

Warwick School Committee Minutes

Open Session

Meeting of November 13, 2007

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at the Winman Jr. High School on November 13, 2007. Chairman Friel called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. with the following in attendance:

COMMITTEE

Christopher Friel, Chairperson

Lucille Mota-Costa, Vice-Chairperson

Bethany Furtado, Clerk

Joyce L. Andrade

Paul Cannistra [present at 6:10 p.m.]

ADMINISTRATION

Peter P. Horoschak, Superintendent

Victor Mercurio, Director of Secondary Education

Robert T. Bushell, Director of Elementary Education

Richard D'Agostino, Director Special Services

Leonard Flood, Director of Business Affairs

Rosemary Healey, Esq., Director of Compliance & Human Resources

MOTION 2007-329: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa to go into closed session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under

General Laws of Rhode Island 42-46-5(a)(1), (a)(2) and (a)(8).

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - absent

Meeting reconvened at 7:20 p.m. with the following in attendance in addition to those above:

David E. Small, Director of Buildings and Grounds

Motion to keep Executive Minutes Private:

MOTION 2007-330: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mrs. Andrade, to keep the Minutes of the Executive Session of November 13, 2007 private.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra – Aye

Student Agenda/Student Comments: Warwick Area Career Center Students

Allen DeLuca came before the Committee commenting on saying how much he had learned at the Career Center concerning drafting skills, designing for clients, how to communicate with clients, being on time, being prepared, and working to meet deadlines. In October he will be going to New England Tech. He earned 7 credits at the Career

Center towards the New England Tech program. Nicholas Jarbeau, a graduate of the Career Center in 2005, told the committee about his experience learning how to perform and prepare for interviews and preparing resume. He was given the opportunity to go out and perform internship with a division of CVS and he was then hired full time. He is going to New England Tech and the classes/credits he took at the Career center were honored at New England Tech.

Chairman Friel – read the proclamation honoring our students for donating blood and said that November 8th was proclaimed Warwick School Hero Challenge Day.

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Approval of Minutes of Public Session

MOTION 2007-331: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the Minutes of the Public Session for October 2, 2007, October 9, 2007 and October 29, 2007.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Approve of Executive Minutes

MOTION 2007-332: Moved by Ms. Furtado, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to approve the

Executive Minutes for October 2, 2007 and October 9, 2007.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Approval of Transfers:

MOTION 2007-333: Moved by Ms. Furtado, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to approve the

transfers presented to the Committee.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Approval of Warrants:

MOTION 2007-334: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the warrants presented to the Committee.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Announcements:

Professional appointments:

MOTION 2007-335: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to approve the following appointments: of Darren Cipriano, Technology Department Head at Warwick Vets;

Robert Simone, tech ed teacher, Step 1, pending receipt of State and National BCI; Tammy Sweeney, special education teacher, from Category 1 to permanent, Step 3; Jennifer DiTusa, special education teacher, from Category 1 to permanent, Step 1; Ann Casey, math coach (90 day work year) at a salary of \$350 per day, be approved, subject to the continuing availability of Article 31 funds at the school level; Mary Kennan, math coach (90 day work year) at a salary of \$350 per day, be approved, subject to the continuing availability of Article 31 funds at the school level, pending receipt of State and National BCI; Joan McPherson, English Language Arts Literacy Coach, (90 day work year) at a salary of \$350 per day, be approved, subject to the continuing availability of Article 31 funds at the school level; Meredith Whittaker, English Language Arts Literacy Coach, (90 day work year) at a salary of \$350 per day, be approved, subject to the continuing availability of Article 31 funds at the school level and Carol Marginson, Transitional Advocate, be approved at a salary of \$270 per day, position to be funded by the McKinner-Vento Homeless Assistance Grant from the RI Department of Education, subject to continuing availability of funds.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

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Leaves of Absence:

MOTION 2007-336: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to approve the extension of parental leave for Meghan Strough, elementary teacher at Hoxsie School, for the remainder of the 2007-2008 school year, returning September 2008; that the request for sabbatical leave by Michelle Bressler, English teacher at Winman, be approved, effective for the spring semester of the 2008-2009 school year.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Retirements:

MOTION 2007-337: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, that the retirement of Michele Mercurio, math teacher at Toll Gate, be accepted, effective November 9, 2007 and that the retirement of Patricia Treanor, elementary librarian teacher at John Brown

Francis, be accepted effective December 21, 2007.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Classified Personnel Items: Retirement:

MOTION 2007-338: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the retirement of Janet Grilli, Superintendent's Secretary, be accepted, effective December 21, 2007; and that the retirement of Marsha McGinity, Secretary Gorton Jr. High School, be accepted effective October 9, 2007.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Coaching Appointments:

MOTION 2007-339: Moved by Mrs. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, that the following appointments be approved: Christopher LeBlanc, head coach, boys' basketball at Warwick Vets; Owen Paquet, head coach, girls' basketball at Warwick Vets; Stephanie Shields, head coach, girls' indoor track at Warwick Vets; Thomas Rayco, head coach, boys' basketball at Toll Gate (one year only); and Michael Batalon, head coach, girls' basketball at Pilgrim (one year only).

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye

Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

School Redistricting/Consolidation Advisory Committee:

Superintendent Horoschak reported that shortly after he arrived, the School Committee charged him with forming a school redistricting and consolidation committee. The thought behind that was to look at our situation regarding cost saving consolidation, keeping in mind that in the next budget year there will be quite a few cutbacks. Therefore, having given consideration to this charge, I have solicited names and support from various interest groups to deliberate on options we may have regarding redistricting. The following names are the participants:

Peter P. Horoschak (Chairperson); Victor Mercurio, Robert Bushell, Richard D'Agostino, Frank Ricci, Ron Areglado, William Sangster, Sam Holtzman, Jeannie Petit, Donna Murgo, Cherie Nickerson, Linda Sheehan, Connie Jaquith. To be determined will be an elementary parent and a middle school parent. He said that the job of the committee is to listen to and consider any options that the various members of the committee may suggest. The committee will then determine which options are feasible, communicate that information to the public and schedule a series of public hearings to collect feedback. The objective is to have a prioritized list of options to take into consideration during the development of the 2008-2009 budget.

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Comments made: Mrs. Andrade asked why no high school principals were included, and the Superintendent said that redistricting would more than likely impact elementary and middle schools, and that high school principals have a lot of work with graduation with proficiency. Ms. Mota-Costa thanked the Superintendent for coordinating this committee and said everyone should look for the postings when the meetings will take place.

Performance Contracting Prioritizing Committee:

Presented: David Small and David LaPlante – A proposed list and order for a committee to review and approve proposed energy savings projects was presented to the Committee. The subcommittee consisted of David LaPlante, Paul Jansson, David Small and a Trane representative. The projects will be identified and assembled in a suggested list of priorities. The main committee will consist of two School Committee Members, Superintendent, Mr. Flood, Mr. Jansson, Mr. LaPlante, Mr. Mercurio, Attorney Healey, Mr. D'Agostino and Mr. Small who will review the suggested priority list. A discussion followed regarding talking to the City for financing, the performance contract is a road we must go down to improve energy, changes and improvements, the fact that to get things accomplished by next summer, we need to prioritize and approve sooner than later. Ms. Andrade commented that her understanding was that a subcommittee would come back with additional information and she was waiting for

that additional information. The Chair commented if there was no funding from the City, the subject is moot. The Chair said it has to be determined if we will get financing through the City, and then this should come before the School Committee for a vote. The Chair said the next step is to “get approval from City Council and the authority to enter into any agreement.” He recommended tabling the proposal.

MOTION 2007-340: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to table any action on this committee [performance contracting prioritizing) at this time.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

School Bus Maintenance Contract for School Bus:

Superintendent Peter Horoschak reported that he had been charged with organizing a bus maintenance committee to review contracts and performance of our current and previous bus maintenance vendors. We have met three times, October 3rd, October 23rd and November 9th. The Committee consists of 2 bus drivers, the superintendent, Leonard Flood, David Small, Steve O’Haire, Joyce Andrade and Cheri Nickerson. The data, cost and operations efficiency for Special Ed Service/Transport has been reviewed. He said we need more information from First Student invoices to compare with Stevie D’s. The information collected will be reported

to the Mayor and City Council at a meeting to review combining services between school and City. He recommended that the School committee approve an extension of the contract with First Student for a period of three months through February 29, 2008.

MOTION 2007-341: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to approve the extension of the First Student contract through February 29, 2008.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Pay increase for lunch aides, bus monitor and substitutes – Attorney Healey recommended increasing the pay rates for the lunch aides, bus monitors and substituting classified staff by 3%. There has been no pay increase for this group for two years – This group of individuals present unique problems in filling these positions. It is a very difficult recruitment process. This would be implemented immediately.

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| Lunch Aide | Current Rate | Proposed Rate |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|

Step 1 8.974 9.245

Step 2* 9.474 9.758

Step 3 9.947 10.245

Bus Monitor

Step 1 8.016 8.256

Step 2* 8.516 8.772

Step 3 9.016 9.286

Teacher Assistants 9.88 10.176

Clerks 9.39 9.672

Custodians 9.65 9.940

Bus Drivers 11.08 11.412

Bus Aides 8.55 8.807

***Step 2 is received after 3 years of satisfactory job performance**

**** Step 3 is received after 5 years of satisfactory job performance**

The Committee requested yearly numbers, and Ms. Healey said it was hard to project an amount for substitutes because you don't know how many you may use over the year. She said she could get some figures together if the Committee so wished. This matter was tabled until December when yearly figures could be provided.

MOTION 2007-342: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mr. Cannistra, to table this matter until December's meeting.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Bids:

MOTION 2007-343: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, that the bid for calculators in the amount of \$20,840.96 be awarded to AFP School Supply, |Tech Depot, and School Savers, as per bid tabulation.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Adoption of Policies:

Policy JE – Student Attendance – 2nd reading - Discussion regarding the 15 unexcused absences section. Ms. Andrade said she agreed with the intent of the policy, but she felt there was a double message. If students meet all requirements, but have been out 16 unexcused times, then they will not graduate. Dr. Sisel said that the “religious observance wordage” had been added. Ms. Mota-Costa wanted to know how will the information about the religious observance get out to all the schools and parents. Dr. Sisel remarked that once this is approved, it will be sent out to every school and every principal to be placed in their policy manual. Although this policy will be effective next school year, parents are concerned about this year. Mr. Bushell said the letter from the state says it is to be marked as an absence, but we are not counting this against the child. Michele Landri had a question about the word “chronic” used in the tardiness section. Ms. Netcoh said that students need to be in school, and it is not

unreasonable to expect students to come to school, and if they are not in school they don't deserve to graduate. She mentioned that summer school needs to be looked at, as some students screw around all year and make it up in the summer.

MOTION 2007-344: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to approve the second reading of Policy JE – Student Attendance.

MOTION PASSES (4 ayes 1 nay)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Nay Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

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Information and Proposals:

School Committee Members: Ms. Furtado said that Attorney Healey and she had met and reviewed many papers regarding advertising policy. There is no firm policy and she is working on compiling papers and the advertising policy is a “work in progress.” There will be a first reading at the December meeting.

Public comment:

Michele Landri remarked that she didn't understand where all the

calculators went. She has asked for a set every year and doesn't get them. She commented about the utility bills at Pilgrim, saying one of the thermostats was broken, and it was 90 degrees in one of the classrooms with all windows opened. Ms. Netcoh said we wouldn't need so many subs if the clerical positions hadn't been eliminated. She also commented about the redistricting committee, saying there were no high school personnel on it, and also there were no School Committee members on the committee. She commented on the minutes of October 29th and asked how much it cost to have the NESDEC representative present. Mr. Ginolfi wanted to know if Mr. Dooley was still consulting and the Chair responded no. Mr. Landri wanted to know if there was a case of MERCER at Gorton, and the Superintendent responded there was a case reported. Mr. Landri also asked if the Department of Ed had changed anything recently about the suspension of students. No one was aware that they had. Karen Farley said that the subs deserve a modest pay raise, but as a member of WISE, she went to work every day, and asked if they didn't deserve a modest pay raise.

Special meeting dates: December 11, 2007.

MOTION 2007 -345: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye

Joyce L. Andrade – Aye

Bethany Furtado – Aye

Paul Cannistra - Aye

Meeting adjourned: 8:45 p.m.

Bethany Furtado, Clerk

Betsey Snipes, Secretary