

MINUTES

WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2008

8:00 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

PUBLIC GOOD & WELFARE:

- **A resident of 323 Main Street, Woonsocket:** Asked if the WSC thought they were being humorous when they started the meeting exactly one hour after it was advertised to start. Mr. Dubois explained that there was an advertised closed session prior to the public session which ran over.
- **Roger Harris, 939 Bernon Street, Woonsocket:** As a supporter of the RI Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Poverty, he thanked the WSC and Dr. Macera for their support of the free breakfast program and asked whether or not it will continue. He also stated that he is a paraplegic as a result of a car accident 14 years ago. He wants to tell his story. Mr. Nasuti referred him to a teen group at the WHS, but that is where it ended. He feels his story can help because of all the teenagers being killed as a result of drunk driving. "I am not asking to be paid for this. I am not afraid to tell my story." Someone had told him to write his story down and it would be reviewed, but he doesn't think that is fair to him. He asked that the WSC allow him to do it for the kids. Dr. Macera will talk to Mr. Nasuti about it. She thanked Mr. Harris for his offer.
- **Tony Gabriel, Winter Street:** Spoke about the new middle school project and the status of it after everything they have been seeing and hearing in the media. "The people who have volunteered want to know what's going on." Mr. Dubois told him that Dr. Macera has been in constant contact with Joel Matthews and the Mayor about this issue. "There are title issues that Mr. Matthews feels can be resolved," added Macera. She announced that there is a meeting being held on Monday at 7 p.m. at City Hall, and she feels very confident that this hurdle will be overcome.
- **Richard Dipardo, Huntington Street:** Acknowledged the efforts of Peter Fontaine to address the mold issues in two of the elementary schools and thanked him.
- **Allen Auclair, 24 Florida Street:** In light of the budget problems in the state, he made two requests of the WSC. He asked that they reopen negotiations with the unions regarding their contracts. Referring to RI General Law, he asked that a joint meeting with the City Council be held about the budget. He had asked for this for three years when he was on the WSC. He noted that meetings regarding the middle schools have taken place with the City Council on a regular basis. He doesn't understand why meetings regarding something involving much more money, such as the budget, can't be accomplished and aren't a priority.

RECOGNITIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Macera

Dr. Macera congratulated the students at Governor Pothier School who brought Christmas cheer to SeaBees who have served in Iraq. Thanked Mr. Ferry for helping the E-Learning Academy students believe in themselves. They are logging onto a website and converting failing grades into credits towards graduation. Announced that a post-graduation party is being planned by the Task Force on Substance Abuse on June 13th.

Motion to receive and place on file: M. Williams

2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Open & Closed Sessions of 12/19/07

Motion to approve: M. Williams

2nd: E. Nadeau (Unanimously Approved)

CONSENT AGENDA:

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

- **Personnel Appointments:** *Pauline Papino - Removed by L. Majewski*
 - **Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000:** *Clifford Sylvia; Good Shephard; Heinemann; RI Network for Ed Tech; Tech Depot – Removed by L. Majewski*
- 2nd: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)**

1. Personnel Actions

Certified Appointments: *P. Papino removed by L. Majewski*

Non-Certified Appointments

2. Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000

Apple Computer/Computers/District/Local

ASAP Software/Software/District/Local

Blueraven Technology, Inc/Equipment/Repair/District/Local

Century consultants/Support Service/District Local

Clifford W. Sylvia, Ed.D./Consultant/WHS/DNA Grant—Removed by L. Majewski

Dell Computers/Ed. Supplies/WHS/Local

FOTODYNE Inc./Ed. Supplies/WHS/Perkins Grant—approved at meeting of 12-19-07

Good Shepherd/Prof. Dev/Good Shepherd/Title II Grant—Removed by L. Majewski

Heinemann/Ed. Supplies/Harris/Local – Removed by L. Majewski

Mt. St. Charles Ice Arena/Rental Fee/Athletics/Local

RI Network for Ed. Technology, Inc/Portfolio System/WHS/Local—Removed by L. Majewski

Tech Depot/Computer Equip./District/Local—Removed by L. Majewski

Valley Transportation/After School Program/WMS/Article 18

3. Field Trip/Conference Requests

Measured Progress Conference, Portland, ME/Mt. St. Charles/Prof. Dev./Title II

Measured Progress Conference, Dover, NH/Harris Elem/Prof. Dev./Article 18

4. Home Schooling Requests (2)

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

EXEMPTIONS FROM CONSENT AGENDA:

1) Hourly, Stipend & Extra-Curricular Positions:

Mrs. Majewski asked whether Pauline Papino was functioning as a teacher or an administrator for the WMS After School Program. Dr. Macera explained.

2) Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000:

• **Clifford Sylvia - \$15,000.00**

Majewski asked who this person is mentoring. Dr. Macera told her he is no longer mentoring. It was an assignment under PS&I for 30 days for Dr. Lourenco Garcia.

• **Good Shepherd - \$9,147.00**

Majewski asked how much we get for Title 2. Linda Filomeno explained that there's a formula that is used to determine the amount that they get.

• **RI Network for Education Technology - \$13,218.24**

Majewski asked if this amount was for our local contribution. Dr. Macera told her that last year it was funded through a grant. We don't have the grant this year so it's being funded locally.

• **Tech Depot - \$4,122.46**

Majewski asked if this was a state vendor. She was told that it is.

• **Heinemann - \$2,131.00**

Majewski asked what kind of supplies were being purchased for Harris. Dr. Macera will have Miriam Goodman give her that information.

**MOTION TO APPROVE THE ABOVE EXEMPTIONS FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA: A. Forcier
2nd: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)**

COMMUNICATIONS: Mrs. Majewski spoke to Barbara DiPardo about College Planning Night because it had been moved from the fall to April. There's a financial aid night tomorrow night. Students at the WMS and WHS will be choosing their courses in February and March during advisories. Guidance departments will be open two nights a week for parents to make an appointment to go in to speak with counselors. Mr. Dubois said that Mr. Nasuti invites everyone to the Wellness Committee Meeting on January 15th at the WHS Library. It's open to the public.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Mrs. Majewski attended the last SELAC meeting and parents had concerns about the delay of services because of leaves of absences of staff, such as physical therapists. They would like notification when that will occur.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1) Discussion and Approval of Committee Assignments – M. Dubois

MOTION TO APPROVE: A. Forcier

**2nd: L. Majewski/M. Williams
Roll Call Vote: 5 yes.**

ASSIGNMENTS:

- **Building:** A. Forcier, E. Nadeau
- **Facilities/Planning:** A. Forcier
- **Finance:** M. Dubois, E. Nadeau
- **Food Service:** M. Williams
- **Health & Wellness:** M. Williams
- **Legislative:** E. Nadeau, M. Williams
- **Minority Concerns:** M. Dubois, M. Williams
- **Parents Advisory Council (PTO):** L. Majewski
- **Personnel/Contracts:** E. Nadeau, M. Williams
- **Policy:** L. Majewski, E. Nadeau
- **Recognitions:** M. Dubois
- **School Safety:** M. Dubois, A. Forcier
- **Sick Bank:** M. Dubois
- **SELAC (Special Needs/Early Childhood):** L. Majewski, M. Williams
- **Strategic/Instructional Planning:** M. Dubois, E. Nadeau
- **Transportation:** A. Forcier, L. Majewski
- **Technology:** A. Forcier, L. Majewski
- **WACTC:** A. Forcier

NEW COMMITTEE: Literacy – L. Majewski

Mrs. Nadeau asked if somewhere along the way, if someone feels they can't serve on a subcommittee, can it be changed. Mr. Dubois told her "Yes, at anytime." Ms. Williams asked if the meetings for her subcommittees could be held after 4:30 p.m. because she can't take a lot of time out of work.

NEW BUSINESS:

1) Approval of the Integration of Fourteen (14) "Principles of Professionalism" within the School Committee Ethics Policy –1st Passage –Dr. Macera

Mrs. Nadeau felt that some of the 14 items are very subjective – such as "openness". Dr. Macera said that the definitions were extrapolated from survey instruments. Nadeau doesn't think you can be unbiased in all your life experiences. "It's like big brother is watching you," she said. She doesn't want something that will hinder her in doing her job. In Ms. Williams' opinion, they take an oath and have a code of ethics to follow, a city charter to follow, and state regulations to follow. She doesn't feel that she's an employee of the WED. She was elected by the people and her paycheck comes from the city. Dr. Macera noted that all the employees of this school department receive their paychecks from the city, state and federal government. Macera acknowledged that it's the WSC's decision and is totally up to them. "We are not employees. We don't get a pension or benefits," said Nadeau and Williams agreed. Dr. Macera didn't think it would be this controversial. She requires all her principals and staff to adhere to these principles. Mrs. Forcier said that she had no problem accepting these 14

professional principles. "I could accept this being part of our ethics code," she said. Mrs. Majewski said that the Code of Ethics includes very specific things that can be evaluated. "These other 14 professional principals are things that are a given by the oaths that we take and the decisions that we make. How do you evaluate it? How do you measure it? I think it's unnecessary," she said. Forcier believes it's a way to show the staff that the WSC is willing to walk the walk and not just talk the talk. "It's to support them and lead by example," she said. Nadeau said that she believes she knows what her role is as a WSC member. "Some members have been confused in the past as to what their role is," she said.

Motion to approve: A. Forcier
Roll Call Vote: 4 no – 1 yes (AF). MOTION FAILS.

2nd: M. Dubois

2) Approval of FY09 Capital Budget/Personnel Supplement-1st Passage – M. Goodman

- **Capital Budget FY09**

Peter Fontaine reviewed his proposed Capital Budget for FY09. Mrs. Forcier asked if he had been contacted by the Mayor yet regarding grant money that is available for things like upgrading the parking lot lights at the WHS because it's a shelter. Mr. Fontaine said that Steve Preston is working on that aspect. Mrs. Majewski asked about money for roof repairs at Pothier School and it being a new school. "Because of the litigation, our warranties are off of that school," Fontaine explained. Majewski asked about a lease/purchase agreement for boilers. Fontaine said that they probably would not be eligible for reimbursement if we went that route. Williams noted that \$0 has been allocated for the WMS and asked where the money will come from if the project doesn't go through. Fontaine said he would have to eliminate everything from the capital budget except for life safety. The WMS fire alarm system would be \$2.5 to \$3 million. He spoke about the mold issues at two elementary schools. They were tested and no mold was found.

Motion to approve FY09 Capital Budget: L. Majewski
Roll Call Vote: 5 yes. Motion passed.

2nd: M. Williams

- **Personnel Supplement: Dr. Macera**

Motion to Table: M. Dubois
Roll Call Vote: 5 yes. Motion Tabled.

2nd: E. Nadeau/M. Williams

Dr. Macera recommended tabling this item. She is very concerned about the budget and has been able to get consent from the unions to reopen negotiations for next year's contract. Both unions have expressed a potential extension for one year.

3) Discussion and Approval of Presidential Preference Primary School Closing – March 4, 2008 – Dr. Macera

Dr. Macera said that Governor Pothier Elementary School has been designated for use during the Presidential Primary to be held on Tuesday, March 4, 2008. This will be the only school closing on that day and they will make it up at the end of the school year. Mrs. Majewski would like to make sure there is very good parent notification for that day.

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

2nd: E. Nadeau

4) Discussion and Approval of Draft Movie/Media Policy – 1st Passage – Chairman Dubois, L. Majewski

Mrs. Majewski read the policy she submitted for approval.

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

2nd: M. Williams

CONFERENCES: None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Macera

Dr. Macera reported that Mike Ferry and Dr. Lynne Bedard met with Omar Ouban to discuss the problem with the PBGRs disenfranchising our special needs students. Spoke about an adult education diploma program that was discussed that may be offered in the late afternoon and evenings. The WSC's approval will be sought for this program at an upcoming meeting. She has spoken with the superintendent of Pawtucket regarding the outcomes of the audit that was done of the NRI Collaborative. Macera reported that the Collaborative voted to build a new

building and purchase another building at their last meeting. She was the only superintendent that voted no.

Motion to approve: A. Forcier

2nd: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD & WELFARE:

Majewski: She supported Mr. Auclair's suggestion of joint budget meetings with the City Council. Thanked the WSC for allowing the seating change. Thanked the unions for agreeing to come to the table to reopen negotiations. She will recuse herself from matters involving the NRI Collaborative because she provides music enrichment services for them. Majewski would like to have a discussion about the end of Dr. Macera's contract coming up in June. Wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Forcier: Supports the idea of an adult certification program. She supports Mr. Auclair's suggestion for joint budget meetings with the City Council. In regards to the middle schools project, she urged parents and the voting public to show up to the workshop that is coming up.

Nadeau: Agreed with Mrs. Majewski about putting together a search committee for a new superintendent, saying that it's a long process and she doesn't want to be caught short. She said that on a couple of occasions, she and Ms. Williams have been left out of the loop as far as being notified of meetings and other information. They don't seem to be included in things that other WSC members are included in—such as meetings that took place earlier this month of which they were not informed. She found out about it at Stop N' Shop. Dr. Macera said she needed specifics because she didn't know what Mrs. Nadeau was referencing. Nadeau mentioned a meeting that was held today at the superintendent's office which she and Ms. Williams were not asked to attend. Mrs. Forcier said that she had happened to stop by. Nadeau said that her email isn't working and she isn't being informed. "There's always a telephone," she said. She and Ms. Williams felt a bit slighted and Nadeau said she has other specific examples that she'll discuss with Dr. Macera.

Williams: Wants to set up a legislative meeting—not a breakfast. She thinks it could even be held in the evening. Congratulated Beacon Charter School on being named one of the top high schools in the country. "It's great for the city." Spoke about an article about a school committee candidate that she received in the mail which was sent with an anonymous note saying that it had been hanging in the maintenance shop at Bernon Heights for three weeks. It has Nazi symbols on it and other derogatory names on it. The person that sent it didn't use their name for fear of retaliation. She would like to go up there because she heard there were girly pictures up there also. Dr. Macera said the incident is being investigated. Ms. Williams stated that it was a hate crime. When Dr. Macera said she has Mr. Fontaine investigating it, Williams said she thought it should be reported to the police department. Williams thinks a search committee is needed for superintendent as soon as possible. She thinks that the search committee should consist of people from the public. Wished everyone a happy new year.

Dubois: Wished everyone a happy new year. He was shocked about that article when he received it yesterday. "It was up there two or three weeks and no one said to take it down? That puzzles me." Congratulated the WHS basketball team. Announced that the next meeting is Jan. 23rd.

Motion to adjourn at 9:55 p.m.: E. Nadeau

2nd: M. Williams (Unanimously Approved)

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy G. Belisle, WSC Recording Secretary