

MINUTES

WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2008
7:00 PM – OPEN SESSION
Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center
Multimedia Room 303

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

Roll Call:	Marc Dubois, Chairman	Present
	Michelle Williams, Vice Chairwoman	Present
	Anita McGuire-Forcier	Present
	Eleanor Nadeau	Present
	Linda Majewski	Present

RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Macera (Taken out of order by unanimous consent)

- **Jennifer Rivera Awards: Marlene Smith**

Mrs. Smith read a brief statement about who Jennifer Rivera was, explaining that she was a 15-year-old witness that was killed before she was able to testify in a murder trial. Smith noted that civics is studied for one semester at the WMS and that Jennifer Rivera died doing her civic duty. Teachers of each 8th grade team presented the award to the student chosen by their team. Recipients were Zoey Rogers, Samantha Sausville, Jennifer Parenteau, Justyna Pietras, and Brittany Bigelow.

PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:

Diane Decasso, WHS Music Boosters: She read a statement written by Cassandra Fromh that was read at last night's Music Awards Ceremony. It reflected how she felt about the WHS Music Program and urged their continued support of the music department.

Donna Houle, 130 Ward Street: Asked who will maintain the Ayotte Field and pay for the lights and concession stand if it's moved to Barry Field. "Is the City going to pay for it or the school department?" She asked that they revisit the promotion policy in the WMS Handbook that is on the agenda for first passage. She would like to see more advanced classes. Mr. Dubois told her that Peter Fontaine spoke to Joel Matthews and he requested that this item be tabled tonight. Matthews wants it to go back before the City Council for review because there are still many unanswered questions.

John Boudreau, WTG Vice President: Applauded Dr. Macera on the recalls that are being made tonight. "It's good, but there are still many people that need to be recalled."

Kevin Plouffe, WHS Music Director: Thanked everyone for their support of music over the past few months. Thanked Dr. Macera for calling back some of the music teachers and hoped that money could be found to bring back the rest.

Tina Clarke, WHS Art Teacher: Wanted to say that there are more teachers that will not be discussed for getting their jobs back tonight. She urged the recall of those teachers also. Thanked Dr. Macera for the recalls that are being made tonight.

Pauline Papino, WMS Asst. Principal: Announced that Alan Shawn Feinstein gave the WMS another \$1,000 last week, which totals \$11,000 this year. She thanked him.

RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS (continued)

Dr. Macera said she attended the Collage Concert and it was wonderful. She thanked them for a great program. She also thanked Alan Shawn Feinstein for his support. She thanked Marlene Smith for her efforts on behalf of the Jennifer Rivera Award. Dr. Macera congratulated 10 students from WMS who were honored by Johns Hopkins Talent Search program, which identifies students with exceptional abilities in mathematical and verbal reasoning. These students took the SAT exam at the high school with juniors and seniors and received honors for scoring above the 97th percentile. Sam Bibeault and Justyna Pietrus both received Honors with Distinction in English for scoring as well as or above average when compared to college-bound senior SAT scores. Macera congratulated Marissa Silva, a

WHS student, who won 1st prize in the Chaminade Music Club's 48th Annual Audition Awards Concert in April and received a \$500 scholarship for vocal performance. She also congratulated WHS students Ryan Laferte, Jason Allard and Suthi Seneth for winning 1st and 2nd place in the Teen TV and Radio Commercial Challenge for their seat belt safety commercial. The WACTC Construction Program won a \$10,000 grant from Lowe's to build a new press box and refurbish the dugouts at Barry Field. Macera thanked them for their hard work. She congratulated WHS Senior Karen Duong on being awarded a Cumberland Farms Believe and Achieve Scholarship of \$1,000 for college. She plans to attend Brown University and has been announced as valedictorian of the WHS Graduating Class of 2008. She also congratulated Preeti Kinha for being named salutatorian. Dr. Macera thanked Rep. Patrick Kennedy for visiting Governor Pothier School on Tuesday, May 27th, to read to the first graders and extended him and his family her warmest regards. Wished WHS Vice Principal Carnell Henderson much success as the newly appointed Head Coach of the WHS Football Team.

Motion to receive and place on file: E. Nadeau

2nd: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

April 30, 2008 Closed Revised; May 7, 2008 Special Closed; Open/Closed May 14, 2008

Motion to Table: M. Dubois
(Unanimously Approved)

2nd: M. Williams/L. Majewski
TABLED

CONSENT AGENDA: (Items were discussed individually before a vote was taken on the Consent Agenda.)

1. Personnel Actions

Certified Appointments/
Non-Certified Appointments

Dr. Macera reported that they have been looking very, very hard to see where they can get money to recall staff. The WED is receiving \$193,000 back from the Governmental Health Group. She read all the appointments and recalls being made. Mrs. Majewski asked about the substitute budget and whether these recalls will be eating up our entire substitute budget. Dr. Macera said they would be using some of the substitute budget, but funding will come mostly from the \$193,000 from the Governmental Health Group. Majewski asked if we will still have money for substitutes. Dr. Macera said that we should "squeak by". Majewski questioned calling back the library media specialists before the music and art teachers. Macera explained that we get library grants and these positions are required in order to get these funds. Mrs. Nadeau asked how many music teachers are at the WMS. Dr. Macera told her there are three and two of them are being recalled tonight. The program will be scaled down. Probably about 125 students are affected.

1. Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000

- **ATC Lincoln Associate/Waste Removal & Disposal/Facilities/Local**
Mrs. Majewski asked what this expense was for. Mr. Fontaine explained that the district collects hazardous materials and periodically has to pay to have it disposed of.
- **Keystone Information Systems, Inc./Financial Software FY09/Business Office/Local**
Majewski asked if any of this software is reimbursable by the state because we are piloting a chart of accounts for them. Dr. Macera said that we use Keystone anyway and updates are required every year. She said we don't get reimbursement from the state.
- **Visconti & Boren Ltd./Legal Services/PROMAC/Business Office/Local**
- **Vortex, Inc./Asbestos Abatement & Inspection/Facilities/Barry Field/Local**
Mrs. Majewski asked if this was a one-time service. Mr. Fontaine explained that the old press box at Barry Field had asbestos in it. We have a contract with Vortex.
- **Wistow & Barylck, Inc./Legal Services/PROMAC/Business Office/Local**

2. Field Trip/Conference Requests

- **ASCD Conference, Nashville, TN/WMS/Title II & V**
Mrs. Majewski asked what ASCD stands for. It means "Association for Supervision of Curriculum and Development".

MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA: A. Forcier

**2nd: L. Majewski/M. Williams
(Unanimously Approved)**

COMMUNICATIONS: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE:** Mrs. Majewski thanked everyone involved in the superintendent search. They have interviewed the two finalists, checked references, and made site visits. The Search Committee will be meeting tomorrow to make a final decision, which will be announced at the June 11th WSC meeting. Majewski thanked Mrs. Nadeau for the time she has put in while enduring some personal problems, as well as Dottie DeRemer and Kim Blais. Mrs. Nadeau asked if Dr. Macera has received anything from RIDE on these candidates. Dr. Macera said, "No." Nadeau asked that Dr. Macera contact them about this tomorrow.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Elementary Handbook 2008-09 – 2nd Passage: Karen MacBeth

Motion to approve: M. Dubois
Roll Call Vote: A. Forcier

2nd: E. Nadeau/A. Forcier

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Bid Awards:

- **#08-21 Pest Control – Woonsocket School District**

Motion to approve award to A & D Pest Elimination of Pawtucket for \$21,420: A. Forcier
2nd: L. Majewski

Roll Call Vote: 5 yes

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- **#08-22 Fire Code Compliance – District-Wide**

Mr. Fontaine explained that with the completion of this bid – 95% of the elementary schools will be up to code. He was very happy with the bids we received.

Motion to award to W. H. Peppes of Lincoln, RI, for a total cost of \$273,332: A. Forcier
2nd: M. Williams

Roll Call Vote: 5 yes

2. Memorandum of Understanding regarding Ayotte Little League Field: Dr. Macera/P. Fontaine

Motion to table at the request of Joel Matthews: M. Dubois

2nd: M. Williams/E. Nadeau
Roll Call Vote: 5 yes

3. WHS Handbook – 2008-09 1st Passage: C. Henderson

Mr. Henderson handed out a list of revisions to the WSC members. He reviewed all the changes that were made. Mrs. Majewski said she would like to see the tardiness guidelines come before the WSC to be approved as a policy. Mrs. Forcier asked about the ID policy and whether or not a student's ID is taken away if they are suspended. Mr. Henderson said they are not asked to turn in their ID. Forcier suggested that their ID be taken away and given back when they return to school since they aren't allowed to attend any school activities while they are suspended. This way, if they come into the building while on suspension, they will be stopped for not having an ID. Dr. Garcia and Mr. Henderson both thought this was a good idea.

Motion to approve: A. Forcier

2nd: L. Majewski
Roll Call Vote: 5 yes

4. WMS Handbook for 2008-09 1st Passage: Pauline Papino, Asst. Principal

Mrs. Majewski suggested that the academic placement policy be looked at in order to narrow the gap between students of different academic levels in the same classes. She has heard from parents and teachers that it's very difficult to teach five different levels of students in one classroom. Dr. Macera thinks there is a need for more than one accelerated group. Mrs. Papino will relay that message to Dr. McGee. On Page 12, Majewski asked what the codes in the parentheses were in the Code of Discipline chart. Papino explained that they are the state reporting codes. Majewski would also like to see in the chart showing the CORE COURSES that it says Reading/Writing instead of just Reading.

Motion to approve: M. Williams

2nd: M. Dubois

Roll Call Vote: 5 yes

5. Termination of Attorney Contract:

Ms. Williams read the letter that she sent to the other WSC members regarding the termination of Atty. Ackerman's contract. She quoted Leo Fontaine as saying, "These are difficult times. There's a need to start looking at everything." She gave the background of having requested an opinion on the RI General Law 16-2-9, receiving an opinion from Commissioner McWalters, and awaiting another opinion from the Attorney General. Williams asked if Atty. Ackerman receives a W2 Form. Dr. Macera stated that he does. Williams believes we should go out to bid for these services because "we owe it to our taxpayers", adding that it should have been done a long time ago. "It's only fair to the taxpayers," said Williams. She also spoke about the fact that after ten years he will be able to collect a pension. Williams also thinks Ackerman should submit a proposal to work as an employee or independent contractor until they get an answer from the Attorney General. Mrs. Nadeau noted that if we go out to bid, everyone already knows Atty. Ackerman's salary. "Do you have to accept the lowest bid?" asked Nadeau. Dr. Macera said that they have to consider the best-qualified, lowest bidder. She added that it's not uncommon for districts to pay \$250,000 for legal services, but that it's up to them because he's their attorney. "No ruling has been received from the Attorney General's Office. We have budgeted \$83,500 for his salary. I can try to see if the Attorney General will speed along his decision. If his contract is terminated, he needs a 30-day notice and I don't think we will have it by June 1st," said Macera.

Motion to approve the termination of Attorney Ackerman's contract: M. Williams

2nd: M. Dubois

Roll Call Vote: (MD=yes; MW=yes; EN=yes; AF=no; LM=no)

Motion passes.

CONFERENCES: School Age Coalition Presentation – Darlene Magaw

Ms. Magaw gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the School Age Coalition Project, the goal of which is to foster educational success at Pothier, Citizens, Globe Park, Bernon Hts. and Woonsocket Middle School. The action plan of this 3-year, grant-funded project was outlined.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Macera

Over the next few weeks, she will be reviewing the funds and projected revenue figures and, hopefully, can bring more staff members back. There are many concerts and events going on. She is out almost every night, but she is enjoying these activities. She thanked the teachers and staff that go above and beyond in securing grants to bring in additional funding and programs for the district. She thanked Mr. Nasuti for the great job he is doing. She attended Honors Night and saw the excitement of the kids and the recognition they were receiving. "There's a great deal in Woonsocket of which to be very, very proud."

Motion to receive and place on file: E. Nadeau

2nd: L. Majewski (Unanimously Approved)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE:

M. Dubois: He went to Honors Night, saying that it was a very classy event. He appreciates all the invitations, but the WSC members can't be everywhere at once. Thanked Marlene Smith for keeping the Jennifer Rivera Awards going. "All but one of those students were involved in the music program." He said that some difficult decisions must be made and the WSC doesn't take pleasure in cutting positions.

L. Majewski: Asked about closing of Kendrick Avenue Bridge and whether letters have gone out to parents. Dr. Macera will check on it. Thanked everyone who volunteered on the Superintendent Search Committee. She congratulated the students receiving awards tonight. She regretted that she couldn't attend the Collage Concert and Honors Night due to the superintendent search meetings.

A. Forcier: She received phone calls from businesses in the community that usually rent our gym and when they called to rent it, they were given the runaround. They contacted her to see if she could do anything. She helped them out the best she could, but we lost one business because of it. Forcier would like to see something in writing regarding the rental policy.

E. Nadeau: Thanked the Search Committee and Sodexo for providing the food. She enjoyed working with Mrs. Majewski. "She is very organized and focused." Nadeau commended her for taking on such an enormous task and scoring a touchdown. "It has been an experience." Thanked everyone who put in many, many hours.

M. Williams: Thanked Marlene Smith for continuing the Jennifer Rivera Awards. Commended Dr. Macera and the administration for bringing back some of the teachers tonight. Thanked the Woonsocket Call for the great coverage on the WACTC students working at Barry Field and the students for their hard work. Thanked the teachers and staff on their work this morning when the fire alarm went off at the start of school at the WMS. They kept the kids quiet and in order.

Motion to adjourn at 9:15 p.m.: M. Williams

2nd: A. Forcier (Unanimously Approved)

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle, WSC Recording Secretary