

WHITMAN-HANSON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of February 27, 2019

Held at the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School
600 Franklin Street, Whitman MA

Meeting convened: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 9:16 p.m.

Members present: Robert Hayes, Robert Trotta, Frederick Small, Robert O'Brien, Jr. (left at 7:55 p.m.), Michael Jones, Daniel Cullity, Steve Bois, and Christopher Scriven, Alexandria Taylor, Christopher Howard

Members absent: None

Administrators present: Jeffrey Szymaniak, Superintendent of Schools
George M. Ferro, Jr., Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Chair Hayes brought the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and announced the meeting was being recorded and broadcast live.

Student Advisory Report

Marah Burt, Student Council School Committee Representative, reported on a number of events and student activities across the District. At the High School on March 7 the Whitman & Hanson Dollars for Scholars (DFS) will be celebrate its 12th Annual "A Taste of Whitman and Hanson" on Thursday, March 7, at the VFW Post #697 in Whitman at 5:30 p.m. On March 8, the Whitman-Hanson Alumni and Community Band Concert will perform in the Dr. John F. McEwan Performing Arts Center at 7:00 pm. At the Indian Head Elementary School, the Hanson PTO organized a fundraiser to purchase Red Sox tickets by Friday March 1 as the Red Sox host the Colorado Rockies on May 15. Dr. Seuss Spirit week is March 1-March 8. Panther socks order forms can be found on the Indian Head website, supplies while they last.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

School Committee Meeting Minutes of February 6 and February 13, 2019

Mr. Cullity motioned; Mr. Small seconded, voted to approve the meeting minutes of the School Committee meetings of February 6, 2019 and February 13, 2019. The motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent's Report

Budget FY2019 Update

Christine Suckow presented the year to date Encumbrances and Revenue Reports. Mrs. Suckow highlighted several lines that are currently over budget, including special education, clinic supplies and substitute lines. Currently, \$960,431 remains in the E&D account.

FY2020 Budget Discussion

Superintendent Jeffrey Szymaniak reported he recently attended two meetings with Whitman Town Officials to discuss the FY2020 budget. The meetings were held to discuss current budget concerns and an initiative by the Town Administrator requesting all town departments, including the Regional School District, consent to a two-year wage freeze to alleviate the \$2.5 million deficit in the Town of Whitman budget. Mr. Szymaniak reported he has not received figures from the Town if the override and debt exclusion proposal for funding do not pass and needs to learn how it will impact the school district's local assessment.

Mr. Szymaniak reported on anticipated budget variations. The medical insurance line increase of 5% may change as the Mayflower Municipal Health Group (MMHG) meets on March 11 to discuss costs and potential increases. Mr. Szymaniak noted that special education costs are always a moving target with constant fluctuation, but recently negotiated a better arrangement saving \$200,000, which may end up being negligible depending on student enrollment and special education needs. Mr. Szymaniak asked the Committee to stay true to his budget proposal as he has not received any real numbers of what the Town of Whitman can afford to back to the budget.

Whitman Town Administrator, Frank Lynam, reported he recently met with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee on budget. He also plans to meet with the Town of Hanson Town Administrator and Accountant on March 5. In addition, he has a meeting scheduled with all town department collective bargaining units on March 4. Mr. Lynam stated the key to funding would be to have the override pass in the Town of Whitman. Mr. Lynam talked about sustainability and that there is no resolution if they do a levy limit this year. Mr. Lynam reported he is working on a capital plan and budget development to help identify where the Town is at any given time, adding there has to be a resolution to address the funding for future years. He spoke of the capital items on this year's warrant, over \$3 million, which the Town does not have funds to cover. Mr. Lynam reported he will meet formally with departments to review budgets line by line, with one of the elements to discuss is foregoing wage increases. Mr. Lynam may have figures for the March 13 School Committee meeting with and without an override. Chair Hayes discussed district salaries and the budget impact of no increases, however, would like to discuss options with the Whitman Hanson Education Association (WHEA).

VOTE: Mr. Bois motioned; Mr. Scriven seconded: voted to post an Executive Session meeting with Whitman Hanson Education Association (WHEA). The motion passed unanimously.

The Superintendent will post an Executive Session School Committee meeting with the Whitman-Hanson Education Association (WHEA) for Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

There was a brief discussion of the state of the Town of Whitman budget and any foreseeable notification that may have been provided earlier in the year to the School Committee. Mrs. Taylor discussed the need of more business revenue sources in the Town of Whitman.

Mr. Szymaniak announced, as stated previously, the budget proposed is a level service budget. If it is the pleasure of the Committee to present budget cuts to a level service budget he will prepare that scenario. Mr. Szymaniak will also share the surrounding area districts per pupil cost, noting Whitman-Hanson remains at the bottom third rank in the state.

Mr. Szymaniak reported that discussions with the Town of Hanson indicate they can support a local assessment increase in a comfortable range after meeting with the Town Administrator and Town Accountant, not at a 16% increase.

It was determined that the Committee will discuss budget and setting the local assessment on March 13 after Executive Session meeting with the WHEA.

The Committee requested the administration prepare a budget scenario with incremental local assessment percentage increases of \$200,000. Mr. Szymaniak agreed to present a budget scenario of cuts for a level funded budget. There was additional discussion regarding indefinite medical insurance costs as well as the possibility of transferring funds out of E&D to reduce the FY2020 budget deficit. Mr. Szymaniak will provide the requested information at the next meeting and identify areas for potential reduction.

WHEA Resolution Proposal - Fund our Future

Whitman-Hanson Education Association (WHEA) President, Kevin Kavka presented a Resolution in Support of Increased Funding for Massachusetts Public Schools through the *Promise Act* for the Committee's support. Mr. Kavka reported this initiative was discussed by Senator Brady, a co-sponsor of the resolution, at the WHRSD Budget Presentation meeting. Mr. Kavka reported 51 towns have signed on and presented two handouts for the Committee's information. Mr. Kavka stated through research, the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District could potentially realize an additional \$919,550 in state aid if the funding formula were sufficient. Mr. Small was not in favor of the endorsement and added the Promise Act is subject to a phase in of charter schools and that he was more in favor of supporting something to benefit Whitman and Hanson, not just the remuneration of the foundation budget formula. The Committee discussed the reality of the estimated additional state funding and the impact the endorsement would have on other groups lobbying for regional school district benefits. Mr. Kavka confirmed the Massachusetts Teacher's Association (MTA) also endorsed the Resolution.

VOTE: Mr. Trotta motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; voted to endorse the Resolution in Support of Increased Funding for Massachusetts Public Schools through the *Promise Act*, as presented. The motion passed 7-1-1 passed Mr. Bois abstained. Mr. Small opposed.

North River Collaborative Report

Superintendent Szymaniak reported the District has agreed to implement a school-based targeted intervention program through Independence Academy under North River Collaborative to provide identification, prevention and early intervention to youths 13-17 years of age at risk for substance use. This is a grant-based program at no cost to the District.

Warrant Articles -Town of Hanson

The Executive Director of Business Services presented a number of capital items to be placed on the Town of Hanson 2019 Annual May Town Meeting as warrant articles. In addition, vote authorization to borrow with regard to the HVAC improvements at the Hanson Middle School in the amount of \$500,000.

VOTE: Mr. Trotta motioned; Mr. Small seconded; voted to approve the following warrant articles to be placed on the Town of Hanson 2019 Annual May Town Meeting Warrant as presented as well as the authorization to borrow as follows:

ARTICLE: To see if the Town will vote to transfer a \$ 25,000 from Free Cash or available funds for the replacement of tiles in (4) classrooms at Hanson Middle School or take any other action in relation thereto.

Explanation: Hanson Middle School replacement of deteriorating and lifting tiles in (4) classrooms. Estimated cost \$25,000.00.

ARTICLE: To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$15,000 from Free Cash or available funds to reimburse the Whitman Hanson Regional School District for the purchase and installment of the solar powered flashing schools signs on Indian Head Street (RT 58)

ARTICLE: To see if the Town will vote to transfer a \$ 14,200 from Free Cash or available funds for the replacement kitchen equipment: skillet at Indian Head Elementary School or take any other action in relation thereto.

Explanation: Indian Head Elementary School replacement of titling skillet in the kitchen. It is beyond life expectancy and cannot be used. The new unit will be more energy efficient.

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and/or transfer from available funds to school Capital Accounts for the following items or take any other action in relation thereto.

Line	Dept.	Item	FY19 CIP Report	Town Admin. Recommendation	Funding Source
1	School -Hanson Middle and Indian Head	Add thumb pieces to all classroom and office doors	38,000		
2	School – Indian Head	2 nd floor ceiling projects	55,000		
3	School-Indian Head	Roof Repairs –Old pitch library	65,000		
4	School – Indian Head	Parking Spaces on School Street	45,000		
5	School – Hanson Middle	Roof shingles Replacement gym	65,000		
6	School – Indian Head	Energy Management	45,000		
7	School – Hanson Middle	Auditorium Theatrical lighting and stage curtains	38,000		
		<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>351,000</i>		

Proposed by the Capital Improvement Committee & Board of Selectmen

Explanation: Item 1- Safety and Security: the current locking system does not allow locking of the doors from inside the classroom or office.

Item 2 – Identified issue from original ceiling falling through the 1999 replacement tile. Remove and install new ceilings on 2nd floor classrooms: rooms 217, 218 teachers’ room and corridor *Item 3 – Old library pitched roof needs replacement*

Item 4 - Replace gravel parking spaces with asphalt

Item 5 – Replace shingles on gym and entry vestibule. The school fully adhered EPDM are at the 20 year anticipated life span. We are starting to see failure of roofs, water infiltration and leakage.

Item 6- Update controller at the site and add CO2 reset devices to improve energy efficiencies and lower operating costs.

Item 7 – Replace falling theatrical lighting system. Replace on stage lighting and controls with newer LED technology. The inadequate leg and border curtains need to be replaced.

ARTICLE : To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds a sum of money to Capital Accounts for the following Whitman Hanson Regional High School items or take any other action in relation thereto.

Line	Dept.	Item	FY19 CIP Report	Town Admin. Recommendation	Funding Source
1	School - High School	Add thumb pieces latches to all classrooms and office doors	14,063		
2	School - High School	Existing Fire lane	10,045		
3	School - High School	Purchase and install solar powered site lighting	30,135		
4	School High School	Roadway Repairs	84,378		
5	School - High School	Roof Top Unit Replacements	40,180		
6	School - High	Vehicle Purchase	30,135		
7	School - High School	Resurface Outdoor Track	90,405		
8	School – High School	Gym Floor Refinish	12,054		
	Total		311,395		

Explanation:

Item 1- Safety and Security: the current locking system does not allow the locking of the door from inside the classroom without using a key.

Item 2 – Existing roadway/drainage does not meet standards. Roadway is becoming worst due to water and sheet draining across the road and increased sand and salt during poor weather conditions

Item 3 – Security lighting needed for recreation area and other parking lot areas where trenching and access is limited for underground utilities.

Item 4 – Additional roadway repairs needed.

Item 5 – RTU 1 continues not to be dependable. Thus unit feeds the Dr. John McEwan Performing Arts Center that is used daily and nightly.

Item 6 – Purchase (2) new facility vehicles. The existing vehicles are beyond life expectancy.

Item 7 – The outdoor track is beyond its useful life and to not resurface, the track will deteriorate and would have to be completely replaced.

Item 8- Wear and tear after 15 years of use. This will be a completer re-sand and refinish.

ARTICLE : To see if the Town will approve the \$500,000 borrowing authorized by the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District to pay costs of designing and carrying out HVAC improvements at the Hanson Middle School (Phase Two), including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto; or to take any other action relative thereto.

Explanation: The Project shall consist of providing a high efficiency variable refrigerant flow (VRF) heat pumps air conditioning system for the First Floor Classrooms and Learning Spaces at the Hanson Middle School (Phase Two) located at 111 Liberty Street, Hanson MA. The Middle School was constructed in 1998, is approximately 83,700 square feet and consists of two floors. The existing buildings classrooms are heated and ventilated through the use of hot water classroom unit ventilator units, and currently do not have air conditioning. As part of this project scope, indoor ductless wall mounted or ceiling mounted AC units shall be installed within the classroom and shall be piped with insulated refrigeration piping to outdoor grade or roof mounted air cooled heat pump condensing equipment. Multiple indoor units shall be connected to each outdoor condensing unit to maximize system sizing, efficiency and diversity. A new direct digital control system shall be provided to control and monitor the VRF system. All newly installed systems shall be fully tested, adjusted and commissioned.

And, Authorize borrowing and incur debt under M.G.L. c.71, s. 16(d) in the amount of \$500,000 for the purpose of, to pay costs of designing and carrying out HVAC improvements at the Hanson Middle School Phase II, including the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto, said amount to be funded by the Town of Hanson in accordance with the Regional Agreement.”

The motion passed unanimously.

School Choice

The Superintendent reported currently sixty-two students are enrolled at the Regional High School under the School Choice program. The Superintendent recommended continuing participation in School Choice for high School grades 9 and 10 as well as any high school student that moves out of district the choice to remain enrolled at Whitman-Hanson.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; voted to participate in School Choice Program for the upcoming 2019-2020 school year Grade 9, Grade 10 and any high school student moving out-of-district who may elect to remain enrolled in the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School. The motion passed unanimously.

At Risk Youth Survey by DESE

Superintendent Szymaniak reported the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education DESE, notified his office the Regional High School was selected to participate in the 2019 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey and 2019 Massachusetts Youth Health Survey for students in grades 9 and 10. A copy of the questionnaire, fact sheet, and sample parent letter were presented to the Committee for review. Mr. Szymaniak noted the Committee recently voted a similar youth risk behavior/health survey for the Whitman Middle School. High School principal, Dr. Chris Jones, spoke to the survey and in addition, explained about SBIRT Screenings for high school students (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral for Treatment) in Schools is intended to identify substance use risk behaviors. Students are asked a series of questions by the school nurse and if a certain level is answered in the affirmative, the student is then referred to a school counselor. SBIRT is a mandated health screening in Massachusetts schools; the Superintendent noted this as another example of a state mandate.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; voted to approve participation in the 2019 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey and 2019 Massachusetts Youth Health Survey for high school students, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

2019-2020 High School Program of Studies

Dr. Jones presented 2019-2020 High School Program of Studies and reviewed a number of course description and prerequisite updates to reflect the new subject curriculum frameworks.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; voted to accept the 2019-2020 High School Program of Studies, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Winter School

Dr. Jones presented information on a new Winter School program. Winter School is a semi-credit recovery program designed to assist students in raising their first semester failing grade to the lowest possible passing grade by completing a predetermined amount of coursework over a time period of six weeks. It is designed to offer the students a second chance; retain the integrity of mastery in the subject matter; and provide the essential skills and knowledge needed to successfully complete the second semester. This is done solely through the use of Edgenuity and the guidance of a Winter School Coordinator. Classes are created in Edgenuity are considered credit recovery. This means that each lesson will have a pre-test the students must take before completing the lesson. This will address the issue/questions concerning how to judge mastery. Dr. Jones added the Winter School is a self-funded program at \$50 per student and already has 44 students registered.

Dr. Jones requested to post for Winter School Coordinators as a stipend position. A job description was presented to the School Committee for approval.

The Winter School Coordinator will be required to complete the following:

- Schedule their caseload to meet the program requirements
- Assign Edgenuity classes to students on their caseload
- Supervise a caseload of no more than 20 students
- Provide accountability and support for their caseload
- Monitor the progress of the students on their caseload
- Collect and distribute data to the Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students, and Director of Counseling

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; voted to approve the job description for Winter School coordinator as presented. The motion passed 9-0-1. Mr. Cullity abstained.

Summer Reading SmackDown

High school staff and students will recommend their favorite books for the 2019 Summer Reading SmackDown. The Selection Committee will choose a “Final 16” books, in a March madness type bracket. The event is an effort to increase literacy for students. In the end, one final book will be chosen for the 2019 summer read. Mr. Jones discussed the book selection process and voting to move one book forward, and then it becomes part of the whole school summer read. Dr. Jones will share in invitation to a YouTube video created by English teacher, Brian Dempsey that showcases the Reading SmackDown. Dr. Jones mentioned an “Interdisciplinary Days” program that he will bring to the Committee in the future.

Donations

The Athletic Director submitted a recommendation memo to accept a donation from the United States Coast Guard. The Coast Guard offered to donate new goalie equipment for the field hockey program valued at \$1,200. The equipment will display a Coast Guard Logo.

Vote: Mr. Bois motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to accept the donation of field hockey goalie equipment valued at \$1,200 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Field Trips

Mr. Ferro reported that a district-wide Grade 2 field trip is scheduled for March 14 at the Zeiterion Theater in New Bedford to attend a musical entitled “Rosie Revere, Engineer.” Similar events are anticipated to continue to build community between students in like grade levels district-wide. Mr. Small suggested a small gift be provided to students attending the play, as a souvenir. The administration will look into the request.

2019-2020 SY Academic School Calendar

The Superintendent presented two scenarios for the 2019-2020 academic school year calendar.

- Calendar Scenario 1: Based on the holidays, the primary and the 2 week holiday break, the last day is June 16.
- Calendar Scenario 2: With the holidays, the primary and a return from the holiday break on Jan 2nd, the last day of school is June 12.

The Committee discussed probable facilities costs savings of \$10,000 based on Scenario 1 to shut down all buildings except the high school during the December holiday recess. Conversely, the savings may be negligible if the weather conditions are pleasant during that two week time period. Possible impact to student youth groups was also discussed. The Committee discussed tabling the discussion until the next School Committee meeting.

VOTE: Mr. Cullity motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; voted to table voting on the 2019-2020 Academic School Year Calendar. The motion passed unanimously.

Warrant Subcommittee

Warrants signed at the meeting are listed below.

Warrant # 022719FS	\$55,554.89
Warrant # 022719AP	\$498,703.97
Warrant # P22819	\$1,232,877.45

Meeting minutes for Warrants

VOTE: Mr. Cullity motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; voted to approve the Warrant Subcommittee minutes of January 31, 2019, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy Subcommittee

There was nothing new to report.

Facilities & Capital Projects Subcommittee

Mr. Small reported the Subcommittee met earlier in the evening and reviewed all capital matrices as well as the proposed Hanson 2019 May Town meeting warrant articles. The next step is to prioritize all capital items listed on the matrices.

Legislative Report

Mr. Small reported Senator James Lewis was appointed Chair of Joint Committee on Education.

Pilgrim Area Collaborative

Mr. Bois reported the Board met in early February and will meet again on Thursday, March 7.

Chair Hayes announced upcoming events and dates to remember.

- March 5, 2019 – School Committee Executive Session meeting – 6:30 PM
- March 6, 2019 – MASC Division III Sponsoring Chapter 70 Equity Lawsuits – W. Bridgewater – 6:00 PM
- March 14, 2019 – Conley School Basket Raffle/Auction at the Whitman Middle School
- March 13, 2019 – School Committee meeting – 7:00 PM – HS Library
- March 29, 2019 – Early Release – PK-12 – Professional Development Day

A Facilities and Capital Projects Subcommittee meeting will be posted for March 13, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. to prioritize capital matrices.

Chair Hayes discussed preparations for setting the assessment at upcoming School Committee meetings and advised the Committee that each percent in the local assessment increase is equal to about \$200,000 in funding resources.

Meeting Adjournment

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michelle Lindberg

Signature of School Committee Secretary

Meeting Handouts:

- Meeting Agenda for February 27, 2019
- Meeting Minutes of February 6 and 13, 2019
- Memorandum of Understanding with NRC Independence Academy for School based intervention services
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey for High School
- Program of Studies (e-copy only)
- Warrant Subcommittee minutes of 01/31/2019
- YTD Budget Expenditures and Revenue Reports
- Warrant Articles and Authorize to Borrow - Town of Hanson
- WHEA Resolution Proposal
 - MTA Funding our Future flyer
- Winter School Program
 - Winter School Program and Job Description for WSP Coordinator
- High School Program of Studies summary of changes
- Academic Calendar drafts for 2019-20
 - Calendar Draft 1: Based on the holidays, the primary and the 2 week holiday break, the last day is June 16.
 - Calendar Draft 2: With the holidays, the primary and a return from the holiday break on Jan 2nd, the last day of school is June 12.
- Donation memo - Athletic Department
- Conley Basket Auction flyer – March 14 at Whitman Middle School