

# MINUTES OF THE HYBRID REGULAR WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Tuesday, June 20, 2023

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Meeting Number: 2493 805 7750

Meeting Password: tNnAU52X3iK

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Chair, called the meeting to order (7:05 PM).

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Chair (in-person); Dr. Maria Madonick, Vice Chair (in-person); Ms. Brooke Hopkins (in-person); Dr. Jay Dahya (in-person); Ms. Sarah Beth Del Prete, Secretary (remote); Mr. Jeff Hughes (in-person); Mr. Steven Lawrence (in-person); Dr. Michael Strambler (remote 7:14 PM) and Ms. Erin Williamson (in-person).

**STAFF:** Vonda Tencza, Superintendent; Donna Coonan, Director of Business Services / Operations; Analisa Sherman, Principal; James Sapia, Assistant Principal; Carrie Borcharding, Special Services Director and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – Ms. Del Prete noted the Board had received a letter from a parent regarding field day concerns. Correspondence received is available for viewing in BoardBook.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

**PTO Report** – None

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **MOTION #1 – CONSENT AGENDA**

Move that we approve the consent agenda as presented.

Dr. Madonick

Second by Mr. Lawrence

Dr. Madonick requested extraction of all policies as they were being referred back to committee for further review.

### **MOTION #1A – CONSENT AGENDA**

Move that we approve the consent agenda as amended.

Dr. Madonick

Second by Ms. Hopkins

**UNANIMOUS**

Dr. Strambler arrived (7:14 PM).

**Superintendent Report** – Superintendent Tencza apprised the Board that follow-up pertaining to the development of the WBOE Mission / Vision and Goals for 2023/24 will occur prior to the July regular meeting. Approximately 30 teachers participated in curriculum writing in reading with Dr. Michael Rafferty. Currently, Kindergarten registration is approximately 113. The 2023/24 Teacher of the Year is Elisa Rosner. Jill Colomonico and Kathy Adamovich, both Teacher Assistants, retired after each serving the district for 25+ years.

**Wellness Update** – Superintendent Tencza presented the annual Wellness Report as mandated by the CSDE. Highlights included healthy food offerings in the Cafeteria, the Physical Education schedule and CSDE mandated assessments, QVHD building inspections and the custodial satisfaction survey.

**Reconciliation of 2023/24 Budget** – Superintendent Tencza presented the possible options for reduction to 2023/24 budget based on action by the Town Boards of Finance and Selectmen. The list developed has limited impact and allows the district to build new positions into the 2023/24 budget. The Board was urged to develop a formalized process for requesting Excess Cost Grant funds from the Town. These are funds should be used for education. Suggestions were made to include and/or bridge the hiring of a STEAM teacher and robotics into the 2023/24 budget, as well as inclusion of a curriculum specialist in the 2024/25 budget.

<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount Or Reduction</b>	<b>Reason for Adjustment</b>
STEAM teacher	(\$75,000)	Back to Superintendent Recommended
Payroll taxes for STEAM teacher	(\$1,088)	Back to Superintendent Recommended
Health estimate for STEAM teacher	(\$33,325)	Back to Superintendent Recommended
Para educator	(\$28,347)	Back to Superintendent Recommended
Payroll taxes for Paraeducator	(\$2,169)	Back to Superintendent Recommended
Health estimate for Paraeducator	(\$13,024)	Back to Superintendent Recommended
CMERS for Paraeducator	(\$5,288)	Back to Superintendent Recommended
Custodian	(\$17,883)	4 hours per day Cafeteria Custodian
FICA/Medicare payroll taxes	(\$1,174)	Psychologist moved to Mental Health Grant
Health Insurance	(\$13,542)	Psychologist moved to Mental Health Grant
CMERS	<b>\$49,481</b>	CMERS rate raised to 19.57% + correction
Health Insurance	(\$45,404)	Improving rate projection
Health Insurance Food Service Manager	(\$14,478)	Move to Cafeteria fund
Ezra Nurse	(\$12,000)	New projection based on enrollment
Stipend	<b>\$5,000</b>	Power School Stipend
	<b>(\$208,240)</b>	

### **MOTION #2 – 2023/24 BUDGET RECONCILIATION**

Move that we reduce the 2023/24 operating budget as recommended by administration.

Mr. Lawrence

Second by Dr. Madonick

**UNANIMOUS**

*BRS Update* – Ms. Sherman noted the many end-of-year programs inclusive of canine visits, boats, artsweek and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation. A sincere thank you was extend to the PTO, specifically Ruchi Jain, who was departing Beecher.

*Professional Development Update* – Ms. Sherman noted that 30 teachers participated in summer curriculum writing in Reading with Dr. Mike Rafferty. New teacher orientation will be held in August for all new staff hires, interns, substitutes etc. to review key protocols, drills, safety / security, etc. Also noted were professional development topics discussed throughout the year pertaining to vertical conversations, DEI, multi-language learners, smarter balanced assessments, strategic planning / PLC's, curriculum and technology. Work has begun to have BRS become an Apple Certified School.

*Special Education / TAG Update* – Ms. Borcharding noted that 134 students were serviced during 2022/23, including 59 new referrals. Approximately, 407 PPTs were conducted and the SRBI process is operational. Approximately 143 students in Grades 3-5 participated in the TAG assessment with 75% deemed eligible. It was suggested that areas be explored to determine gap areas, study new opportunities and establish rules / guidance to raise our TAG levels.

*BRS Town Building Committee* – Mr. Hughes noted this Committee met on June 12 and recommended the architectural firm of Silver Petrucelli to the Board of Selectmen. At the June 14 meeting of the Board of Selectmen, they voted to enter into a contract with Silver Petrucelli to perform the architectural drawings / plans for the project going forward.

*Ad Hoc Enrollment, Instructional Needs and Space Planning Committee* – Dr. Madonick noted that this Committee met on May 31 and June 7. Dr. Madonick presented the report from the Committee to the Board. The Committee was comprised of the following members: Co-Chairs - Vonda Tencza, Superintendent and Dr. Maria Madonick; Lynn Piasyck, Chair WBOE, Ex Officio; Jeff Hughes, WBOE; Brooke Hopkins, WBOE; Analisa Sherman, Principal; Donna Coonan, Director of Business & Operations; Joe Crisco, Board of Selectmen; Susan Jacobs, Board of Finance; Katie McCollom, Teacher Representative; Alli Grabowski, Teacher Representative; Vito Esparo, Director of Facilities and Patti McKeon, Woodbridge Community Representative.

The committee met five times between March and June 2023. The committee identified several working groups to explore: current space needs, current and projected enrollment, impact of legislation on preschool enrollment, shared services with BOWA districts, engagement with town leadership to explore existing spaces suitable for school expansion, repurposing of existing spaces within Beecher Road School, considerations of expanding physical space, and our goals

and vision for adding value to both our school district and Woodbridge community. To explore these working groups, the committee reviewed the following data:

- June 2022 Enrollment projections through 2031 (Peter M. Prowda, PhD)
- Current enrollment
- WBOE Classroom size guidelines
- Current Capital Projects: solar initiative, roof repair, Woodbridge Town Building Committee reports
- BOWA Portrait of a Graduate
- Beecher Road School Space Usage Report
- Beecher Road School Space Usage & Challenges Presentation (Analisa Sherman)
- Review of Region 20 formation process; Review of the Temporary Regional School Study Committee report and presentation
- Equity, Safety, and Health (Dr. Michael Deitter): review of presentation from Bristol school system on their process of expanding space using existing town buildings
- Review of the process of school expansion in Guilford, CT starting with review of an Education Specification study.
- Goals and vision formation for our district and town

After review and discussion of the information gathered, the committee makes the following recommendations:

1. Continue formal discussions with BOWA districts to explore shared services including grade level organization.
2. Recommend the WBOE hire a consultant for a feasibility study, specifically an Education Specification Study, to explore:
  - a. Repurposing current spaces within Beecher Road School
  - b. Evaluation of other spaces in town that could be repurposed for educational instruction.
  - c. Comprehensive evaluation of space utilization and instructional needs and our options for addressing those needs.

It was noted that this is the beginning stage of a 3-5 year process and that it could potentially take a decade to accomplish major changes. The possibility exists that interim spaces may be needed if current enrollment trends continue. It is also important to note that while town buildings may be multi-purpose, programs and departments have different growth requirements and security standards / restrictions. This Committee will make a formal report to the Board of Selectmen at their July 12 meeting.

### **MOTION #3 – AD HOC ENROLLMENT, INSTRUCTIONAL NEEDS AND SPACE PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Move that we accept recommendations of the Ad Hoc Enrollment, Instructional Needs and Space Planning Committee.

Dr. Madonick

Second by Mr. Hughes

**UNANIMOUS**

*Policy Committee* – Dr. Madonick noted that the Policy Committee met prior to the Board meeting to review the policies extracted from the Consent Agenda. While the WEA has a strong process for selection of participation within its membership the PTO does not. The Committee would like to further explore a parent representative process to ensure parent / community engagement.

*Finance Committee* – Mr. Lawrence reviewed the June 13 meeting inclusive of the monthly financials. Consistent with last month, there is a projected surplus of approximately \$119,000, which does not include the \$167,000 from the Excess Cost Grant for special education costs. Salary savings for the 2022/23 SY were in the range of \$347,000. While highly unusual, this was attributed to hiring staff less than predecessors and unfilled vacancies throughout the year.

Superintendent Tencza presented a list of options for use of the surplus. Priorities included roof replacement, development of educational specs, safety and security enhancements, refurbishment of playground areas and smartboard replacements.

Ms. Del Prete left the meeting (9:33 PM)

### Potential Uses of FY 2022/23 Surplus

Architect Engineering Services for Partial Roof Replacement	95,000.00
<i>*already included in surplus calculation</i>	
PA System Improvements – Quote pending	50,000.00
12 Smartboards for Classrooms *already included in surplus calculation	20,000.00
Extend Wireless Capabilities to Outdoor Areas of Campus	12,000.00
New Dismissal Platform and iPads to Run it on	8,700.00
Additional Security Measures - cameras, rotunda doors	21,000.00
<i>Additional funds available in ARP ESSER Grant</i>	
CABE Comprehensive Policy Audit	8,300.00
Playground Repairs	TBD
North Playground Loop Gravel Replacement	TBD
Total	215,000.00
Less Amounts included in surplus calculation	(115,000.00)
Net Uses to Approve in Motion	100,000.00
Current Estimated Surplus	120,000.00
Potential Funds Returned to Town	20,000.00

The Board was urged to consider separating capital projects and excess cost funding from the operating budget and to use ESSER funding if possible. The Board has some unique circumstances this year and it is important to continue to work collaboratively with the Town given the allocation of our resources. There was general consensus that if the surplus was not going to be returned to the Town, there should be an explanation as to why.

### **MOTION #4 – 2022/23 BUDGET SURPLUS**

Move that we use approximately \$215,000 of the projected surplus in the 2022/23 operating budget as recommended by administration with the addition of funding for education specs with no remaining dollars returned to the Town.

Ms. Piascyk

Second by Dr. Madonick

The motion was amended to include a letter of explanation of the extenuating circumstances associated with the budget surplus accrual.

### **MOTION #4A – 2022/23 BUDGET SURPLUS**

*Move that we use approximately \$215,000 of the projected surplus in the 2022/23 operating budget as recommended by administration with the addition of funding for education specs with no remaining dollars returned to the Town and include a letter of explanation of the extenuating circumstances associated with the budget surplus accrual.*

Ms. Piascyk

Second by Dr. Madonick

**IN FAVOR:** Ms. Hopkins, Mr. Lawrence, Dr. Madonick, Ms. Piascyk, Dr. Strambler and Ms. Williamson

**AGAINST:** Dr. Dahya and Mr. Hughes

***MOTION PASSES 6-2-0***

**HVAC Maintenance Contract** – The Finance Committee reviewed the RFP for a three-year HVAC maintenance agreement. Ms. Coonan noted that an RFP had been published with both a one-year and three-year option. While this work is usually performed annually, it may be possible to obtain better pricing with a three-year option as work is performed during the months of August, December and April. Proposals were received from Reliable, USA Mechanical Perfect Temp, Mechanical Heating & Plumbing, Modern Mechanical, Sav-Mor Heating & Cooling and Tucker Mechanical.

**MOTION #5 – HVAC MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

Move that we authorize the Superintendent and/or designee to enter into a three-year contract agreement with *Tucker Mechanicals* to perform the annual HVAC Maintenance.

Mr. Hughes  
Second by Dr. Dahya  
**UNANIMOUS**

*CABE Liaison Report* – No Report.

**NEW BUSINESS** – None

*Upcoming WBOE Committee / Meeting Schedule* – The regular WBOE Meeting on July 17 at 7:00 PM; a Vision / Mission / Goal Setting special working session at 5:00 PM on July 17.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

*Executive Session*

The Board entered Executive Session to discuss the 2023/24 contract for the Superintendent.

**MOTION #6 – EXECUTIVE SESSION (9:45 PM)**

Move that we enter Executive Session to discuss negotiations with respect to collective bargaining and to discuss the Superintendent's Contract Extension.

Dr. Madonick  
Second by Mr. Lawrence  
**UNANIMOUS**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Chair (in-person); Dr. Maria Madonick, Vice Chair (in-person); Ms. Brooke Hopkins (in-person); Dr. Jay Dayha (in-person); Mr. Jeff Hughes (in-person); Mr. Steven Lawrence (in-person); Dr. Michael Strambler (remote 7:14 PM) and Ms. Erin Williamson (in-person).

The Board reviewed the contract for the Superintendent.

**MOTION #7 – RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

Move that we return to Public Session (10:47 PM).

Dr. Madonick  
Second by Ms. Hopkins  
**UNANIMOUS**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Chair (in-person); Dr. Maria Madonick, Vice Chair (in-person); Ms. Brooke Hopkins (in-person); Dr. Jay Dahya (in-person); Mr. Jeff Hughes (in-person); Mr. Steven Lawrence (in-person); Dr. Michael Strambler (in-person) and Ms. Erin Williamson (in-person).

**STAFF:** Vonda Tencza, Superintendent; and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

Ms. Piascyk called the Public Session back to order (10:47 PM).

**MOTION #8 – CONTRACT MODIFICATION**

Move that we extend the contract of the Superintendent through June 30, 2026 approving a \$4,000 salary increase for the 2023/24 school year and with an additional \$1,000 added to the annuity amount set forth in Section XIII of the Superintendent's Contract Agreement.

Mr. Lawrence  
Second by Dr. Dahya  
**UNANIMOUS**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN: (10:49 PM)**

Mr. Lawrence  
Second by Ms. Hopkins  
**UNANIMOUS**

Recorded by Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board