

Warwick School Committee Minutes  
Meeting of August 21, 2008  
Open Session

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at Warwick Veterans High School on Thursday, August 21, 2008. 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 Chair (present at 5:50 p.m.)  
Bethany Furtado, Clerk  
Joyce L. Andrade  
Paul Cannistra

ADMINISTRATION

Peter P. Horoschak, Superintendent  
Victor Mercurio, Director of Secondary Education  
Rosemary Healey, Esq., Director of Compliance & Human Resources

Superintendent Horoschak's reported he had a recommendation to the School Committee regarding the termination proposal for a member of the WTU. This teacher has been notified in writing of her right to have this hearing in Open Session. While she has opted to have the meeting in Open Session, the other individual whose job performance is also necessarily implicated in this proceeding has opted to have the discussion held in Executive Session. After our attorney's consultation with the Attorney General's office, we have concluded that the hearing must be conducted in Executive. Attorney David Scher objected to having the hearing in Executive Session. Chairman Friel noted that legal counsel checked with the Attorney General's office who governs the Open Meetings law, indicating that it should be held in Executive Session.

MOTION 2008-162: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Ms. Furtado 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)(4)

MOTION PASSES (4-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye	Lucille Mota-Costa - not present
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye	Bethany Furtado - Aye
Paul Cannistra - Aye	

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

Richard D'Agostino, Director Special Services  
Leonard Flood, Director of Business Affairs  
David E. Small, Director of Buildings and Grounds

Chairman Friel announced that in executive session the Committee voted to uphold the recommendation of the Superintendent with a vote of five (5) to zero (0).

**Professional appointments:**

MOTION 2008-163: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Ms. Furtado, that the following be approved: the appointment of **Richard Clark**, Guidance Department Head at Toll Gate; **Will Parker**, Athletic Director at Toll Gate; and **Gail Gustafson**, teacher of the hearing impaired, step 1, be approved pending receipt of State and National BCI and Certification in the State of Rhode Island.

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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**Classified appointments:**

MOTION 2008-163: Moved by Ms. Furtado, seconded by Mrs. Andrade, that the appointment of **Nina McGurrin** Special Services Office Manager, be approved.

MOTION PASSES (4 ayes 1 nay)

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa – Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade – Aye      Bethany Furtado – Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Nay

**Classified resignation:**

MOTION 2008-164: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Ms. Furtado, that the **resignation of Sandra Maymon**, Sr. Clerk Typist (Transportation) be accepted effective August 22, 2008.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa – Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade – Aye      Bethany Furtado – Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**Chartwells Contract** – Mr. Flood: at the august 12<sup>th</sup> meeting the School Committee tabled action on the renewal of the contract, as the budget reflected at \$79,715 deficit. The revised budget for the 08-09 school year is in balance through staffing cuts and the following revenue increases being approved. Increase in reimbursements for fee and reduced lunch of 10 cents a meal and reduced breakfast of 5 cents a meal; increase of fully paid breakfasts by 25 cents (from \$1.60 to \$1.85); increase of fully paid breakfasts by 25 cents (from \$2.60 to \$2.85); and increase cost of reduced breakfasts by 5 cents (from 25 cents to 30 cents) which is the maximum allowed under the program. The total savings in Chartwells' labor and fringe benefit costs is \$182,727. If Chartwells were to break even, they would be owed \$32,000 management fee under the terms of their contract. \$100,000 was originally budgeted in the general fund for transfer to the lunch fund. This amount was reduced during cuts to \$50,000. Operating costs in 2008 for armored car service, equipment repair and replacement, commodities and other expenses totaled \$54,147. Estimating a similar level of expenses for FYE 2009 as occurred in FYE 2008 and combining that with the payment of Chartwells' management fee, less the \$50,000 budgeted would result in the school lunch fund being over budget by \$36,147. Staff will continue to look at ways to reduce local operating expenses in an effort to balance the budget.

MOTION 2008-165: Moved by Mrs. Andrade, seconded by Ms. Mota-Costa, to increase cost of lunch prices and breakfast prices as outlined.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa – Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade – Aye      Bethany Furtado – Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

MOTION 2008-166: Moved by Ms. Andrade, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the 08/09 Chartwells contract.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa – Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade – Aye      Bethany Furtado – Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

**First Student Bus Contract** – Mr. Flood: The bid was awarded to First Student in 2004 for the July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2007 contract period with an option for an extension of three additional years. This would be the second of the three extension years allowed. The terms of the renewal include a 3% rate increase. Terms: full size vehicle \$273.33 (per bus per day allowing 7 hours of drivers time and 100

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miles per day); small buses \$258.50 (per day allowing 7 hours of drivers time and 100 miles per day); extra curricular trip rates: rate per mile \$1.74, rate per man hour \$25.33 and minimum per bus \$92.90.

MOTION 2008-167: Moved by Ms. Mota-Costa, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the First Student 08/09 Contract.

MOTION PASSES (5-0)

Christopher Friel - Aye	Lucille Mota-Costa – Aye
Joyce L. Andrade – Aye	Bethany Furtado – Aye
Paul Cannistra - Aye	

**April 08-09 Student Code of Ethics** – Attorney Healey requested that the 08-09 Student code of Ethics be approved. The changes are underlined on the copy provided. Ms. Andrade said that she voted against changes in the attendance policy, and they are incorporated into the Code, so she could not support the Code of Ethics as it stands.

MOTION 2008-168: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Ms. Furtado, to approve the 08/09 Student Code of Ethics.

MOTION PASSES (4 ayes 1 nay)

Christopher Friel - Aye	Lucille Mota-Costa – Aye
Joyce L. Andrade – Nay	Bethany Furtado – Aye
Paul Cannistra - Aye	

**2008-2009 Budget** - Superintendent Horoschak reported that the 2007/2008 deficit has been analyzed and placed into a report provided to the School Committee and other city elected officials. It is also on the Warwick Public School website. There is a page correction attached as well. The deficit overview of \$2.22M is broken down –Professional salaries and subs are over budget by \$602,440. In regard to the sub account, at the end of May 2008 the line item was only over budget by \$12,848, by the end of June that deficit grew to \$220,973 (a difference of \$208,125). Classified salaries and subs are over budget by \$506,859, the majority of which is in the classified salaries account. Professional pension costs are over budget by \$203,261. Purchased services are projected to be over budget by \$188,505. Supplies and materials are projected to be over budget by \$278,679. The overages of \$57,372 in gasoline and diesel fuel costs and \$354,788 in heat and fuel totaled \$412,160. Other objects category is projected to be over budget by \$184,590. This is primarily due to projected lunch fund deficit of \$230,842. What needs to happen to prevent this from happening again: changes in how the School Department tracks and manages the flow of information, especially in regard to personnel. Automated record keeping needs to be improved and better coordination between departments. Computerized record keeping instead of manual record keeping, avoiding a duplication of effort and keeping information consistent and readily available from department to department. Purchasing controls – purchase orders for all expenditures and not on a bill to bill basis. This needs to include routine costs such as utilities or costs that cannot be avoided such as special education tuition expenses. If purchase orders were issued at the beginning of the fiscal year as expenses become known, those funds would have been encumbered, leaving money available for expenditure or unencumbered clearly identifiable on financial statements. Encumbrances are being established for all salary and fringe benefit accounts. Since they make up over 85% of the budget, tracking them more closely must be the top priority. Nutrition/School lunch fund FYE 2008-09 budget and budget revenue and expenditure accounts will be incorporated. This will allow us to establish encumbrances based on our contractual obligations and monitor costs against revenues on a regular basis. We need to establish the practice of the Director of Business Affairs prepare monthly written reports to accompany the issuance of monthly financial reports to the School Committee (copies sent to City Hall as well). We must establish a quarterly verbal report to be given by the Director of Business Affairs regarding the financial position of the School Department as part of the meeting agendas in October, January, April and July each year.

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Mr. Dooley commented at length regarding the report, saying he had some differences of opinion. He went over budget numbers and said that his expenditures came in on target. He said that purchase order control is a good way but not always the best way to monitor some expenditures and controls. He always presented a payroll projected report for both professional salaries and classified salaries, and had conferences with transportation and maintenance. He said he believes his budget was adequate and controls were in place. Mrs. Andrade requested a copy of the report that Mr. Dooley was referencing. Chairman Friel, Mr. Cannistra and Mrs. Andrade all requested a forensic audit.

MOTION 2008-169: Moved by Mr. Cannistra, seconded by Mrs. Furtado, to return to Executive Session.

**MOTION PASSES (5-0)**

Christopher Friel - Aye      Lucille Mota-Costa - Aye  
Joyce L. Andrade - Aye      Bethany Furtado - Aye  
Paul Cannistra - Aye

(10:30 reconvened)

MOTION 2008-170: 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: 10:30 p.m.  
Bethany Furtado, Clerk  
Betsey Snipes, Secretary