

WHITMAN-HANSON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of February 7, 2018
Held at the Whitman-Hanson Regional School High School
600 Franklin Street, Whitman

Meeting convened: 7:03 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 9:00 p.m.

Members present: Robert Hayes, Frederick Small, Robert O'Brien, Jr., Kevin Lynam
Daniel Cullity, Robert Trotta, Christopher Howard, Michael Jones, Alexandria
Taylor, and Steve Bois

Members absent: None

Administrators present: Dr. Ruth Gilbert-Whitner, Superintendent of Schools
Kyle Riley, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
Christine Suckow, Executive Director of Business Services
Chad Peters, Director of Technology Services

Chair Hayes brought the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and announced the meeting was being recorded and broadcast live. The Chair also identified elected officials from each town and state representatives in attendance. Chair Hayes announced the next School Committee meeting will take place on February 28, 2018 and will continue the discussion about the FY2019 budget.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Chair Hayes announced the approval of meeting minutes would be tabled until the next regular School Committee meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

MARS - Regional Agreement

Chair Hayes reported the Regional Agreement Amendment Committee (RAAC) met on January 29, 2018. A significant amount of language updates have been made to date. The RAAC Committee anticipates presenting the final document for approval soon. Their next meeting is February 26, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the high school library.

Maquan School Closing Update

The Superintendent reported on recent developments associated with the closing of the Maquan Elementary School. At the Hanson Special Town Meeting held on February 5, 2018, the warrant article to see if the Town will vote to transfer available funds from free cash for costs related to the closing of the Maquan Elementary School passed. At the leadership team meeting earlier today, tasks to move forward with the project were prioritized. Asbestos abatement at the Indian Head School is the top priority and will occur during the February school vacation week. All other work will begin during April vacation week. The Town of Whitman is holding a Special Town Meeting on March 12 at 7:30 p.m. to vote on the allocation of the remaining funds associated with the Maquan School closing. During the February school vacation week, the District will be fine-tuning the Maquan School closing project timelines. The Facilities and Capital Projects Sub-committee will meet on February 28, 2018 for additional discussion of the anticipated timeline.

Superintendent Search Update

Chair Hayes reported Superintendent Search Screening Sub-committee put forth three finalist candidates for the position of Superintendent of Schools after a review of nineteen applications and series of interviews. The finalist candidates are Dr. John M. Marcus, Assistant Superintendent, Sharon Public Schools, from North Easton, MA; Mr. Kevin J. McNamara, Principal, Lincoln High School, Lincoln Public Schools, from Greenville, RI; and Mr. Jeffrey Szymaniak, Principal, Whitman-Hanson Regional High School from Pembroke, MA.

Chair Hayes discussed conducting site visits for each candidate and the process of determining the interview questions for the finalists. It was the consensus of the Committee to conduct site visits and interview the finalists in a timely fashion during the week of February 12. The Committee discussed potential of losing a candidate if the interviews or site visits are delayed. There was a discussion whether to have site visits at Whitman-Hanson or to go to the site of each candidate. Dr. Whitner recommended going to site visits for all three candidates as well as bringing the candidate to Whitman-Hanson to meet with stakeholders and focus groups at in District. The Committee members are to submit potential interview questions to the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent who will gather and provide the listing at the finalist interview session meeting where the questions will be chosen and will contact the finalists to host site visits for the week of February 12.

Field Trip Request

High School French Honor Society to New York City

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to waive the nurse requirement and approve the approve High School French Honor Society field trip request to New York City, NY to attend the Phantom of the Opera on Broadway, on May 3, 2018. The motion passed unanimously.

Letter from Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA)

Chair Hayes announced the Indian Head School Guitar Ensemble was selected to perform at the 2018 Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA). Chair Hayes read the announcement letter addressed to music teacher, Chad Gillander. The ensemble's performance is scheduled for Friday, March 2 at 1:45 p.m. at the Seaport Hotel in Boston. MMEA will provide a complimentary conference registration and will receive \$500 to defray the cost of transportation for the ensemble.

Public Hearing on FY02019 School District Budget

Chair Hayes announced the Committee will open a public hearing on the FY2019 school district budget.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded: voted by roll call to open the Public Hearing on the FY2019 School District Budget. By Roll Call:

Robert Hayes – yes

Frederick Small – yes

Robert O'Brien – yes

Kevin Lynam – yes

Daniel Cullity – yes

Robert Trotta – yes

Christopher Howard – yes

Michael Jones – yes

Alexandria Taylor – yes

Steve Bois – yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Hayes invited all attendees to ask questions at any time throughout the presentation.

Chair Hayes invited state representatives in attendance to speak on current legislative efforts and the Governor's budget proposal (House I). State Representative Josh Cutler, Senator Brady's legislative aide, Rick Branca, and State Representative Geoff Diehl's legislative aide, Jacqueline Del Bonis, were in attendance.

Representative Josh Cutler reported that the legislation is currently in the midst of their budget process as well. Representative Cutler reported that state revenues are above projections and currently are \$158 million over benchmark for January. This year's consensus revenue forecast indicates a 3.5% revenue growth. In turn, that means the Unrestricted General Government Aid (UGGA) will increase by 3.5%. Chapter 70 funding is based on this formula as well. Unfortunately, the minimum per pupil increment was set low by the Governor at \$20 per pupil. The Ways and Means hearings are underway and the education hearing is scheduled for February 27, 2018. Efforts continue to increase the minimum per pupil increment by state representatives are well-supported again this year, and Representative Cutler is optimistic it will pass although he is unsure of the increase. Representative Cutler provided a summary of legislation the Regional School caucus is prioritizing this term. The Ways & Means public hearing for Education and Local Aid is set for February 27, 2018. Representative Cutler reported he received the letter from Dr. Ruth Gilbert-Whitner regarding the inadequate funding of the special education circuit breaker account FY20018 and has contact the Governor via a letter requesting a supplemental budget appropriation, and signed in support by a number of other state representatives. Representative Cutler announced the Annual Plymouth District Student Art Show at the State House in Boston is coming up in March and encouraged the community to attend. Also, Marc Benjamino, a Whitman-Hanson Regional School District senior, is now interning with Representative Josh Cutler. Chair Hayes thanked Town Officials, Whitman and Hanson staff, and community members for attending.

WHRSD Budget Proposal FY2019

Dr. Whitner thanked the legislators for the information on regional transportation working towards 100% reimbursement that is clearly needed and efforts for Chapter 70 funding to increase the per pupil minimum. Dr. Whitner acknowledged the leadership team members present, along with Whitman-Hanson Education Association (WHEA) representatives, and teachers and parents to learn more about the budget.

The Superintendent presented the FY2019 budget proposal. The budget binder is divided into nine sections as listed below.

1. Overview/Executive Summary
2. Historical/Background Information
3. Grants and Other Funding Sources
4. Revenue
5. The 2018-2019 Budget Proposal
6. Strategic Plan Priorities
7. Staffing
8. Capital Improvement
9. Notes/Additional Information

Section I – Overview/Executive Summary

In the letter, the Superintendent shows the binder is laid out and provides highlights of the priorities for this school year. The difference this year, in terms of level services, is unique as funding has been shifted to other schools as a result of the closing of the Maquan School, consequently increases in line items in the other schools are notable.

The budget proposed in Section 5 includes similar services to students as those provided in 2017-2018 and several top priorities that the Leadership and Administrative Teams have determined are critical to the success of WHRSD students. These priorities are all linked to the Strategic Plan.

- One to One Devices (Chromebooks) – Year 1 for a Multi-Year Technology Plan
 - Students must learn to read and write electronically as well as test electronically.

- Staff need professional development for electronic teaching skills.
- Director of Technology Services has provided a multi-year implementation plan.
- Fundraisers are helpful, but do not provide an adequate number of devices for students.
- 2 Special Education Teachers – Middle School Science
 - Currently do not have inclusion for history/social studies and science
 - Science is now tested area and student must be ready for high school high stakes testing
- 1 Family Liaison – Elementary Schools
 - Works with families and school staff for resources and support for social / emotional needs
- Instructional Materials – Know Atom: Elementary Science
 - District responsible to maintain the program

These top priorities have been built into the proposed FY2019 school district budget.

Other items the leadership team recognizes as other priorities are as follows:

- Kindergarten – Full Day No Cost Kindergarten
- Consistent School Opening Times – Whitman Elementary Schools
- The Foreign Language Program
- Instrumental Music
- Professional Development
- Instructional Materials to align with updated Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

Section II – Background Information

Dr. Whitner reviewed the historical background information and noted two important items. The most recent information from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the average per pupil expenditure (FY2015-2016) for Massachusetts is \$15,545. In FY2015-2016, Whitman-Hanson's per pupil expenditure was \$11,815, ranking seventh from the bottom and \$3,730 below the state average. At the FY 2016 state average of \$15,545 per pupil, our current budget would be \$62,180,000. The Superintendent discussed declining enrollment due to low birth rates. Tracking of enrollment was illustrated in Section II from 2013-14 SY to the 2017-18 SY. Whitman-Hanson enrollment is now below 4,000 students. The expenditures for the District comparison to state average in ten functions are also illustrated.

Section III – Grants and other Funding Sources

Dr. Whitner discussed the importance of knowing all of the funding sources of the operating budget. The Whitman-Hanson Regional School District is recipient of federal, state, and private grant opportunities which provide additional resources and staffing for District programs. One of the most important grants over the last nine years is the 21st Century Community Learning Grant for at risk high school students. The Superintendent encouraged the community to contact their legislators to continue supporting grant funding. The Superintendent reviewed the grants listed in this section noting they make up over \$1.7 million in funding. Furthermore, eighty-eight salaries were not funded by the operational budget in FY2018 in the amount of \$3,230,626. There was a brief discussion of the benefits of school choice. Currently, there are 61 students enrolled under School Choice, including high school students who finish their high school career in district even if they move out of town.

Section IV – Revenue

Christine Suckow presented the anticipated revenue figures for FY2019 in Section IV. The revenue for the current FY 2017-2018 budget at 448,688,029 and the projected revenue for FY 2018-2019 budget at \$48,032,151 reveals a revenue shortfall of \$655,878 or -1.34%.

Mrs. Suckow reported the current balance in the Excess & Deficiency (E&D) account was certified as of June 30, 2017 at \$937,761. At this time, the School Committee has not voted to transfer funds out of E&D to offset the budget deficit. Dr. Whitner discussed under-funded mandates and unfunded mandates that are costly to the District. Charter school and homeless transportation reimbursements are less than 100% reimbursed.

The local assessment financial contributions, based on October 1, 2017 Enrollment was presented. Mrs. Suckow noted the swing in enrollment is not a prominent in years past.

Fiscal Year	FY 18	FY19
Hanson	40.45%	40.18%
Enrollment	1618	1567
Whitman	59.55%	59.82%
Enrollment	2382	2333

A schedule of local assessment scenarios was presented and will be discussed in upcoming meetings.

The proposed level services operating budget for the FY2019 is \$50,706,972. The anticipated revenue is 448,032,151, resulting in a budget deficit of \$2,674,821. These figures do not include any assessment increase from the Towns.

FY 2019 ASSESSMENTS DETAIL and PERCENTAGE INCREASE											
		WHITMAN			HANSON			TOTAL			
FY 2019 Apportionment of Operating Costs Per Regional Agreement		59.82%			40.18%						
FY 2018 \$9.55		12,064,192 40.45			8,194,736			20,258,928			
*Adjust for Enrollment as of 10/1/2017		54,699			(54,699)						
LEVEL BUDGET NO INCREASE ASSESSMENT FROM TOWNS		12,118,891			8,140,037			20,258,928			
FY-2019 PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET		50,706,972			48,032,151			** 2,674,821			
TOTAL ASSESSMENT		WHITMAN			HANSON			TOTAL BUDGET			
INCREASE IN ASSESSMENT BY %		INCREASE AMT		AMT INCREASE TOTAL ASSESSMENT		AMT INCREASE TOTAL ASSESSMENT		REMAINING DEFICIT		WHITMAN HANSON WHITMAN HANSON	
1%	202,589	121,189	12,240,080	81,400	8,221,438	2,472,232	1.46%	0.33%	175,888	26,702	
2%	405,179	242,378	12,361,269	162,801	8,302,838	2,269,642	2.46%	1.32%	297,077	108,102	
2.5%	506,473	302,972	12,421,863	203,501	8,343,538	2,168,348	2.96%	1.82%	357,671	148,802	
3%	607,768	363,567	12,482,457	244,201	8,384,238	2,067,053	3.47%	2.31%	418,265	189,502	
3.5%	709,062	424,161	12,543,052	284,901	8,424,939	1,965,759	3.97%	2.81%	478,960	230,203	
4%	810,357	484,756	12,603,646	325,601	8,465,639	1,864,464	4.47%	3.31%	539,454	270,903	
4.5%	911,652	545,350	12,664,241	366,302	8,506,339	1,763,169	4.97%	3.80%	600,049	311,603	
5%	1,012,946	605,945	12,724,835	407,002	8,547,039	1,661,875	5.48%	4.30%	660,643	352,303	
5.5%	1,114,241	666,539	12,785,430	447,702	8,587,739	1,560,580	5.98%	4.80%	721,238	393,003	
6%	1,215,536	727,133	12,846,024	488,402	8,628,440	1,459,285	6.48%	5.29%	781,832	433,704	
6.5%	1,316,830	787,728	12,906,619	529,102	8,669,140	1,357,991	6.98%	5.79%	842,427	474,404	
7.0%	1,418,125	848,322	12,967,213	569,803	8,709,840	1,256,696	7.49%	6.29%	903,021	515,104	
7.5%	1,519,420	908,917	13,027,808	610,503	8,750,540	1,155,401	7.99%	6.78%	963,616	555,804	
8.0%	1,620,714	969,511	13,088,402	651,203	8,791,240	1,054,107	8.49%	7.28%	1,024,210	596,504	
8.5%	1,722,009	1,030,106	13,148,996	691,903	8,831,940	952,812	8.99%	7.78%	1,084,804	637,204	
9.0%	1,823,304	1,090,700	13,209,591	732,603	8,872,641	851,517	9.49%	8.27%	1,145,399	677,905	
9.5%	1,924,598	1,151,295	13,270,185	773,304	8,913,341	750,223	10.00%	8.77%	1,205,993	718,605	
10.0%	2,025,893	1,211,889	13,330,780	814,004	8,954,041	648,928	10.50%	9.27%	1,266,588	759,305	
10.25%	2,076,540	1,242,186	13,361,077	834,354	8,974,391	598,281	10.75%	9.51%	1,296,885	779,655	
10.5%	2,127,187	1,272,484	13,391,374	854,704	8,994,741	547,634	11.00%	9.76%	1,327,182	800,005	
11.0%	2,228,482	1,333,078	13,451,969	895,404	9,035,441	446,339	11.50%	10.26%	1,387,777	840,705	
11.5%	2,329,777	1,393,672	13,512,563	936,104	9,076,142	345,044	12.01%	10.76%	1,448,371	881,406	
12.0%	2,431,071	1,454,267	13,573,158	976,804	9,116,842	243,750	12.51%	11.25%	1,508,966	922,106	
13.0%	2,633,661	1,575,456	13,694,347	1,058,205	9,198,242	41,160	13.51%	12.25%	1,630,155	1,003,506	
13.5%	2,734,955	1,636,050	14,853,846	1,098,905	9,238,942	(60,134)	14.01%	12.74%	1,690,749	1,044,206	
14.0%	2,836,250	1,696,645	13,815,535	1,139,605	9,279,642	(161,429)	14.52%	13.33%	1,751,343	1,084,906	
14.61%	2,959,829	1,770,570	13,889,461	1,189,259	9,329,297	(285,008)	15.13%	13.84%	1,825,269	1,134,561	

** The Regional Agreement annually reviews enrollment as of October 1st and apportions assessments to member towns as a percentage.

** This is based on Governors Budget January 24, 2018

Dr. Whitner reported a 1% increase to the assessment would add \$202,589 in revenue from local aid to the deficit. Dr. Whitner noted that Whitman-Hanson Regional School District is dependent over 50% of its funding from Chapter 70 state aid. It was noted that the Towns currently do not fund locally at “Target Share” as computed by the state, and receive more than \$4 million over the state computation.

The Superintendent discussed the unlikelihood of anticipating an increase in Chapter 70 funding. For FY 2018, Chapter 70 aid funds 64.22% of the foundation budget. This amount exceeds the state target, which assumes that local contributions should cover 59% of the foundation budget. Although local contributions meet minimum contribution requirements, they fall short of the target share goal of state aid covering 41%. This is called target state aid. For this reason, Whitman-Hanson does not receive additional state aid with the implementation of full day, no cost kindergarten.

Section V – Budget Proposal

Dr. Whitner reviewed the budget proposal.

The table below illustrates the proposed budget expenses for the Fiscal Year beginning on July 1, 2018 and ending on June 30, 2019, referred to as FY 2018-2019. Overall this represents a 4.10% increase of the current fiscal year.

FINAL BUDGET FY 2018	48,688,029
PROPOSED BUDGET FY 2019	50,706,972
INCREASE (\$)	2,018,943
INCREASE (%)	4.10%

The Superintendent reviewed revenue estimates. At this time many of these numbers are based on projections which often are not finalized until the state legislature approves the budget in May or June. At this point the estimate is:

FY 2018 REVENUES	48,688,029
FY 2019 ESTIMATED REVENUES	48,032,151
SHORTFALL (\$)	-655,878
SHORTFALL (%)	-1.34%

FY19 TOTAL ANTICIPATED DEFICIT

Increased expenses	2,018,943
Shortfall Projected Revenue	655,878
Total Anticipated Deficit	2,674,821

Dr. Whitner noted the total anticipated deficit, without any increase in the assessment to Towns is \$2,674,821. There is more work to be done over the next six weeks to work with the towns and School Committee to reduce the budget gap for level services. The closing of the Maquan School will also impact the budget. Some

savings have already been realized this year with one principal overseeing two schools, Maquan and Indian Head. Also, estimated costs for Maquan School have been pro-rated to ten months for this school year.

Dr. Whitner and Christine Suckow reviewed the proposed budget by school, by line item, highlighting areas of interest. Most of the notable changes are directly due to the closing of Maquan School and personnel movement.

Dr. Whitner confirmed the District is currently in a budget freeze.

Section VI – Strategic Plan Priorities

The budget presented in Section 5 represents the costs of providing essentially the same services in 2018-2019, including the top budgetary priorities as determined by the Leadership and Administrative Teams. This budget includes the operational costs of the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District to fund the services in 2018-2019 that are now offered in 2017-2018. Section 6 presents budgetary considerations that are linked directly to the priorities of the 2017-2018 Action Plans of the District's Strategic Plan.

- Pillar #1 - Every Child Every Day - Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds
- Pillar #2 - A Cohesive PreK-12 System of Teaching and Learning, Engaged and Successful Students, Independent Learners
- Pillar # 3 – Safe and Secure Schools

Elementary Science Instructional Supplies: For the past four years, the Gelfand Family Foundation has provided the financial resources (\$426,519) to support the implementation of the Know Atom. The instructional materials that used in science class must now be funded by the operating budget.

Chromebooks to implement Year 1 of a Multi-Year Technology Implementation Plan:

Chromebooks purchased for the 2018-2019 school year will be used to implement the Science and Mathematics Curriculum in the middle schools. Chromebooks purchased for the 2018-2019 school year will be used for instructional purposes in grade 9 English Language Arts to ensure that students are proficient in writing and responding to prompts in an electronic format.

Two Special Education Teachers to provide support students with special needs in middle school science classes. All students in grade 8 take the Next Generation MCAS tests in science. Although there is support for students with special needs in English Language Arts and Mathematics for them, special education teachers are need to provide similar support in science. *A Family Liaison* to work in the elementary schools to assist students and their families. Although counselors are available in middle school and high school to assist students and their families, there are no counselors in the elementary schools to provide coordinated services between students, their families, and the schools.

Other Strategic Plan priorities include:

- Full Day Kindergarten
- Consistent Starting/Ending Times
- Foreign Language Program
- Instrumental music position

Section VII – Staffing

Section VIII – Capital Improvement Information

This section contains a summary of capital projects as well as the impact of closing the Maquan School. Also included are the capital project matrices for each town and the District.

Chair Hayes announced that budget discussions will continue as the Committee works toward reducing the budget deficit and finding revenue sources.

Donation

Chair Hayes stated in the receipt of the letter announcing the Indian Head School Guitar Ensemble was selected to perform at the 2018 Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA) the Committee will need to accept the donation of \$500 from the Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA) which will be used to defray the cost of transportation to the 2018 MMEA Ensemble.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded: voted to accept the donation of \$500 from the Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA) which will be used to defray the cost of transportation to the 2018 MMEA Ensemble. The motion carried unanimously.

Close Public Hearing on FY2019 School District Budget

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded: voted by roll call to close the Public Hearing on the FY2019 School District Budget. By Roll Call:

Robert Hayes – yes

Frederick Small – yes

Robert O'Brien – yes

Kevin Lynam – yes

Daniel Cullity – yes

Robert Trotta – yes

Christopher Howard – yes

Michael Jones – yes

Alexandria Taylor – yes

Steve Bois – yes

The motion passed unanimously.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; to adjourn the School Committee meeting at 9:00 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michelle Lindberg

Meeting Materials and Handouts:

- 1) Field Trip Request – HS French Class to New York City
- 2) Memo notification Indian Head Guitar Ensemble selected to perform at 2018 MMEA Conference
- 3) FY2019 Whitman-Hanson Regional School District Budget Proposal Presentation