

WHITMAN-HANSON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of March 13, 2019

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

Meeting convened: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 8:12 p.m.

Members present: Robert Hayes, Robert Trotta, Frederick Small, Robert O'Brien, Jr., 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. Chair Hayes thanked the number of community members and staff for being in attendance at this important meeting.

Approval of Minutes

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; voted to approve the meeting minutes of the School Committee meeting of February 27, 2019 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Student Advisory Report

Marah Burt, Student Council School Committee Representative, was not present to report.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent's Goals Update

The Superintendent updated the Committee on his goals. In support of SmartGoal 1, to monitor, evaluate and support a cohesive Pre K-12 system of teaching and learning, the Superintendent is working with administrators to finalize and gather feedback on the math program curriculum of choice. In addition, the review of several ELA (English Language Arts) programs are being studied to determine which to pilot, as well as reviewing K-12 curriculum instruction overall. The success of these curriculum instruction goals is pending positive budget outcomes. In support of SmartGoal 2, to be visible throughout the district to support administrators, teachers, staff and students, Mr. Szymaniak reported he continues to visit all schools on a weekly basis and has instituted weekly teacher recognition. By visiting schools, the Superintendent affirms visual evidence of staff doing a good job even with an expiring math program and the downsizing of the Know Atom science curriculum. In support of SmartGoal 3, to improve and create open lines of communication in conjunction with Pillar 3, Safety and Security of students and staff, the Superintendent has improved communications and the District's relationship with first responders as well as developing a group emergency text for real time conversations for the decision-making processes. In addition, a new grant may be available from the state Governor's office which would fund the replacement of communications equipment with all first responders. A.L.I.C.E. training is forthcoming at the elementary level. In support of SmartGoal 4, to develop a workable budget that will deliver services and create opportunities so Whitman-Hanson students are prepared for higher education, the workforce, or military service, the Superintendent will continue advocating for level service under severe budget constraints as the chief child advocate for Whitman-Hanson Regional School District. The Superintendent will work with Committee

members to tour the schools in order to share a glimpse of current active teaching, goings on, and the differences in education from just a short time ago. This is also a good opportunity to identify the needs of the schools in regular education and special education and be shared with the public. Chair Hayes reported the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is seeking help in developing guidance and resources that school committees and superintendents can use to make the evaluation process practical and useful for both committees and superintendents. Karla Baehr, a former superintendent and Deputy Commissioner at DESE, is heading up the project and selected the Whitman-Hanson Regional School District to work with because Whitman-Hanson seems to be doing an effective job with the superintendent evaluation process. Mr. Szymaniak reported at a recent Superintendent training meeting, he learned that 40% of districts do not properly evaluate their superintendents.

North River Collaborative Report

The Superintendent reported the Board has affirmed their budget. North River Collaborative is working on their Strategic Plan with former Superintendent Dr. Ruth Gilbert-Whitner leading the process.

FY2019 YTD Expenditures and Revenue Reports

Christine Suckow presented the year to date Encumbrances and Revenue Reports. Mrs. Suckow highlighted several lines that are currently over budget, including the salary reserve line due to unanticipated retirements this year, special education needs, the cost of out-placing students, transportation and tuition to other schools.

FY2020 Budget Discussion

Superintendent Szymaniak thanked the Committee for their support of level service budget at 15.1% local assessment increase. There is a meeting scheduled for March 19 at Whitman Town Hall with both Hanson and Whitman Town Administrators to continue budget discussions. On March 26, 2019, the Committee has been invited to attend a joint meeting with the Whitman Finance Committee to review the school district FY2020 budget submission and capital warrant articles. The Whitman Finance Committee anticipates being prepared to provide the District with a preliminary recommendation regarding the FY 2020 budget for the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Szymaniak reported he received an email from Executive Director of M.A.S.S., Tom Scott, advising the Joint Committee on Education is holding a public hearing on three school finance bills on March 22, 2019. All areas of public education will be represented at this hearing including many mayors, legislators and multiple special interest groups consisting of unions, school committees, and superintendents. Mr. Szymaniak will prepare Whitman-Hanson's concerns regarding special education and underfunded/unfunded mandates so that they will be represented. Mr. Small may also attend to give testimony.

Unfinished Business

Capital Projects Warrant Articles

Titling Skillet – remove from Warrant

The Director of Business services presented warrant article items for the Committee's vote. The first is to remove a warrant article from the Town of Hanson Annual Town Meeting Warrant. The Food Services Director is seeking an alternative solution and working with the Town of Hanson Green Communities for grant funding to purchase a steamer kettle as a replacement and the request for a tilting skillet is no longer necessary.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mrs. Taylor seconded: voted to remove the Town of Hanson 2019 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article as capital item for kitchen equipment (tilting skillet) for the Indian Head School in the amount of \$14,200 which was previously voted approved by the School Committee on February 27, 2019. The motion passed unanimously.

HVAC at Hanson Middle School

The Director of Business Services requested to amend the amount of the authorization to borrow vote taken for HVAC improvements at the Hanson Middle School at the February 27, 2019 School Committee meeting from \$500,000 to \$675,000. Mrs. Suckow and Ernie Sandland explained the project and four alternates which requires an additional \$175,000 to be bonded for the project.

VOTE: Mr. Cullity motioned; Mr. Small seconded; voted to amend the motion adopted at the February 27, 2019 meeting to revise by striking \$500,000 and inserting \$675,000. The motion passed unanimously.

MSBA Statement of Interest (SOI) – WMS

The Superintendent discussed the need to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI) for the Whitman Middle School to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), due to the ongoing issues facility issues. The Director of Facilities, Ernie Sandland, provided details of the contents in preparing a Statement of Interest, including the possibility of adapting different grade configurations for a new or renovated middle school. Mr. Sandland reported in order to get in the queue with MSBA, all documentation must be submitted no later than April 12, 2019.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; to move forward with preparing a Statement of Interest (SOI) for the Whitman Middle School with Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). The motion passed unanimously.

Town of Whitman Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles

The Director of Business Services requested the following articles be voted by the Committee for reimbursement.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mrs. Taylor seconded; voted to see if the Town will vote to transfer \$ 7,898.65 from Free Cash or available funds to reimburse for the replacement of roof top unit servicing the guidance suite at Conley Elementary School or take any other action in relation thereto.

Explanation: This roof top unit was installed during the renovations of the Conley School. It has out lived its useful life and was constantly breaking down.

To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$11,716 from Free Cash or available funds to reimburse the Whitman Hanson Regional School District for the purchase and installment of a new boiler stack at Whitman Middle School.

Explanation: The purpose of this Article is to resolve the stack issue cited by the MA Dept. of Fire Services on 12/06/2018. The base of the stack showed deterioration, the 26” stainless steel pipe was compromised at the bottom. The next piece that needed to be replaced was an adjustable pipe fixed length piece ties into a Y that exits the roof and joins the two boilers. It is a double wall system with a stainless steel inner pipe and a galvanized outer pipe.

The motion passed unanimously.

Academic School Calendar 2019-20 SY

The Superintendent continued discussion of the two academic calendar drafts for the upcoming school year. One version has a return date during the holiday recess of January 2, 2020 with the last day of school falling on June 12, 2020 and the other a return date of January 6, 2020 after the holiday break with the last day of school falling on June 16, 2020 with no snow days. The discussion focused on an extended holiday break in December and beginning of January. Most Committee members reported negative feedback on having an extended holiday break with no desire for a two week break during the holiday season in December/January. Mr. Szymaniak added that any savings cost to shut down buildings during that time would depend on the weather and may or may not save up to \$15,000.

VOTE: Mr. Bois motioned; Mr. Howard seconded; vote to accept the 2019-20 Academic School Year Calendar draft option of a return from the December holiday break on January 2, 2020 and the last day of school, with no snow days, as June 12, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Field Trips

DECA International Career Development Conference in Orlando, FL

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; voted to waive the nurse requirement and approve the overnight, out-of-state DECA International Career Development Conference field trip to Orlando, Florida from April 27 through May 1, 2019, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Director of Student Services

The Superintendent requested posting the Director of Student Services at this time. Mrs. Lauren Mathisen is currently the Interim.

VOTE: Mr. Small motioned; Mr. Bois seconded; vote to post the Director of Student Services position, as requested. The motion passed unanimously.

Subcommittee Reports

Warrant Subcommittee

The following warrants were signed at the School Committee meeting.

<u>Warrant</u>	<u>Amount</u>
031319FS	\$38,546.42
031319AP	\$1,247,708.49

Policy Subcommittee

There was nothing new to report.

Facilities and Capital Improvements Subcommittee

Mr. Small Report reported the warrant articles were addressed in the meeting.

Legislative Update

Mr. Small reported Representative Josh Cutler is co-sponsoring the letter to increase the per pupil dollar amount in the Governor's budget from \$20.00 per student to \$100.00 per student. Other legislative groups are lobbying for fully funding special education Circuit Breaker and regional transportation reimbursement.

Pilgrim Area Collaborative Representative Report

Mr. Bois reported the next meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2019.

Dates to Remember

- March 29, 2019 – Early Release – PK-12 – Professional Development Day
- April 5, 2019 – Early Release – PK-12 – Grading Day
- March 13, 2019 – School Committee meeting – 7:00 PM – HS Library
- April 10, 2019 – School Committee meeting – 7:00 PM – HS Library
- April 15-19, 2019 – No School - Spring Recess Week

Meeting Adjournment

VOTE: Mr. Cullity motioned; Mr. Bois seconded: voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Michelle Lindberg

Meeting Handouts:

- Meeting agenda for March 13, 2019
- Meeting Minutes for February 27, 2019
- YTD Revenue and Encumbrances reports
- Email from Tom Scott at M.A.S.S regarding March 22, 2019 Hearing on School Finance
- Town of Whitman Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles
- Town of Hanson - Remove Warrant Article for Kitchen Equipment
- Motion to amend previously adopted item language
- Copy of 2019-20 SY Academic Calendar scenarios
- High School DECA Club Field Trip Request April 27-May 1,2019 to Orlando , FL
- Copies of notification of SC Vote on 3/11/2019 to set the local assessment