

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Weston Middle School
January 28, 2019

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 4:03 PM at Weston Middle School by Mr. John Henry, Chair. In attendance were Mrs. Danielle Black and Mr. Alex Cobb of the Weston School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Dr. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning; and Ms. Sheri Matthews, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. Not present: Dr. Sanjay Saini. Dr. Ed Heller joined the meeting at 4:15 PM.

Also present were Finance Committee members Ms. Lisa Reitano, Mr. John Sallay and Mr. John MacDonald, Chair; Dr. Lee McCanne, Director of Technology and School Libraries; Ms. Amy Kelly, Director of District Advancement; Mr. Anthony Parker, Weston High School Principal; Mr. John Gibbons, Weston Middle School Principal; Ms. Jen Faber, Woodland School Principal, and Mr. Gary Jarobski, Director of Facilities.

Mr. Henry welcomed everyone, introduced members of the School Committee and Administration, and reviewed the agenda. He opened the meeting for public comments.

Open Forum

Parent Rachel Stewart spoke about the shortage of bus drivers that has caused cancellation of bus routes and the lack of timely communication parents have received. Mr. Henry spoke about the issue and noted a letter addressing the matter had gone out electronically from Dr. Connolly to all parents. He said that afternoon routes would no longer be cancelled, noting that children will remain in a safe environment. He noted that a more attractive compensation package has been negotiated for bus drivers and expressed confidence that more drivers will be hired soon. Mr. Henry said they will look at collapsing or combining routes and assured parents that communication will be done in more timely manner whenever possible if a driver calls in sick. Ms. Stewart thanked the Committee for their support and assistance.

Budget Review

Members of the School Committee and Finance Committee liaisons conducted initial review of the proposed FY20 Budgets for High School, Middle School, Technology, and Operations (Buildings and Grounds, Utilities, Transportation).

Middle School -- Mr. Gibbons indicated the middle school budget has a 1.3 reduction in staff that would be across all disciplines. He reported that capital projects include completion of renovation of science classrooms and locker room floor. The Committee discussed and had opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Cobb asked about cell phones and radio use regarding safety. Mr. Gibbons noted that cell phone reception is challenging but that radios seem to work effectively.

High School -- Mr. Parker presented an overview of the high school. He indicated that the reduction of 1.0 faculty will be identified by department heads rather than be across all disciplines. Ms. Reitano questioned why only a 1.0 reduction when the enrollment will decline by 49 students, which could be two sections. Mr. Parker noted he was requested to reduce faculty by 1.0. Mr. Cobb suggested that, with declining enrollment, now might be the time to closely study elective course offerings and consider running every other year. Mr. Parker indicated that sectioning decisions will be complete at end of March and that could be considered.

There was much discussion about the way salaries are documented; Ms. Matthews noted she reallocated salary in a different way than it had been done in the past to be accurate at each school, so it could appear an increase in some instances when it is just a reallocation. The Committee discussed language course offerings. Mr. Cobb noted that multiple languages being offered often ends up with singleton courses and scheduling difficulties. He suggested a discussion about language offerings occur. Mrs. Black asked about cameras in the high school parking lot and whether they are working. Mr. Parker indicated he is working with Dr. McCanne to address non-functioning cameras.

Approved by School Committee 2.11.19

Technology -- Dr. McCanne and the Committee discussed security, including a student access card system and its costs.

Operations

Facilities – Mr. Jarowski indicated the budget is basically level funded, noting that some funds for utilities were transferred to road maintenance. He indicated a study would be conducted to determine the safest way to secure the high school courtyard and noted ongoing projects, including high school library.

Transportation – Ms. Matthews indicated the primary increase is due to purchase of three new buses with five-point restraint system. She said today was first use of new buses. Mr. Cobb asked about training for drivers, and Ms. Matthews noted it is not a state law to require seat belts.

No action taken.

Approval of Warrant

Ms. Matthews presented a Certificate of the Secretary, approval of warrants for payment.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Dr. Heller and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$3,713,956.65 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:05 PM.