

MINUTES
WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2006
7:15 PM – OPEN SESSION
WACTC –ROOM 303
MULTI MEDIA LAB

Called to Order by Chairman Marc Dubois
Moment of Silence
Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:	Marc Dubois, Chairman	Present
	Allen Auclair	Present
	Michelle Williams	Present
	Eleanor Nadeau	Present
	Anita McGuire-Forcier	Absent

PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:

- **Mrs. Auclair, parent:** Asked about whether there will be a citywide kindergarten orientation this year. Dr. Macera informed her that several meetings are planned.
- **Linda Filomeno:** Announced that there will be kindergarten orientation on Tuesday, June 1st, at 6 p.m. at Globe Park and Thursday, May 25th, at 6 p.m. at Pothier.
- **Marlene Smith, 7th Grade Teacher at WMS:** “We do need another middle school. I would have no problem staying at the old school myself if another one is built and the staff has to be divided between the two. There are many things going on at the WMS.” She received several phone calls from parents this afternoon saying that teachers are raising their voices to the students. “We have had new directors. We have a new dismissal time. We walk students to lunch and now back from lunch while losing time from our own lunchtime to do this. Most of us have pretty good control in the classroom. There’s a small percentage of students that cause the problems. I do raise my voice sometimes, but apparently, most of the kids like me anyway. I get a lot of happy-grams. I’m at a loss. I don’t know what to do anymore. You can’t ask disruptive students to leave the classroom unless you call an administrator.”
- **Carmen Boucher, PAC Co-Chair:** Thanked Dr. Macera and Marc Dubois for the letter that was sent out on Monday regarding the death of Savannah Smith, saying it was greatly appreciated. She announced the next PAC meeting to be held on May 17th at 7 p.m. at the WACTC. In regards to the promotional policy, she wanted to know if a student is “almost meeting the standards” and receiving “1’s” or “2’s”, would they be required to attend summer school. “How do we choose kids that will make a class if there are no integrated classrooms because of the budget cuts? Will there be resource teachers? What qualifications do T.I.M.E. teachers have? Will the student/teacher ratio change?”
Dr. Macera: She will arrange to have Linda Filomeno discuss the T.I.M.E. teachers and have Carole Lerner, Special Education Director, present at the next WSC meeting to discuss special education needs.
- **Donna Houle, 130 Ward Street:** Thanked Dr. Macera, the WSC, counselors and teacher for their help and support this week with the tragedy that happened, especially Donna Coderre.
- **Pauline Papino, Asst. Principal, WMS:** Announced that the WMS Dance at the Bocce Club last Friday went very well. “The owner of the Bocce Club said that we are the best-behaved group he has ever had.”
- **Linda Filomeno, Director of Literacy:** Announced that the PAC is having a Family Information Fair on June 3rd from 10 am to 2 pm at the WMS. There will also be translators available.
- **Denise Boulay, SELAC member:** Spoke about notification that sent to parents about Savannah Smith and thanked the school department for sending it out. She is also concerned about what will happen with the integrated students for next year.

RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS – Dr. Maureen Macera, Superintendent

Commended the faculty and staff at Globe Park School for their outstanding and caring efforts to the family of Savannah Smith. Expressed the WED’s heartfelt sympathies to the family of Savannah. Commended Lisa Alves, Jeffrey Ethier & Kevin Plouffe and the young musicians who represented the Woonsocket School District at the recent Williamsburg

Festival of Music. The festival was a great success and the students performed with great honor. She thanked them for being an outstanding example for Woonsocket, and congratulated them on their champion performance. Gave kudos to Nicholas Bibeault, Gr. 2, at Globe Park for being the second place winner at the Harris Library poetry contest, and April Cheever from Gr. 3 for placing third. Congratulated the 2006 Future Business Leaders for their recent winnings at the National Competition. There were 5 First places, 7 Second Places, 10 Third places, 5 Fourth places and 6 Fifth place winner. Congratulated Mandy Shurgot for being named "Scholar Athlete of the Week" by the Call. Mandy is the Tri Captain for the Villa Novan softball league. Mandy is the No. 3 hitter on the team and is one of the premier shortstops in the state. She is a great role model for her teammates and is an outstanding student with a solid B average. She is a member of the Rhode Island Honor Society and works with the Blackstone Boys & Girls Club. She will be attending Rhode Island College in the fall with hopes of becoming a teacher.

Motion to receive and place on file: M. Williams

2nd: A. Auclair (Unanimously Approved)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 4-12-06 OPEN/CLOSED SESSION & 4-26-06 OPEN SESSION

Motion to Approve: A. Auclair

2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

Ms. Williams made a **correction** to her Good & Welfare comments on the April 26th Minutes, saying that it was "**Peter Fontaine**" whom she congratulated on the recycling program – not Leo Fontaine.

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion to approve: A. Auclair 2nd: M. Williams (Unan. Appr.)

1. Personnel Actions

Certified Appointments/
Non-Certified Appointments

2. Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000

Demco, Inc./Furniture/Savoie/RI Legislative Grant
Gateway/Network Storage/Burrillville/Perkins Grant
RI Center for School Leadership/Prof. Dev./McFee/Title11
Visconti & Boren/PROMAC/McFee/Local

3. Field Trip/Conference Requests

FBLA National Leadership Conference, Nashville, TN/WHS
ASK Education Conference "Mentoring in the 21st Century"/Alexandria, VA/Title 11

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

COMMUNICATIONS: Ms. Williams announced that kindergarten registrations for next year are coming up and named the schools and times of sign-ups. She asked parents to please not wait until the last minute to register their kids.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

CONFERENCES: Presentation of Information on Pandemic Flu Virus – Peter Fontaine, Facilities Director

Mr. Fontaine reported that he attended a January meeting presented by Governor Carcieri on this topic. He has gathered as much information on it as possible since then. The state has called a meeting on May 18th of all the superintendents regarding this issue. He said the WED is planning a meeting of representatives from various agencies for after that date. He urged the public to start paying attention to this issue. "It's not like the typical flu. We should start preparing for this should it come here. You need to start taking it seriously. The City will be involved in the May 30th meeting. We have received pieces of information from the state and pieces from the federal government." Mr. Auclair suggested holding a couple of training sessions over the summer for the general public on basic steps they should take. Fontaine said the worst-case scenario is that the flu could be here this fall.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Elementary Promotion Policy Revisions – 2nd Passage

Motion to approve: M. Dubois 2nd: E. Nadeau
Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; AA/no; MW/yes; EN/yes) 3 yes – 1 no. Motion passed.

Mr. Auclair thinks this will reduce the communication to the home when we are trying to increase the communication to the home. He asked for clarification of the grading scale of 1, 2, 3 & 4 and what each grade represents. Dr. Macera asked Linda Filomeno to explain the grading system to him. 4 = Exceeds the Standards, 3 = Meets the Proficiency, 2 = Not Quite Meeting the GLE's for their grade level (student may need reading assistance, tutoring program, or a little extra help), and 1 = Substantially Below Proficiency (probably 2-3 grade levels below their grade level). She explained that there is no real state policy on retention. It's done on a case-by-case basis. The state is encouraging personalization. Auclair feels this will lower the bar to maintain NCLB. Dr. Macera told him that Woonsocket did extraordinarily well in our ranking, although she wasn't at liberty to announce it officially. She reported on all the programs available to provide extra services to students needing them. Linda Filomeno added the Woonsocket is one of the few districts that offer a full Reading Recovery Program. She also listed many other programs we operate in the district, such as Read 180.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Contract Proposal for Gilbane Building Company and Ai3

Motion to approve: A. Auclair 2nd: M. Williams
Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; AA/yes; MW/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. Motion passed.

Joel Matthews, City of Woonsocket's Planning Director, said that the WSC should have received a draft of the final contract and noted that Atty. Ackerman was very thorough. He said they had seven meetings with Gilbane. The contract is a design-build contract wherein they are folding in a construction manager who is responsible for implementation of the project. The architecture design has been folded in as a subcontractor for Gilbane. The Building Committee wanted to be involved in the selection of the architect. Ai3 was selected. There are two phases to the contract. Phase 1 involves site evaluation of six sites. Then the sites will be narrowed down to two or three options. A final feasibility report will be prepared to present to the WSC, the Mayor and the City Council. The contract obligation is only for Phase 1. The fee is based on the hourly fees for the individuals—not to exceed \$119,625 total. Matthews explained the process of how things would proceed. The proposal needs to be submitted to RIDE for approval. Phase 2 involves schematic design drawings and the building design would come more into focus. Gilbane would offer a Guaranteed Maximum Price for everything from start to finish, furnishings not included. Atty. Ackerman stated that it's an unusual type of contract because there's an evaluation phase and then the design and construction phase. There's wording that allows the WED to be released from the contract after Phase 1 for a total of \$119,625. There's money that has been set aside to pay for the first phase. Ackerman asked what the WED's involvement would be after the contract is signed. He thinks that the subcommittee and Joel Matthews will be making most of the major decisions. Matthews stated that the contract would be between the WED and Gilbane. Decisions regarding contract award, approval of the GMP, final drawings, etc., and any contractual issue rests with the WSC. Before it goes up for the bond issue, the City Council would like to approve whatever the proposal is. The man commitments will be made by the WSC. The Building Committee has representatives from those entities and will work with Gilbane to try to shape this school and will make preliminary decisions, which will then be brought to the WSC for approval.

Atty. Ackerman asked if the WSC reserves the final say if the City Council doesn't agree with its choice. "It has been structured so that the two parties have to be in agreement to proceed," said Matthews. "The WSC has final approval, but it would still have to go to the City Council for approval in order to go forward to the legislature for a bond referendum. The Building Committee will be the driving force behind the proposal," said Matthews. Ms. Williams asked about the WED being referred to in the contract as the "owner". "How can we be the owner? I thought the school department couldn't own property?" she asked. Ackerman explained that it's used in the contract just to distinguish between the two parties. The WED controls the schools, but instead of using "the committee", they used "owner". Williams asked what happens if we spend this money and our proposal doesn't pass. Matthews said there might be a change in the selected option and go with Option 2. "Or maybe we would need to promote the proposal better. If the Lincoln Park gambling money comes in, it will pay for our share of the school, even if its only 1/3 of what it's projected to be. I think this bond referendum stands an excellent chance for approval," said Matthews. Ms. Williams thinks some public meetings should be scheduled to see what the general public wants to get a better idea. Matthews agreed, but once a building is taking shape. Then a community meeting might be a good idea during the

design/development phase. "The time frame for Phase 1 of the contract is three months. Our submission is due in October. By February we should have an approval and have a better idea of the gambling revenues," Matthews said.

2. Re-Appointment of Elementary School Principal to Leo A. Savoie

Motion to approve reappointment of Karen L. MacBeth as principal at Leo Savoie Elementary School: M. Williams
2nd: E. Nadeau Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; AA/yes; MW/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. Motion passed.

3. Transfer of Elementary School Principal from Second/Fifth to Globe Park

Motion to approve the transfer of Michael Capasso to Globe Park Elementary School as principal from Fifth and Second Avenue School principal: A. Auclair/E. Nadeau 2nd: M. Williams/ M. Dubois

Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; AA/yes; MW/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. Motion passed.

4. Approval of Revised Capital Plan FY07

Motion to approve revised Capital Plan FY07: A. Auclair 2nd: M. Williams/ E. Nadeau
Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; AA/yes; MW/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. Motion passed.

Mr. Fontaine submitted a new FY2007 capital budget and 5-year plan, in which a lot of the changes consist of addressing the new fire code. Mr. Auclair asked him to explain the change in roofs at Bernon and at Citizens. Fontaine said he had the roofs evaluated and it was recommended that the repairs/replacements be reversed.

5. Approval of WHS Diploma for Project RIRAL Adult External Degree for Woonsocket Residents

Motion to approve: M. Williams 2nd: E. Nadeau
Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; AA/yes; MW/yes; EN/yes) 4 yes. Motion passed.

Dr. Macera explained that, in the past, Project RIRAL diploma recipients have received Central Falls diplomas. She fully supports it being a WHS diploma that they receive. Patricia Bellart from Mentor, Inc. explained the program, which is for people 21 years of age and up. Mr. Auclair asked if this is part of the Virtual Learning Academy run by Dr. Bedard. Dr. Macera told him that this program is for adults 21 and over. The Virtual Learning Academy is for high school age children. This is a second option for adults. The other option is a GED program.

6. Bid Award #06-14 - Insurance

Motion to approve the award of insurance coverage for Workers' Compensation Insurance and Property/Liability Insurance coverage for the WED to Rhode Island Interlocal Risk Management Trust of E. Providence, RI for the amount of \$386,213 for Workers Compensation Insurance and \$190,538 for Property/Liability Insurance: E. Nadeau

2nd: M. Dubois Roll Call Vote: (MD/yes; AA/yes; EN/yes) 3 yes. M. Williams left the room. Motion passed.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – Dr. Maureen Macera, Superintendent

Dr. Macera stated that she would be exploring options for uniforms at the WMS next year, adding that there are many positives of uniforms. The issue would be routed through the parents' organization and it could be tried as a pilot. There was also a concern about the size of one of the 8th grade lunches at the WMS and it has been reduced in size. She would like to see some TV monitors in the lunchroom possibly with PBS programming on them also. Whatever community support she can get she welcomes.

Motion to receive and place on file: M. Dubois 2nd: M. Williams/ E. Nadeau (Unan. Approved)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE

Williams: Extended her sympathies to the Smith family and commended everyone for providing the support that they gave. Congratulated the WHS band and chorus on an outstanding job in Virginia. She attended the SELAC Autism Awareness Workshop and thanked everyone who put that event on. Last Wednesday she and Mrs. Nadeau visited the WMS and they were informed that the last 8th grade lunch was difficult to work in. "These kids are bunched in at the tables and it was out of control. I got hit in the head with something." She appreciated the immediate response to this problem. As far as uniforms at WMS, her daughter goes to parochial school and must wear a uniform. "It's so much easier to have uniforms. We saw clothing at the WMS that we couldn't believe last week." Announced a Minority Concerns Meeting on May 31st possibly. Announced that the City will have its budget meeting on May 22nd and asked

what years the school department didn't asked for any additional funding from the City. Dr. Macera told her that no additional funds were requested for the last eight years. "If you don't ask, you won't receive," Williams said.

Auclair: Congratulated the WHS band and chorus on their awards. Said he is very proud of the WHS and WMS band and chorus. Wished the FBLA good luck in Nashville. He supports school uniforms in some form. Suggested implementing keyboarding into the elementary curriculum for kids to be prepared to do reports on the computer. His daughter is still using the two-finger approach. Asked if a pilot program could be instituted with looping for the elementary grades. He has gathered some information on it and would appreciate any input. In regards to Truancy Court, the City Council said to have the WED draft a letter to the social service agencies and ask them to attend the hearings. If that doesn't work, then the City will do the same. Wished his mom happy 74th birthday.

Dubois: Congratulated the WHS Band and Chorus and also the WHS Cheerleaders on their awards. Congratulated Richard Ackerman on becoming a new grandfather today. Announced the National and RI Honor Society Ceremony next Thursday night at the WHS. Said he got the phone call about Savannah Smith on Monday morning at 8 a.m. and immediately responded to Globe Park School. Within ½ hour, 20 to 25 social workers and counselors were there to provide grief counseling for the staff and students. Also thanked the No. RI Community Mental Health Center for providing assistance all day. He was very impressed with Ms. Coderre, who has been principal at Globe for only five weeks, saying she took charge and made sure everyone knew what he or she were doing. "Big hat's off to her." The funeral is Tuesday at 9:30 am. Calling hours are from 4 to 8 pm at Lauzon Funeral Home. A notice will go home to all parents when arrangements are finalized. "Whatever staff and students want to attend will be allowed to do so."

Nadeau: Extended heartfelt sympathies to the family and friends of Savannah Smith. Attended the 8th Grade Dance last Friday night at the Bocce Club. "It was excellent and the students were well-behaved." Commended Dr. Macera for steps taken to bring some kind of sanity to the WMS. "The directives came from here—not from the leadership of the WMS. It saddens me to see the lack of respect in that building. If I were a teacher in that school, I would raise my voice. We need a resource officer at that school. If I leave this committee without accomplishing something at the WMS, I will feel like I have failed." She and Ms. Williams went to the 7th Grade side because they had heard that textbooks were being thrown outside in the rain. She thinks that the teachers are being used as scapegoats and it's not the teachers. "They are doing the best they can."

Motion to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.: A. Auclair

2nd: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle, WSC Recording Secretary