

MINUTES
WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2008
8:00 PM – OPEN SESSION
Woonsocket Area Career & Technical Center
Multimedia Room 303

Call to Order / Moment of Silence / Pledge of Allegiance

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

PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:

Allen Auclair, 24 Florida Street, Woonsocket: He voiced his concerns about the modification of the current WTG contract that is up for approval tonight. He was concerned about the costs being put off into 2011 and the uncertainty about what condition the economy will be in at that time. Auclair referenced items about multi-year contracts in the City Charter, where it states that no department or agency, including the school department, shall contract to expend any money in the fiscal year other than the amount appropriated. He believes that would also pertain to multi-year contracts, which would make tonight's approval of the WTG's contract contradictory to the City Charter.

RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Robert Gerardi

Gerardi congratulated Head Coach Dale Seward, Assistant Coach Kathleen Fagnant, and the Varsity Girls Soccer Team for their Division IV State Championship victory over Tolman High School. He reported that the Woonsocket Middle School and its Boosters group recently sponsored a Guitar Hero Fundraiser Extravaganza, a musical fundraiser which was an event for the kids to compete in one of the favorite video games. Attendance was outstanding and was such a success that it is planned again for later in the school year. Gerard thanked the students and parents who volunteered the use of the Play Station machines, as well as CVS and Wal-Mart for their donation of \$50 gift cards as prizes, and Frito Lay and Pepsi for donating refreshments. Gerardi announced that the WHS physical education and Jr. ROTC students showed off their climbing and strength abilities during a visit from members of the Rhode Island National Guard. A climbing wall was constructed for students to participate in this event. He thanked Lt. Col. Dan Richards, the Jr. ROTC, and the Physical Education Department for sponsoring this event.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: 10/29/08 Open & Closed; 10/30/08 Closed

Motion to approve: M. Williams 2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

Mrs. Majewski had a correction on Pg. 5 of the Oct. 29th Open Session under her comments during "School Committee Good & Welfare". She added to the last sentence, "and she hopes they remember that during negotiations."

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion to approve Consent Agenda with the following exceptions: A. Forcier

- *Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000: NCS Pearson– Removed by L. Majewski. An addition of the requisition for JMB Mechanical for \$3,200 for boiler repairs at the WACTC was made by Dr. Gerardi.*

2nd: **M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)**

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Personnel Actions:

- Certified Appointments
- Non-Certified Appointments

CONSENT AGENDA (continued)

2. Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000

Dell Computers/ Computers/WHS/WACTC/ E2T2 Grant
Doreen Corrente/Consulting Services/WACTC/Perkins Grant
Heinemann/Ed. Supplies/Harris/Title I Grant
JMB Mechanical/Boiler Repairs/WACTC/Local – added by Dr. Gerardi
Monsignor Gadoury School/Prof. Dev./Grants & Curriculum/Title II Grant
NCS Pearson/NovaNet Licenses/Feinstein e-Learning/Local—Removed by L. Majewski
Norton & Associates/Speech Therapy/Sp. Ed./Local
RI Writing Project/Prof. Development/WMS/Local/Article 18
Wistow & Barylack, Inc./Promac/ Legal Services/McFee/Local

3. Field Trip/Conference Requests

American Speech and Hearing Association Conference/Chicago, IL/Harris, McFee/Article 18/ASHA
New York City, NY/WHS Girl's Basketball Team/WHS/Fundraiser
NECAP Bias Committee/Quechee, VT/RIDE
NCTE Conference, San Antonio, TX/WMS/Article 18/Title II

4. Home Schooling Requests: Removed by L. Majewski

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

EXEMPTIONS FROM CONSENT AGENDA:

1. PURCHASES/TRANSFERS OVER \$2,000:

- **NCS Pearson for NovaNet Licenses for Feinstein e-Learning Academy: \$20,450 Local**

Mrs. Majewski asked about NovaNet and the purchase of seats. She asked if it had to be done yearly or quarterly. Mr. Ferry explained that we purchase the portals. Communities purchase seats for one year from us. Each portal will provide unlimited seats.

Motion to approve: A. Forcier

2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

**Motion to approve exemptions from the consent agenda: A. Forcier
2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)**

ADDITIONAL PURCHASE/TRANSFER OVER \$2,000: (approved under Consent Agenda)

- **JMB Mechanical Controls for Boiler Repairs at the WACTC: \$3,200 Local**

This cost will be reimbursed by RIDE and is of an emergency nature so it was added to tonight's agenda.

COMMUNICATIONS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Mrs. Majewski reported that the School Success Coalition has been meeting monthly and their goal is to bring into partnership the WED and the Parent Information Network. The Uniform Committee met on Nov. 5th and the next meeting will be on Jan. 22nd. They are waiting for legislative approval of the bill. There will be a SELAC Meeting on December 4th, during which they will be presenting the special education draft policy for public hearing. The PAC is working on a transition plan for the two new middle schools.

NEW BUSINESS: (taken out of order by consent of the WSC members)

1. Approval of Modification to Current WTG Contract and Extension of Current Contract to include years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011.

Dr. Gerardi gave his report on the contract modification and the deferrals, including the changes for the public. Mrs. Nadeau said she took offense to Mr. Auclair's remarks. "During his tenure, did Mr. Auclair ever have a deficit to deal with or negotiate a contract? He doesn't have that experience and shouldn't criticize the people that put in the time and the effort," she said. Mr. Dubois also took offense. He added that Mr. Auclair did have part in negotiating a

contract for Dr. D'Acchioli. Dubois thanked everyone involved, especially the WTG, for making a good-faith effort to negotiate these changes. Mrs. Majewski and Ms. Williams thanked everyone.

Motion to approve: M. Williams
Roll Call Vote: 5 yes

2nd: M. Dubois/E. Nadeau

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**1. Discussion of Naming Rights of WMS**

Dr. Gerardi suggested naming a subcommittee of the school committee to write a proposed School Committee school naming policy for the upcoming School Committee that will be acceptable based on the discussion tonight. He included three models of School Committee policies from other districts in RI that either chose not to name any schools in honor of people or chose to allow the naming of schools to be a decision of a joint subcommittee of the City Council and the School Committee. Mrs. Forcier and Mrs. Majewski thought that our middle schools should not be named after anyone, adding that possibly a library, athletic field, etc., might be more appropriate. Mrs. Majewski suggested naming a scholarship in the name of a person. "That's a legacy that can live on," she said. Mrs. Nadeau reported that at the last Building Committee Meeting, they were told they have an assessment of the historic office building on the site. She said, "It will cost between \$4.5 and \$5 million to get this building into shape. The building had to be kept in order to get the site for the middle schools. We don't have the money in the budget to fix this building. The consensus in the community is that they don't want to change the name of the middle schools because they belong to the City of Woonsocket." Nadeau said she wouldn't mind working on a committee to determine naming rights. Mr. Dubois thought they made it very clear two months ago when this issue was discussed how they felt as a committee. He believes this issue would fall under the Policy Subcommittee. Mrs. Forcier said she would like to see us work with the City Council to develop a policy regarding the naming of any building.

2. Discussion/Request and Approval for Additional 30-Day Extension for Corrective Action Plan

Dr. Gerardi requested the WSC's approval of an additional 30-day extension for the Corrective Action Plan to end on December 29, 2008.

Motion to approve: A. Forcier
Roll Call Vote: 5 yes. Motion approved.

2nd: M. Dubois

CONFERENCES: None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Robert Gerardi

At Ms. McGuire-Forcier's request at the last school committee meeting, he spoke with Dr. Morrell, Superintendent of Schools in Cumberland, regarding the Valley Breeze article discussing a solution for short-term substitutes. Dr. Morrell explained that RIDE is currently reviewing the practice and she is optimistic that she will win approval to continue it. She will notify Dr. Gerardi when she gets a ruling from RIDE. If RIDE approves this practice, we will look at implementing this in WMS and WHS as not only a cost savings measure for the FY 2009-2010, but also a practical matter for student work consistency on substitute days as well. He thanked the Mayor and the City Council for their continued support in helping us resolve our deficit. Thanked John Ward as the City Council Liaison and the members of both negotiating committees for remaining focused and ultimately agreeing on the contract extension. Gerardi said he is proud to be working in a community where we are determined to have good working relations in our schools during these fiscally challenging times while other communities may be struggling with labor relations.

Motion to receive and place on file: E. Nadeau

2nd: A. Forcier (Unanimously Approved)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE:

M. Dubois: Congratulated the WHS Girls' Soccer Team on winning the championship. Mentioned the Boys' Football Team getting the short end of the coin toss. Congratulated them on a good season. Also mentioned that the boiler repair was added to the agenda at the last minute because of the heat situation. Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

L. Majewski: Asked Dr. Gerardi about adult supervision at the WMS outside before school. She was made aware that an adult has had to break up a fight there three times. She asked about the transition team for the WMS students. Dr. Gerardi said they have met twice and she is welcome to come. Majewski congratulated the Girls' Soccer Team on a great season and commended the football team on being very responsible in their handling of the decision that was made. She said that the Providence Journal reports that RIDE is considering cuts in reimbursement to the state breakfast program and also the Reading Recovery Program and she asked how that would affect us. Dr. Gerardi told her that they have had conversations about the Reading Recovery Program.

Majewski also mentioned staffing for PS&I, saying she hasn't seen anything on that. Mr. Strom told her there hasn't been anything on the breakfast program. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

A. Forcier: She asked why they weren't on the radio tonight. Mr. Dubois informed her that the radio station had already committed to playing something else, thinking we would be on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month. The WED had told them the meeting this month was on the 19th. Mrs. Forcier announced the Chili Drive at Tim Hortons for the Bernon Heights Elementary School sign coming up on Saturday. Thanked the community members who volunteered to mentor a child. "It makes a difference." She asked if there are any students on the Uniform Committee. Mrs. Majewski told her that there are three students and they will be at the next meeting. Forcier's daughter is at the WMS and they have no straws. Her daughter told her the milk cartons are gross to drink out of. Mr. Strom will check into it with Mr. Fontaine. She spoke about a conference she attended. Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and thanked everyone for negotiating a revised contract.

E. Nadeau: Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

M. Williams: Wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and congratulated the Girls' Soccer Team.

Motion to adjourn at 8:50 p.m.: A. Forcier

2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle, WSC Recording Secretary