

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

April 10, 2012

MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Teri Maia-Cicero, Chair; Mark Rafanelli, Vice-Chair; Valerie Zuercher, Clerk; Theresa Donovan, Paul McFadden, Lee Kissinger, and Claudine Pande. Others present: Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar, Director of Administration Robert V. Ross, Student Member Angela Russo

ORDER – Chair Cicero called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Member Donovan read the District Mission Statement.

Open Forum – None

RECOGNITIONS/ACHIEVEMENTS – Restaurant Essay Winners – Dr. Geismar recognized Metcalf students Nicholas Petrarca, Rachel Lesinski, and Mary Reynolds for their outstanding achievement as winners of the first ever Metcalf School Restaurant Essay contest. Music teacher Stacey Place who sponsored the competition gave a brief outline of the contest.

Member Kissinger arrived at this time, (6:05 p.m.).

Ms. Place said that she wanted to inspire students to write. The prize was an all-expense paid dinner to Gracie’s Restaurant in Providence. It was a wonderful experience and will be repeated again next year. Principal Almonte called the three students forward and Chair Cicero presented each of them with a School Committee Recognition Award and Sodexo gift card.

Spelling Bee First and Second Place Winners – Dr. Geismar, Mrs. Almonte and Chair Cicero joined in honoring 1st Place and 2nd Place District Spelling Bee winners Thomas Ricciutti and Rachel Lesinski. Junior High Assistant Principal Christopher Anthony accepted Thomas Ricciuti’s award in his absence. Rachel was presented with a School Committee Recognition Award and Sodexo gift card.

Vice Chair Rafanelli made a motion to move up the Consent Agenda at this time. Member Pande seconded the motion. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA- Superintendent Geismar gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Student Member Angela Russo arrived at this time, (6:11 p.m.).

Mr. Ross answered Member McFadden's inquiry regarding the *bills*. Member Donovan asked what the impact of the replacement for the LOA request is. Mr. Ross explained that the incumbent in all probability will not return to the district at the end of the leave period. She is leaving the district to take a job in another school district. Her position here has been filled through a Council 94 job fair.

Clerk Zuercher made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Member Pande seconded the motion. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.

The following items were approved:

- A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Minutes of March 27, 2012; Executive Session Minutes of March 27, 2012**
- B. Personnel Items**
 - 1. Appointments – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)**
 - a. Diane Pastore as .57 FTE One-on-One Instructional Teacher Assistant for Kindergarten Student, Step 1, pay Grade 3, Annual Salary \$10,815.92; effective on or about April 9, 2012**
 - b. Heather Aguilar as .57 FTE Recess Assistant at Metcalf School, Step 1, Pay Grade 3, Annual Salary \$10,815.92; effective on or April 9, 2012**
 - 2. Leaves of Absence – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)**
 - a. Lisa Fiorio request for a six-month Leave of Absence from her position as .5 FTE Purchasing Clerk, effective April 12, 2012**
 - 3. Resignations – (As Recommended by the Superintendent, with Regret)**
 - a. Letter of Resignation from Joan Goldstein resigning her position as Co-Advisor for the Junior High School Student Council, effective June 15, 2012**
 - b. Grievances**
 - c. Non-Renewals**
 - d. Recalls**
 - e. Sabbaticals**
- C. Bills – In the amount of \$339,537.61**
- D. Home School Approval**

End Consent Agenda

PRESENTATION – Student Member Report – Student Member Angela Russo reported that yesterday EWG held its first track meet ever! She gave a brief report on the outcome of the meet and said that it went well and was well organized. Next, she reported that half of the seniors would be presenting senior project products on this Thursday and Friday. The band competed at the RI Music Educators Association (RIMEA) Sr. High

Band Festival and received a mark of *Excellent*, which is the second highest mark achievable.

Sr. High School Presentation – High School Principal Brian Butler said that the overall performance at the high school this year was even better than last year. He introduced Assistant Principal Christopher Anthony to report on NECAP results.

Mr. Anthony presented data relating to the 2011 NECAP results and reported that this is the second year in a row that EWG students did very well. The data compared EWG results to the state. EWG scores were well ahead of the state average in all categories again this year.

Mr. Butler reported on recognitions and awards, SAT and AP testing, Career and Tech Outreach, RTI State Initiatives, the Transition Program, Diploma Plus and VLA incentives, and class selection. He said that EWG students are doing well and are well prepared for college. This year for the first time, that an EWG student, (Samantha Dallas) was named as a National Merit Scholar Finalist.

Mr. Butler introduced Assistant Principal Jim Alves to talk about the successes of student activities and student athletics. Mr. Alves stated that EWG High School students strive to do well both inside and outside of the classroom and always seem to rise to the occasion. The numbers of successes achieved at the high school this year were plentiful.

- Over \$41,000 in scholarship will be awarded to seniors
- The highest gain in Science NECAP scores
- Thousands of dollars raised through senior project activities
- A school record Blood Drive was set
- Various Boys' and Girls' Athletic State Championships
- Numerous Student Activities Accomplishments
- National Coach of the Year – Kevin Fraser – Girls Soccer
- School of the Year 2011-2012 RI Association Athletic Administrators
- Two students accepted to RI School of Design

Chair Cicero requested that the School Committee receive a college acceptance list for this year.

Senior Project Coordinator Robert Quindazzi reported on the senior project process and answered members' clarifying questions. Chair Cicero and Assistant Principal Alves commended Mr. Quindazzi for his excellent work in guiding every student through the process.

Spelling Bee First and Second Place Winners – Chair Cicero reverted to Recognitions and Achievements as 1st place Spelling Bee winner Tom Ricciutti – grade 7 arrived to the meeting. Dr. Geismar and Chair Cicero offered congratulations and presented Tom with a School Committee Recognition Award and Sodexo gift card.

Correspondence – (1) **September 6, 2012 – March 31, 2012 Disciplinary Reports;** (2) **Wawaloam School March 29, 2012 SIT Meeting Minutes;** (3) **Junior High School March 28, 2012 SIT Meeting Minutes;** (4) **April 4, 2012 Letter from SORICO to Superintendent regarding initial distribution of SORICO funds to eight member districts**

Dr. Geismar referenced Correspondence 4 and informed members that today a \$20,000 check was received from SORICO for the sale of the building. Referencing Correspondence 1, he said that the discipline reports are fairly easy to follow. Going forward the reports will be provided at the beginning of every month along with the previous year's report for comparison.

2011 – 2012 Monthly Budget Projection – Members did not express any questions or concerns regarding this item.

2012 – 2013 Budget – Chair Cicero recognized that the budget was passed by voters yesterday.

MONTHLY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT(S) – Policy Subcommittee – None

IT Subcommittee – None

Public Relations Subcommittee – None

MONTHLY STATUS REPORTS – Superintendent – Members did not voice any concerns or comments regarding the Monthly Status Reports.

Business

Special Education

Maintenance

Technology

NEW BUSINESS – Capital Asset Plan – Mr. Ross referenced his Capital Asset Protection Plan (CAPP) report and gave a comprehensive overview of the program and submittal process for new members unfamiliar with the program. The CAPP is the maintenance, repair or upgrade of projects to protect the capital assets of the District. Eligible projects are subject to reimbursement from the state. The School Construction and Housing Aid regulations were updated in 2007 and reflect some significant changes. Mr. Ross referenced page 3 of his report, *Housing Aid - Old Way vs. New Way*, noting

that under the *New Way* the minimum state share of reimbursement ratio increased to 40%. The increase only applies to new projects completed after July 1, 2010. However, all new projects are subject to the multistage submittal and approval process. The good news is that EWG is grandfathered in for the CAPP it submitted in 2005 under the *Old Way*, which requires submitting a more straightforward two-part Housing Aid form. The 2005 CAPP will remain in place as long as the District remains active in Capital Improvement submittals. A key element to remember is that the District is under no obligation to complete CAPP projects submitted to RIDE.

The Capital Reserve Fund will start 2013 with a balance of approximately \$100,000. In order to replenish the Capital Reserve Fund, Mr. Ross asked the committee to consider the options listed on page 8 of his report.

- Transfer a portion of the General Fund Balance to the Capital Reserve Fund in order to perform capital improvements during 2013
- Do nothing, and move to the *New Way* of funding capital improvements through RIHEBC
- Do minimum activity of capital improvements during 2013 and request Capital Funds at the ADR in the 2014 budget

Mr. Ross summarized that the Capital Reserve Fund will be at its lowest point in several years as there has been no capital request in the past five school committee budgets. He asked, is it in the District's best interest to move funds into the Capital Reserve or to request CAPP funds for the 2014 budget? By properly funding the Capital Reserve Fund the District can continue to manage capital improvements under the *Old Way*.

Mr. Ross referenced the District Asset Protection Plan Summary that is sent to the state and said that RIDE will look at the capacity in enrollment as it relates to funding a school building with a critical eye to determine if it make sense to close a building. As the School Committee and administrative team make decisions about the District, they need to be conscious about who is in the buildings and how the buildings are being used.

The next step is to review the remaining items on the Facility Analysis Report performed by Torrado Architect three years ago. The analysis will be reviewed and updated by the administrative team and a five-year plan will be brought to the School Committee for discussion of the financial component and adoption.

Mr. Ross said that he met with Joe daSilva of Statewide Efficiencies at RIDE on April 4 to discuss the winding down of the \$5.8 mil bond project. The remaining balance of the bond fund is about \$100,000, which the Building Committee has designated to fund the ADA Egress and Parking project for access to the lower admin Data/IT center.

Clerk Zuercher left the meeting at this time, (8:03 p.m.).

That project is already calculated in the bond payment. When the Bond ends, the Building Committee will stay on. Typically, the Building Committee would dissolve after one-year. However, RIDE is interested in keeping the Building Committee intact. Mr. DaSilva communicated that he could not be more pleased and RIDE is very appreciative of what EWG has done. Dr. Geismar, Chair Cicero, and Member Pande thanked Mr. Ross for his explanatory report.

2012 – 2013 Calendar Amendment – Dr. Geismar explained a mistake on the 2012 – 2013 calendar was discovered that requires an amendment to accommodate one more day of school.

Member Pande moved to approve the new revised calendar for 2012 – 2013. Member Kissinger seconded the motion.

Member Donovan noted that the professional development day was moved to September 11, which is the primary day.

Clerk Zuercher returned to the meeting at this time, (8:10 p.m.).

Member Donovan said that part of the reason legislators closed schools on Primary Day was to make sure that no people, including adults, are in the building during an election event. She requested to inform the Boards of Canvassers that Metcalf School would be unavailable that day. Dr. Geismar said he would notify the boards from both towns that Metcalf School would not be available for voting on Primary Day, September 11, 2012.

Chair Cicero recalled the motion. Voted 7 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Enrollment Verification Process – Dr. Geismar presented the DRAFT Process for Establishing the October 1 Enrollment Count. Chair Cicero questioned whether the School Committee agreed a policy needs to be created. Member Pande offered her view that it could be an administrative directive or a policy. Dr. Geismar said that if the committee is confident, the document could be shared with the towns for review. Member Kissinger said that he thinks it should be in the form of a policy. Chair Cicero agreed but said the document needs more work before it can be converted to a policy. Dr. Geismar said he would reach out to both town councils. When the working document is ready to transition, it will be brought to the policy subcommittee.

Members discussed item 3. *The school principal will review the names and addresses of all students in his/her school and inform the data manager of any changes that need to be made to ensure accuracy and sign off that the report is accurate.* Member Pande expressed her view that this task falls under clerical duties and not principal duties. She asked what resources would be available and how that task would be accomplished. Dr.

Geismar said that parents registering students are required to provide two forms of identification that includes their street address. Mr. Ross said that presently 99% of student addresses are correctly entered into the Student Information System. An internal query procedure for verifying information and finding conflicts could be established that would be supplemental to the policy. The internal procedure would be to direct building principals to run a query to show any conflicts. Member Pande said that the language reads that the principal verifies. That language needs to be changed. Dr. Geismar said that he would reach out to the towns and work on that language. This item will continue to a future meeting agenda.

NESDEC Superintendent Search – Chair Cicero advised that the School Committee would vote to select search committee members at this time. Student Member Russo read the paper ballot results aloud as follows:

- West Greenwich Community Member - James Bell
- Exeter Community Member - Pierre LaPerriere
- School District Administrator - Melissa Marino
- School District Administrator - Deborah Blake

Math Coach Job Description – Dr. Geismar presented the proposed Math Coach K – 6 Job Description for School Committee approval. He explained his rationale for not changing the title from K – 6 to K – 8 as proposed at the last meeting. Member Pande said she thinks the job description works the way it is worded as long as there is a bridging and the math coach works with the math department head and grade 7 – 8 math teachers for alignment of curriculum and transition from the Everyday Math program to the junior high math program. Chair Cicero voiced concern that the language is not strong enough to have bridging. Vice Chair Rafanelli recommended and the committee agreed to add language to the opening sentence, “*and is required to work with*”, “*will be required to perform the following*”. Additionally, with regard to the second bullet from the bottom under Qualifications instead of “*work with*” change language to say “*coordinate with math department head and 7-8 teachers to align curriculum instruction and assessment from grades 6 through 7 – 8*”. Member Pande said she would prefer it to say “*work with*” instead of “*coordinate*”. Dr. Geismar suggested saying both, “*coordinate and work with*”.

Member Kissinger moved to approve the Math Coach Job Description with the suggested changes. Member McFadden seconded the motion. The committee voted 7 – 0 in favor. The motion passed.

Emergency Generator Discussion – Mr. Ross told the committee a project scope and estimated cost of installing an emergency backup generator at the junior – senior high school is forthcoming from Eastland Electric. During the walkthrough it was determined that there would be a need for major renovations to the existing panels in order to meet

the design of the backup requirements. This item could falls under the housing aid capital improvements and be eligible for state reimbursement. Chair Cicero and Member Pande requested to conduct a full analysis and present both the CAPP and the emergency generator together on May 8.

October 1 Enrollment – Dr. Geismar said that he and Mr. Ross called the RI Department of Education (RIDE) regarding amending the October 1 Enrollment count. RIDE will send a template so that the data can be corrected. RIDE’s concern was that the data is published. Chair Cicero informed the committee that she contacted Attorney Andrew Henneous today. He was in his car at the time and did not have access to his computer. He said that he would review the Charter and recommended that the School Committee vote tonight to approve the corrected numbers, subject to legal opinion by him tomorrow. Chair Cicero advised that while reviewing the Charter today, she discovered that the District is obligated to notify the towns within ten days subsequent to the adoption of the budget at the all-day referendum the percentage of apportionment due to support the school district.

Member Kissinger moved to approve the corrected numbers, with subject to legal opinion. Clerk Zuercher seconded the motion.

Mr. Ross reported that the amended numbers are 1010 for West Greenwich and 826 for Exeter.

Member McFadden said that he believes the committee should adhere to RI Public Law without deviation. Chair Cicero said that the committee has heard the attorney’s recommendation. If the committee feels comfortable, she will send the committee the written opinion tomorrow. If Attorney Henneous finds a problem, the committee can respond accordingly. The committee would vote tonight to meet the timeline obligation as stated in the Charter. Chair Cicero added that she spoke to Arlene Hicks, Exeter Town Council President today. Mrs. Hicks said that Exeter is comfortable with whatever the number is.

Chair Cicero recalled the motion made by Member Kissinger and seconded by Clerk Zuercher. The committee voted 6 – 1 in favor. Member McFadden opposed. The motion passed.

Chair Cicero said that she would email all members the information tomorrow. If a problem is determined, the committee will take action accordingly.

Recycling Discussion – This item will be continued to a future meeting agenda.

Capital Project Update – This item was reviewed previously during the CAPP report.

Reports/Comments – None

Important Dates and Meetings – Tuesday, April 24, 2012-School Committee Meeting 6-7 PM; Tuesday, April 24, 2012-Special School Committee Meeting-NESDEC @ 7PM; Tuesday, May 8, 2012-School Committee Meeting-Wawaloam School Presentation @ Wawaloam School; Thursday, May 17, 2012-Special School Committee Meeting-NESDEC @ 6PM; Tuesday, May 22, 2012-School Committee Meeting-6-6:30 PM; Tuesday, May 22, 2012-Special School Committee Meeting-NESDEC @ 6:30 PM

EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Clerk Zuercher moved to go into Executive Session at 8:58 p.m. in accordance with 42-46-5 (2) – CBA – (C94/Teachers’ Association) – Negotiation Discussion and/or Pending Litigation; seconded by Member Donovan; and voted as follows:

Teri Cicero	Yes
Mark Rafanelli	Yes
Valerie Zuercher	Yes
Lee Kissinger	Yes
Theresa Donovan	Yes
Paul McFadden	Yes
Claudine Pande	Yes

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 9:00 p.m.

Clerk Zuercher moved to reconvene to Open Session. Vice Chair Rafanelli seconded the motion. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 9:18 p.m.

There were no votes taken during Executive Session.

Adjournment – Vice Chair Rafanelli moved to adjourn; Member Donovan seconded the motion; and voted 7 – 0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

**ROBIN CERIO
CLERK**