

WHITMAN-HANSON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of June 12, 2019
Held at the Whitman-Hanson Regional High School
600 Franklin Street, Whitman MA

Meeting convened: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 8:32 p.m.

Members present: Robert Hayes, Christopher Scriven, Frederick Small, Daniel Cullity, Christopher Howard, Michael Jones, Alexandria Taylor, and Dawn Byers

Members absent: Steve Bois and Robert O'Brien, Jr.

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.

Approval of Minutes

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mrs. Taylor seconded; voted to approve the meeting minutes of the School Committee meeting of May 15, 2019 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

VOTE Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to approve the meeting minutes of the School Committee re-organization meeting of May 20, 2019 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent's Report

State Auditor's Office Presentation – Ben Tofoya, Director of the Division of Local Mandates

Mr. Szymaniak introduced Ben Tofoya, Director of the Division of Local Mandates from the State Auditor's Office. Mr. Tofoya was present to discuss unfunded and underfunded mandates, explain the active and inactive state mandates and how they affect education. Mr. Tofoya began his presentation with an overview and history of the Division of Local Mandates, a division of the state auditor's office which determines what is and is not an unfunded mandate. The division also spends much time doing in-depth research reports on the impact of mandates to municipalities. He cited several examples of mandates determined imposed after 1981 and explained what is known as an incidental administrative expense. Some imposes apply to all employers in the state and are not unfunded if it is a universal action. The Auditors Office opines on the determination if a mandate is unfunded. Mr. Tofoya answered additional questions and concerns of the Committee. A noticeable increase in regional transportation reimbursement was discussed, although not yet at 100%. Mr. Tofoya reported that he and the State Auditor testified as recently as June to remind Commission of the need to fully fund school transportation. He also explained the process to file a petition.

The Superintendent noted State Representatives Josh Cutler and Alyson Sullivan along with Senator Brady were in attendance at the School Committee meeting.

State House Visit

The Superintendent reported on his visit to the State House on June 5, 2019. High School principal, Dr. Christopher Jones and two groups of Whitman-Hanson Regional High School students participated in the MassCUE Education Evolution at the State House. Students showcased the “Spin for Change” entrepreneur 3D fidget spinners project and the High School summer reading project “Summer Read Smack Down” as part of the event. The students also enjoyed a special tour of the State House with State Representatives Alyson Sullivan and Josh Cutler, Superintendent Jeff Szymaniak and Assistant Superintendent George Ferro. The students were awarded citations.

Superintendent’s Evaluation

The Superintendent’s evaluation date submission was extended until the next School Committee meeting.

North River Collaborative Report

Appoint Superintendent Szymaniak to NRC Board of Directors

Mr. Szymaniak informed the Committee he needs to be re-appointed annually to the North River Collaborative Board of Directors by vote of the School Committee.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to re-appoint Superintendent Jeffrey Szymaniak to the North River Collaborative Board of Directors for the 2019-20 school year. The motion passed unanimously.

Budget and Capital Items Discussions

Mr. Szymaniak reported the Business Office is processing the closeout of FY2019. Mr. Szymaniak reviewed detailed FY2020 budget cuts and reductions. Nineteen positions were eliminated from the FY2020 budget totaling \$897,000 in budget reductions. \$292,000 in legal supplies was also eliminated. Eliminated positions were detailed as follows

1-Central Office Accounts Payable Clerk

1-Director of Technology Services

6-Paraprofessionals throughout the District

1-High School Business Teacher

1-High School Science Teacher

1-Elementary Teacher at Indian Head School

3-Duty Aide at each elementary school

1-Elementary Teacher at Duval

2-Elementary Teachers at Conley

0.2- Music Teacher Gr.5 Band

1-Foreign Language (Spanish) at the Middle School (eventually will develop a 6-12 vision of foreign language)

- Recycled positions to create three school adjustment counselor positions at each elementary school
- Reduced the Out-of district Coordinator from 1.0FTE to 0.6 FTE

Mr. Szymaniak noted a student enrollment “bubble” at Indian Head grade 4, and at both Conley and Duval grades 5. There was a brief discussion regarding class size and guidelines from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) guideline of no more than 25 students per classroom. Mr. Szymaniak reported some middle school classes are at 30 students, although Whitman-Hanson makes every effort to keep class size under 25. Mr. Szymaniak explained the paraprofessional’s reduction in force did not affect any 1:1 Aides, only classroom instructional support paraprofessionals. Mr. Szymaniak reported several resignations and retirements will not be filled.

The Committee scheduled a budget discussion meeting for July 22, 2019. The discussion will focus on forecasting a solid budget, providing projections for years beyond FY2020, restoring services/lost positions, and the anticipated override in the town of Whitman.

Mr. Szymaniak reported he received a letter from the Whitman Department of Public Works (DPW) informing him that after a review of the Town's water and sewer billings, multiple water and sewer reading and billing errors were discovered. This resulted in under readings of the high school water and sewer usage since 2005. The initial incorrect readings at the high school and field house led to subsequent misreadings until April 5, 2019. The total under billed error is \$307,419.58. The letter stated the DPW division apologizes for the error, "as with all water and sewer accounts, must be accounted for and paid." The District is consulting with legal on this matter. The split cost between the towns would be \$180,000 to Whitman and \$120,000 to Hanson. This information also impacts the budget projections on future water bills. Mr. Szymaniak will keep the Committee informed on this matter.

Mr. Szymaniak reported he received a public records request from the Town of Whitman Town Administrator requesting all WHRSD employee detailed hire date/assignment by school, class enrollment history and projections and staffing data for 2018, 2019 and 2020, all bargaining unit contracts and individual contracts of non-union personnel. This is a massive request and due to the timing of the records request and school district transition from FY2019 to FY2020, the District requested a 30-day extension some of the requested items. It was unclear if the Town Administrator requested such documentation and data from other town departments.

Capital Items

Mr. Szymaniak reported that the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District Director of Facilities and Director of Business Services attended the June 11 Whitman Finance Committee meeting to discuss capital items and the Whitman Special Town meeting warrant for June 17, 2019. The following is a breakdown of the recommendations and no recommendations by the Town of Whitman.

Recommendations:

Whitman Middle School – curtains, doors, thumb latches
High School – gym floor, handicap ramp, thumb latches, fire lane track
\$314,307

Non-Recommendations

High School – roof top units, solar lighting, vehicles, roadway
\$275,172

In addition, the District applied for a Safer Schools and Community \$60,000 Grant and are waiting on the award notification. It was reported the Town of Whitman applied for a Green Communities grant to install LED lighting at the Conley and Duval Elementary schools. This item was recommended by the Whitman Finance Committee and will need to be voted by School Committee to be placed on the Whitman Special Town Meeting warrant for June 17, 2019.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to add capital item Warrant Article 3 to the Town of Whitman, Special Town Meeting on June 17, 2019, to install LED lighting at Conley and Duval Elementary Schools as a result of the Green Communities funding of \$55,700 and National Grid incentive of \$15,013 with the balance of \$40,479 to be paid by the Town of Whitman. The motion passed unanimously.

Bus Transportation Preliminary Analysis on Adjusted Start Times

Mr. Szymaniak reported a preliminary study on adjusted school start times and student bus transportation was prepared per the Committee's request to research costs for a later high school start time. Mr. Szymaniak presented a scenario of a high school start time change to 8:00 a.m., middle schools remaining at 7:40 a.m. and all elementary schools will begin at the same time and no longer stagger, the result would be in additional estimated expense of \$400,000. Mr. Szymaniak would like to implement in the 2020-21 school year and will include this in the FY2021 budget presentation.

Maquan School Status

Chair Hayes reported the building is cleaned out and all surplus equipment has been removed. Mr. Sandland added the building has been boarded up will be turned over to the town of Hanson on June 30, 2019.

Subcommittee Reports

Insurance Subcommittee

Mr. Small, Mrs. Taylor, Mr. Scriven and Mr. Cullity were appointed to the Insurance Subcommittee. The next meeting date was scheduled for July 2, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

Warrant Subcommittee

Warrants

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Cullity seconded; voted to approve the Warrant Subcommittee minutes of May 22, 2019. The motion passed unanimously.

Warrants signed at meeting

Payroll:

P6130A	\$1,016,230.65
P6130E	\$858,223.74
P6130D	\$861,697.30
P6130C	\$857,927.30
P6130B	\$857,927.30

Accounts Payable:

061219MP	250.73
061219AP	97,259.25
061219FS	37,571.11

Policy Subcommittee

There was nothing new to report.

Facilities Subcommittee

The next meeting will be scheduled for August 28, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Szymaniak will schedule a facilities walk-through during the summer.

Legislative Update

Senator Brady and State Representatives Sullivan and Cutler shared legislative news.

State revenue was down in December but recently is up

- Regional Transportation reimbursement is at 82%
- Circuit Breaker reimbursement is at 72%

There was a brief discussion regarding the Promise Act (a reform the current foundation budget calculation) and its non-effect on the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District.

Pilgrim Area Collaborative

Mr. Bois was not present to report.

Executive Session

Chair Hayes passed over the Executive Session.

Meeting Adjournment

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mrs. Taylor seconded: voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michelle Lindberg

Signature of School Committee Secretary

Meeting Handouts:

- Meeting agenda for June 12, 2019
- Meeting Minutes for approval
 - May 15, 2019 School Committee
 - May 20, 2019 School Committee
- Superintendent's Evaluation Form and Rubric
- Warrant subcommittee minutes May 22, 2019
- Pilgrim Area Collaborative notification Steve Bois appointed as representative
- MASC/MASS Joint Conference Voting delegate and alternate notification to MASC
- School Committee membership contact information and subcommittee listing
- Town of Whitman Capital Item to be added as a Warrant Article for June 17, 2019
- Town of Whitman Capital warrant articles status as voted by Whitman Finance Committee
- Notification from Town of Whitman DPW regarding water and sewer billings
- Copy of RAO response to Records Request from Town of Whitman
- WHRSD School Committee Membership and Contact information