available and what type of resources and/or funding would be necessary.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Early Retirement Incentive – Dr. Fleischman presented the Early Retirement Incentive for certified staff. It is hoped that by providing this information earlier in the budget process, our operating budget will be more accurately reflected when presented to the Boards of Selectmen and Finance.

**MOTION #3 – EARLY RETIREMENT INCENTIVE (WEA)**

Move that we authorize the Superintendent to offer the early retirement incentive to the membership of the WEA.

Dr. Fleischman

Second by Ms. Matthews

**UNANIMOUS**

Certified Staff Resignation – Superintendent Gilbert apprised the Board of the resignation of the recently hired Physical Education teacher, Meaghan Cleveland. Discussion ensued as to whether the hiring process was satisfactory, and given the timing of this resignation, the impact this would have on student programming.

**MOTION #4 – CERTIFIED STAFF RESIGNATION (CLEVELAND)**

Move that we accept the resignation of Meaghan Cleveland, effective November 4, 2016.

Dr. Fleischman

Second by Ms. Matthews

**UNANIMOUS**

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

The Board entered Executive Session to discuss a certified staff interview and hiring process.

**MOTION #5 – EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Move that we enter Executive Session (8:48 PM).

Ms. Connor

Second by Dr. Fleischman

**UNANIMOUS**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Hamilton, Chair called the Executive Session to order (8:53 PM).

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Margaret Hamilton, Chair; Dr. Steve Fleischman, Vice Chair; Ms. Lisa Connor, Secretary; Ms. Karen Kravetz; Mr. Garrett Luciani, Ms. Nancy Maasbach, Ms. Keri Matthews, Ms. Emily Melnick and Ms. Lynn Piascyk.

**STAFF:** Mr. Robert Gilbert, Superintendent

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** (9:08 PM)

Dr. Fleischman

Second by Ms. Matthews

**UNANIMOUS**

Recorded by Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board