

**WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
OPEN MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2012
7:00 PM – OPEN SESSION
WOONSOCKET MIDDLE SCHOOL
HAMLET BUILDING - 60 FLORENCE DRIVE**

Call to Order by School Committee Chair, Anita McGuire Forcier at 7:00pm

**Moment of Silence
Pledge of Allegiance**

Roll Call: Dr. Donoyan:

Anita McGuire Forcier, Chairwoman	Present
Vimala Phongsavanh, Vice Chairwoman	Present
John Donlon	Present
Eleanor Nadeau	Present
Christopher Roberts	Present

PUBLIC GOOD AND WELFARE:

Jeff Partington, President of Woonsocket Teachers' Guild.

Mr. Partington brought forward his views on the Resolution Opposing the Continuation of Contracts that was on the agenda. He believes that the Resolution Opposing Contract continuation is not in the best interest of the children. He stated that if the School Committee was truly concerned, then there would be a resolution for the restoration of All Day Kindergarten and that it would also be funded. He also stated that a resolution should go to the Representatives to modify or accelerate the fair funding formula to help Woonsocket out of financial difficulties. He said that the teachers have given back millions to the School Department in the past two years to help balance the budgets. The teacher's contract will expire in June 2013 and if this is an indication that the School Committee is not interested in bargaining a new contract. The bill before the General Assembly will defeat the plan to let the contract expire and impose a salary and benefit cut on the Teachers and Para's that the Teachers' Guild represent. The School Committee should be looking to retain high quality teachers and attract new teachers. After five years of no salary increases and givebacks it will be hard to negotiate a contract in good faith. Mr. Partington asked "How is this good for the students in Woonsocket." Mr. Partington asked that the School Committee send a clear message of support to the teachers, para's, and children of Woonsocket to defeat the resolution on the agenda.

Donna Houle, 130 Ward Street, Woonsocket.

Ms. Houle was looking at the personnel appointments and questioned under non-renewals and terminations the appointments of the Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapists. She asked the School Committee not to terminate these people because it is too hard to replace them. The children need these services and it is to hard find these teachers and not to give them pink slips.

RECOGNITIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Dr. Donoyan recognized Ms. Eileen Lariviere, Gr. 5 teacher at Harris School for being awarded the "Golden Apple Award" by Commissioner Gist from the Rhode Island Department of Education on Friday, February 3rd. This is quite an honor. The presentation will be aired on Channel 10 NEWS at 6:00pm on Thursday, March 8th.

She congratulated the Winners of the Spelling Bee. This years champion is Zachary Damon, Grade 8 at Woonsocket Middle School. Second place went to Jared Briere, Gr. 7 Woonsocket Middle School. Congratulations to all the Spelling Bee participants.

She congratulated the Woonsocket Career and Technical Center building and construction students for their expert work on giving a facelift to a historic barn located in Cumberland. In a letter from Mr. Frank Geary, Chairman of the Barn Committee

to the Heritage Corridor, he stated that over the years, this 200 year old barn had has undergone interior repair work but the barn was in dire need of outside repairs. That's were our students from Charlie Myers and Keith Thibeault class shine. They took on the challenge of restoring old shingles, replacing footings, rotten beams and window sills. It will be a few months before the structure is restored. The student and staff want to keep the integrity of the barn to its historical natural state. This is a great hands-on learning experience for our students and will help them prepare for the working world. Keep up the good work and congratulations to everyone for your efforts.

Congratulations to Kevin K. Coleman Elementary school for receiving a \$500.00 Verizon Telephone Pioneers Grant to provide books for students' health education classes. Congratulations.

Dr. Donoyan also congratulated Nicole Paula, Kylee Phelan, Dannew Delon Garcia, Jessica Valero Martinez, Loriano Khamvongsa, Demtrius Smith, Andrew Greco and Colin McCarthy and students from Harris Elementary School who helped in raising \$344.00 towards the Milk Fund. The fundraiser was held over a 4 day period and every dollar helps in providing milk vouchers year round for families. Thank you to Ms. Stephanie Roberts for organizing this fund raiser. According to Ms. Roberts, Ms. Ann Bolduc and Ms. Phillip's classes tied in raising the most monies toward the fundraiser. I want to congratulate everyone for your outstanding efforts towards this worthy cause. Thank you.

She mentioned that the Woonsocket High School Jazz Band performed at the RI Music Educators Association High School Jazz Festival at the University of Rhode Island on Saturday, February 4th. Thirteen schools participated from throughout the state. Each band was evaluated by three professional jazz educators. The Woonsocket High School Jazz band was given a rating of excellent.

**Motion to receive and place on file: Vimala Phongsavanh: Seconded by Christopher Roberts:
Roll Call: All Yes.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**Motion made by Christopher Robert to table minutes of January 19 and January 25, 2012, until February 28, 2012:
Seconded by Chairwoman Forcier:
Roll Call: All Yes.**

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Personnel Actions

Certified Appointments/
Non-Certified Appointments
Non-Renewals/Terminations

ADDENDUM ADDED TO PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS

2. Purchases/Transfers Over \$2,000

Blue Raven Technology/Ed. Supplies/WHS/Champlin Grant
Carolina Biological/Ed. Supplies/WHS/Champlin Grant
CDI Computers/Ed. Technology Supplies/Champlin Grant
Industrial Burner/Boiler Repairs/Coleman/Emergency Repairs/Facilities/Coleman/Local
Learning A-Z/Educations Materials/District/Elementary/Title II Grant
Lowe's/Ed. Supplies/WACTC/Perkins Grant

3. Field Trip/Conference Requests

Urban Debate Team, Suffolk University, Boston, MA/WHS/21ST Century Grant
Council for Exceptional Children, Denver, CO/WMS, WHS/IDEA Grant

4. Home Schooling Requests

Approval of Consent agenda: All in favor: Yes. Any discussion.

Mrs. Nadeau asked if this was this list of people who got pink slips as of the March 1st deadline. Dr. Donoyan said yes. Ms. Nadeau asked what the status was of the Feinstein Academy? Dr. Donoyan explained that the Feinstein Learning Academy will be changed as it is right now. The Special Education Department is looking at how best to provide services for those children who need Feinstein services. The Feinstein program will not exist the way it looks, but you can be assured that there will be support staff ready to provide services for these children. Ms. Nadeau asked if they were going to mainstream these children? Dr. Donoyan said that some may be mainstreamed but I believe the program is being evaluated and designed so it will meet the individual needs of these children. Dr. Donoyan said that some of these children will go back into the classroom with additional support, or some may be put in small clusters that will be supported by a teacher, at this point the entire design is being re-evaluated. Ms. Nadeau asked, is that why these teacher's were notified? Dr. Donoyan said correct.

Mr. Roberts asked if this was the entire personnel list prior to the March 1st deadline. Dr. Donoyan said that there was an addendum with one additional person. Addendum added to the agenda of one individual. Mr. Roberts asked about the Gr. 8 team? Dr. Donoyan said that team will be dissolved.

Ms. Forcier asked about how people received pink slips. Was it by just by seniority? Dr. Donoyan said it was judged by Grant funding. We want to make sure that the Federal Grant does come in at the allocated level that we expected. We want to make sure we were covered because if we cannot support Grant funded individuals, we would have to take it out of local funds. So we made sure that the grant funded positions were covered, that the least senior individuals were covered, and we are looking at all the positions that may appear to be too many in some departments. We are just being careful with the analysis of the funds.

Ms. Forcier stated that Ms. Houle had some questions about the Speech Pathologist and OT's. Dr. Donoyan explained that the OT's are highly specialized individuals in high demand and we need to be efficient as possible with staffing. We are looking at the number of enrolled students that require PT and OT services and we are very certain at this time that the number of staff in house will be satisfactory to fulfill the needs of our students at this time. We are meeting State regulations with the number of people that we have. Ms. Forcier asked if we were meeting State Regulations with children's IEP's. Dr. Donoyan said yes. Ms. Forcier asked if we will still be able to meet their needs. Dr. Donoyan said yes, barring that we do not have more children enrolled in the system that require additional support staff; we will deal with that as needed. We are taking a look at case loads of the PT's and OT's and making sure we are maximizing them and are trying to equalize them across the district for everyone.

Ms. Forcier asked if there are any further questions under personnel actions. Ms. Nadeau asked if in the budget deficit, if the Math Teachers were included in the list? There was suppose to be funding? There was a section on sports and the question was did we have the money to do that? Dr. Donoyan said you bring up a good question. A number of Math positions are on the list but I am not aware if these are the exact Math positions. Dr. Donoyan asked if she could get back to Ms. Nadeau and the entire committee on this question. Ms. Nadeau said if you are analyzing the budget this would not be any question if they were in the budget, was there money, if not, then they should be getting a lay-off notice. Dr. Donoyan said she look into this and would have to get back to her and the Committee.

Ms. Forcier asked if there were any further discussion under personnel actions. Motion to approve personnel actions. No further discussion.

Chris Roberts: Motion to add the addendum: Seconded by Eleanor Nadeau

Chris Roberts made a motion to approve the personnel actions in its entirety: Seconded by: John Donlon

All in favor: Yes

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

COMMUNICATIONS: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Ms. Phongsavanh: Health & Wellness Committee met on January 23, 2012, and did updates on the Action Plan. It will be available online so that everyone can see what the goals are for the Committee. **The next meeting will be on March 5, 2012 at the McFee Administration building at 4:00pm.** The Policy Committee has not met but is in the process of formatting the Policy manual so it is user friendly. We are in the process of formatting and indexing it so that the Committee can come in and look at it. It is going to take time because it is a big document. I have had a lot of questions and input, so we are looking forward to getting this project started.

Mr. Roberts: - The Finance Committee also met on Monday, February 6th and had a lengthy agenda. It was a 3-1/2 hour meeting. We did a financial review of the information that was submitted to the state and did a financial overview review of the lunch fund which was an issue that Braver brought up. Thank you to Sodexo for their input. We had a work session on reinstatement All-Day Kindergarten and will be on an upcoming agenda, and did a review of the bus contract which is on our agenda tonight. The Finance Committee will be meeting again on **Wednesday, February 15th at 6:30pm at the McFee Administration Building.**

Ms. Forcier added that anyone who was interested in being on the Finance Committee can contact Mr. Roberts or herself or send an e-mail on why you are interested in being on the Committee and your qualifications. Ms. Forcier said they are looking for more people to serve and that the meeting will be long and stressful.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. FY2012 Year to Date Budget Review –G. Donoyan, D. Dutremble

Dr. Donoyan reported that Ms. Dutremble is currently in the process of evaluating our position and she is doing tremendous work bringing credibility to the numbers but I do not have any information at this point to report. I want it to be a complete and viable report. Thank you.

Ms. Forcier asked if there is any other discussion.

Ms. Nadeau asked even though it's an ongoing process why aren't they getting regular reports on what is happening? We will probably have a deficit next year and we have no idea what is going on. We have no update we are still in the dark so we cannot answer any of these questions to the public.

Dr. Donoyan responded to Ms. Nadeau and said that the executive decision that was made was not to release information until we have absolutely accurate numbers because things change on a daily basis, within the day, because of adjustments that have to be made, journal entries that have to be made, adjustments from one account to another, and payroll differences. Dr. Donoyan stated that she is very cautious of giving out any information at this point. Once there is verifiable evidence of what our numbers look like and Braver PC can verify and certify that Ms. Dutremble's numbers are accurate, then we will have a starting point and be able to move forward. Dr. Donoyan stated that she will not be surprised if we do end this fiscal year in a deficit. It's the magnitude of the deficit that is worrisome. We will not know until we get actual numbers. Things can change at the drop of a penny.

Ms. Nadeau stated that this is the time that we should be working on the next fiscal year budget but can't do that until we get out of this year's budget. Dr. Donoyan stated that this was correct and she will address that in her Superintendent's report but stated that we cannot go forward and develop a reasonable budget without knowing where we are at this point. We want to present a realistic budget. It will be different from the one presented previously. Ms. Nadeau stated that she is not surprised that we will be in a deficit. A structural deficit does not go away unless you have an infusion of money. It just continues unless money is available.

Ms. Forcier stated the Ms. Dutremble has more work to do on the budget and will have Braver in to help and that we need to have a budget by March 1st. Ms. Forcier asked if this was going to happen?

Dr. Donoyan stated that the Director's and Principals have been looking at enrollments, capacity, classrooms, and have been doing a study of consolidating classrooms, we have looked a moving to a 4-4-4 model, 4 years at Elementary, 4 years at Middle and 4 years at High School, we have looked at different variations and are ready to go forward with some of these things, we need to be sure that we are using realistic numbers. We want to make sure that our substitute line, was cut drastically last year and that the substitute line item is already over budget at the moment. So when I put forward a budget for next year which is due March 1st. I want it to be realistic and have no surprises.

Ms. Dutremble and Dr. Donoyan have been in contact with the Mayor, and Mr. Bruce and they recognize that there may be a waiver that they may allow, but it will have to go before City Council to allow a couple of extra weeks to insure that our budget is realistic.

Ms. Forcier asked if we cannot meet the March 1st deadline, would we ask for an extension. Mr. Roberts is good at writing letters if we should request help from the Auditor General or the Commissioner. Dr. Donoyan responded that she would take help from anyone. Ms. Forcier asked if the City has been sending help for Ms. Dutremble from the Finance Department. Dr. Donoyan said yes and she will mention that in her Superintendent's report. She thanked Mr. Bruce for sending one of his staff to help out Ms. Dutremble.

Motion to table for three weeks. Motion by Chairwoman Forcier - Seconded by Chris Roberts

Roll Call: All Yes.

2. Discussion of Education Programs – A. Forcier/V. Phongsavanh

Ms. Phongsavanh stated that the original intent of this request was to provide the School Committee with a detailed description, or a chart of educational programs from Kindergarten to grade 12. This chart would help the School Committee determine which programs are effective, how many students are in each program, and if they are mandated; why they are mandated, and how much it cost to run each program. What are some of the successes of each program? The information provided was incorrect. There was miscommunication of what was being asked. The School Committee should periodically review these programs.

No further discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Resolution Opposing Contract Continuation - A. Forcier:

Ms. Forcier read the Resolution Opposing Contract Continuation into the record:

WHEREAS: Current state law does not provide for mandatory continuation of an existing teacher collective bargaining agreement; and

WHEREAS: a Superior Court justice recently ruled that state statute, defining when a contract ends, obviates any clause, agreed to, allowing for a continuation of a public employee contract and;

WHEREAS: School districts and cities and towns have seen a calamitous reduction of state aid and;

WHEREAS: There exists a \$120 million dollar revenue/expenditure gap in the FY 2013 budget and cities and towns, from FY 2007 – FY 2012 have lost over \$185 million general revenue sharing and auto excise reimbursement and;

WHEREAS: Taxpayers are already burdened by some of the highest property taxes nationally and;

WHEREAS: School districts and cities & towns must comply with RIGL §44-5-2, that caps the property tax levy, for FY 2012 at 4¼%, and;

WHEREAS: According to § 16-2-9 (d) “The school committee of each school district shall be responsible for maintaining a school budget which does not result in a debt.” and;

WHEREAS: School committees may require employee concessions to comply with the aforementioned state statutes and;

WHEREAS: 2012 – H 7250 would mandate that an expired contract shall continue under the same terms and conditions and;

WHEREAS: This would serve as a disincentive for unions to bargain in good faith and allow existing employee wages and benefits to continue unchanged indefinitely thus forcing districts to possibly violate RIGL §44-5-2 & § 16-2-9 (d); now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Woonsocket School Committee respectfully requests the Rhode Island General Assembly to oppose 2012 H—7250, and any other legislative proposal that would, mandate expired teacher contracts must continue at the existing terms and conditions; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to every Rhode Island Municipality, School Committee, State Senator, State Representative and the Governor.

WHEREBY: The following bear witness:

Ms. Forcier stated this was brought to her attention by the RI School Committee Association, Mr. Tim Duffy, State Rep. has placed this continuation to go through and was asked to bring this up and vote on it. Ms. Forcier stated that she understands where the Union is coming from, but said that the Union also has to understand where the School Committee is coming from, considering that we did not pass a resolution for a Fair Funding Formula that was passed at the City level at that time.

Ms. Forcier stated that she went every week to every meeting and to the State House to support the fair funding. She asked the Union, “Where were you?” “Where were you when we were in North Providence when we did have some union leadership there to talk about Fair Funding but wouldn’t take the time to stand up to fight for our children, but took the time to stand up for the Central Falls teachers. Who cares about the children? “So back at you, with all due respect.” Central Falls came before the Fair Funding Formula and we are working on resolutions with different cities and towns. We met for a conference and we were supposed to have on in February but it was cancelled. It was a Leadership Conference to get the Fair Funding quicker instead of waiting for the ten year process. This is in the works and we are trying to do everything we can. We also filed a lawsuit. I have been fighting for Fair Funding for the last six years. When binding arbitration came up the Union got two bus loads of teachers to go to the State House. I got a free bus to go for the Fair Funding and got the ROTC students and a few parents. Where were you? In school responded Mr. Partington. The bus was there after school. With all due respect, I understand the Union’s position, but please understand the School Committee’s. As you know, financially we are in trouble. If you want this to pass your saying that you are not willing to negotiate and you would benefit. If this bill passes you would benefit because you would say that you don’t want to negotiate and your contract would continue and the School Committee would have no recourse. With respect, back at you Jeff.

Mr. Roberts would like flexibility. We are in such a tough time to push for the legislation to move the layoff notice date from March 1st date to June 1st. We are laying off over 50 people tonight because we don’t have a budget. This is an unfortunate process when likely a number will be recalled. I am going to support this tonight and I think that we need to have every option available to us.

Ms. Nadeau asked Mr. Ackerman “How does this Resolution affect Teacher Negotiations?” Mr. Ackerman stated that you assume the parties who negotiate these contracts do it in good faith. It shouldn’t affect people who are trying to reach a fair contract in good faith. Ms. Nadeau asked, “Then why is it necessary?” Mr. Ackerman stated

you asked me how does the resolution effect negotiations. If your question is; what will happen if this resolution is passed? Yes, stated Ms. Nadeau. Mr. Ackerman said, if this resolution is passed and if there is an impasse, and if there is no agreement on a replacement contract, then the existing contract will not be deemed to carryover or continue to govern the parties until there is a new contract. So the decision in the East Providence case was without agreement the old contract did not continue, that would become law if this was defeated. Ms. Nadeau stated in 2013 the School Committee will be negotiating a brand new contract. Mr. Ackerman stated that this seeks to say that the old contract will continue if there is no agreement on new contracts. Under the East Providence case that is not the law. The East Providence case if there is no agreement on a new contract the court rules that the old contract did not continue in effect, so this proposal is to change the result of the East Providence case. The East Providence case was peculiar on its facts and there was an impasse and there were no other choices and the court found that the concern was to avoid a deficit. So these factors would have to apply before you could have another decision like the East Providence decision. This law is saying we want to nullify the effect of the East Providence decision, or any similar decision, we want to say, if the parties do not agree on a new contract, the terms of the old contract must continue in effect until a new one is negotiated. That is how I understand this Resolution, stated Mr. Ackerman. Mr. Ackerman said he can't speak for the Union, but he thinks the Unions are opposed to this Resolution because they feel that they would be far better under the existing contract. Rather than having the existing contract expire and then the management can impose whatever they feel it's able to afford as was done in East Providence. These are all hypothetical suppositions. Does this answer the question?

Ms. Nadeau asked if this Resolution would attempt to use East Providence as a model?

Mr. Ackerman said that he thinks the result in East Providence which is that the old contract does not continue in effect is what this resolution is intended to avoid. The Resolution says if the old contract is not replaced by agreement then it shall continue. Mr. Ackerman questioned if he was correct about the resolution because he did not have the copy in front of him. If this is the case, then this resolution means the contract will continue in effect until they are replaced by a new contract. That is not the case in East Providence. The contract did not continue in effect.

Ms. Forcier said that it is backward. Ms. Forcier said they are doing a resolution of "opposing" the contract continuation. She said if the Union walks away from the table and School Committee walks away from the table, the Union won't have a contract. If this contract continuation goes through, and if the Union and School Committee walks away from the table, their old contract holds up until we come up with a new one.

Mr. Ackerman stated that is correct. That is why the Union positions have changed over the years. Whereas, in the past the Unions did not want the old contracts to continue in effect because they would get contracts that they deemed fair that provided for increases. Under the current economic conditions, new contracts are going to be less favorable because there is less money, so my supposition is that the Unions oppose the East Providence decision because the Union would want the old contract to still be in effect until they negotiate a new contract because they feel that the terms of the old contract would be fairer and more favorable to their members because of the poor economic conditions.

Mr. Donlon asked Mr. Ackerman if this resolution is passed tonight and we cannot come to agreement with the Union would their step raises stop? Would their Blue Cross stop? Would their pay stop? If there is no contract?

Mr. Ackerman stated that the Resolution that is before the Committee is to oppose this proposed piece of legislation. So the resolution if passed by Committee tonight will put Woonsocket School Committee on record as opposing a change in the State Law. That change in the State Law is the pending bill presented before the General Assembly. That change would say if the parties don't agree on a new contract, the old contract would continue. So if that bill becomes law, then if you do not negotiate a new contract, the terms of the old contract will continue. If the pending legislation is defeated, what will be the state of the law? The state of the law in the East Providence case is that the old contract is not replaced by a new contract the terms of the old contract do not continue and the school department unilaterally can impose new terms and conditions if the findings in the East Providence case are duplicated in Woonsocket. Mr. Ackerman asked if there were any other questions. He stated that the difficulty is that this is a proposal to change the uncertain state law. This proposal is intended to do away with what may happen in the East Providence case when it goes to the Supreme Court or to do away with any distinction between the East Providence facts or what may occur in other school districts. This proposed piece of legislation is saying we want the old contracts to continue until they are replaced with a new contract.

Mr. Donlan asked if that was this legislation says?

Mr. Ackerman said that is what this piece of legislation before the General Assembly is saying. This is to oppose it. This resolution is saying, we don't agree with this proposed Resolution, we don't agree that an old contract will continue forever until it is replaced. We believe that if the parties in Woonsocket cannot negotiate a new contract the old contract expires. Then as was done in East Providence the School Department will determine what funding is available and meeting with the Union what is possible and not be constrained by the old contract, so that raises and other conditions could be decreased. They would not be negotiated. The Union is saying we don't like this. We want the old contract to continue until we agree on a new contract. If they can't agree, then the terms of the old contract must continue. This is not the state of the law under the East Providence case, which is on appeal to the Supreme Court. It used to be believed before the East Providence case, that if the parties did not agree on a new contract, the old one continued. But, because of economic conditions, and findings in that case, it went to impasse. The court found that there was no money available the court said, once that contract expires and is not replaced by a new contract, management does not have to follow the old contract. It can impose different wages, health insurance provisions, etc. The pending legislation in the General Assembly is opposed to that result. Leagues of Cities and Towns and School Committee are saying to all School Committee's we think this is detrimental to the fiscal reality so we don't want this piece of legislation to pass. We want to be able to try to negotiate with the unions and come up with a contract that is fair and affordable to the district. This may be a lower wage scale to the existing contract. We don't want to be tied into the old contract we may not be able to afford, so by voting in favor of this resolution your saying, "yes," we don't want to be tied into the old contract, therefore, we must oppose this pending legislation because if this legislation passes, we will be tied into the old contract if we can't replace it with a new negotiated contract.

Ms. Nadeau stated there is no where in this discussion about step increases.

Mr. Ackerman stated that step increases are provided by state law.

Ms. Nadeau asked if any districts like Woonsocket can't decide to take away step increases.

Mr. Ackerman stated that they can't decide to take away step increases, but the amount of the step increase would be subject to change. The only thing in the State Law is that there has to be a \$300.00 increase or difference per step. He said he is not positive about this and he would have to look up the law. He stated that there has to be step increase recognizing experience up to ten years. The gap in the steps would be subject to negotiation, or to change by the School Committee.

Ms. Nadeau asked isn't already subject to negotiation?

Mr. Ackerman answered yes. But it is subject to negotiation and can't be changed unless it's negotiated by the parties. East Providence case said it doesn't have to be negotiated by the parties, but if the parties reach impasse and it's deemed that there isn't enough money to pay these step increases they could be reduced.

Ms. Nadeau asked that you can do that in negotiations?

Mr. Ackerman said under the existing law, yes. The existing parties can agree. Both sides look at the step increases which might provide from 3% to 8% increases on the step and no across the board increase or a pay freeze, teachers going from one step at a time, can always be negotiated.

Ms. Nadeau stated that Woonsocket has not had increase in a number of years.

Mr. Ackerman said an across the board raise and that there have been give backs.

Ms. Nadeau said that we are not coming from the position that we have not negotiated in good faith and did not get concessions. We negotiated all these things.

Mr. Ackerman said that Woonsocket has done very well and we are coming from a position of appreciation.

Ms. Nadeau said that she does not see a need to join forces with this because it is not happening to them. She does not want to put a wedge between the Unions and School Committee. What happened in East Providence is they tried to break the union. If this is what it is going to be, I will not support this.

Ms. Phongsavanh asked do you know who submitted this bill? Was this a Senate bill or House Bill?

Ms. Forcier said she thinks it was a House Bill submitted by Mr. Duffy.

Ms. Phongsavanh said after hearing all the information she feels that this limits the School Committee negotiating powers and she will support this because she believes that we have the ability to be able to negotiate what is best for the students in Woonsocket. Whether it means there will be increases in some parts or decreases. I do believe that we have the ability to negotiate. I don't want to see that power taken away from the School Committee. I don't think that this is a strong bill at the state level. So I think this will not make a difference. I will be supporting this bill.

Ms. Forcier stated that if legislation was to go though the State House and agrees with Ms. Phongsavanh, it would remove the School Committee's negotiating powers and would give the Union the opportunity to walk away from the table anytime they wanted, because their old contract would continue indefinitely.

Mr. Ackerman said he doesn't think that is the case.

Ms. Forcier said that she spoke to Mr. Duffy and took notes down.

Mr. Ackerman read again from the resolution: Whereas, 2012 H7250 would mandate that an expired contract shall continue under the same terms and conditions. So if the expired contract continues under the same terms and conditions, indefinitely, if the parties do not agree on a new contract.

Ms. Forcier said that the Union could get up and walk out and two years later they are still under a new contract and take the power away from the School Committee.

Mr. Ackerman said that is if this legislation passes.

Ms. Forcier stated that is why she is opposing it before it passes.

Mr. Ackerman asked if she supports this resolution.

Ms. Forcier said she support this resolution.

Mr. Ackerman stated that this is not limiting the authority of the School Committee.

Ms. Forcier said that it could limit the School Committee and we are here to look at the future of Woonsocket. Our Unions have been more than great. Our unions have given back than anyone else in the community. If this legislation was to pass at the State House the old contract would continue indefinite. Correct?

Mr. Ackerman replied; correct.

Ms. Forcier said she is supporting this resolution because I think that should be there for any School Committee if this was to pass, however, I do want to keep the belief in our Union and its ability to negotiate with us because in the passed you have negotiated in good faith and you have given up raises, health care benefits, and you pay more co-pays and have given up more than most places in Rhode Island. This is greatly appreciated and I hope we can continue this. However, as you said right now the contract, as it is, would not continue but if this resolution goes though it would. What I'm saying is don't change a thing. However, it's evident from this end, if they can change it to a unions benefit. That's how I feel. So I will be supporting this resolution.

Chris Roberts made a Motion to approve this Resolution: Seconded by: Ms. Forcier

Roll Call: AF/VP/CR = YES

EN/JD= NO

Resolution Passes - 3-2

2. Discussion/Vote of School Shutdowns for February & April Vacation Weeks – A. Forcier

Ms. Forcier asked the Superintendent to go over the numbers that we would save on energy because in the past we were told that we would save about \$17,000. dollar's a day. This is not true. She asked Dr. Donoyan what the total amount for the week from all the Elementary Schools.

Dr. Donoyan said based on Mr. Fontaine's calculation and much of the number that you have are actual numbers as of last year when we had higher rates of fuel necessary, we came up with an approximate figure of \$5,200/per day between electrical and fuel usage throughout the district. This comes out to approximately \$26,000/per week for all schools. Please take into consideration that these numbers are based on last year's usage. It was a very cold winter last year.

Ms. Forcier said that after discussing this with some members of the Committee, Dr. Donoyan and Mr. Fontaine, that February shutdown would be to soon and this would be too short of a notice to do this for this year, but she would like it to be considered for next years budget. If this is to be considered to put it in the for this years budget for the March 1st deadline. It would save \$26,000/per week. This has to be planned ahead. Because we have Kids' Klub and other programs that run in our schools.

This will be taken under consideration by the Finance Committee for the FY 2013 budget.

Ms. Nadeau asked if these were the true figures? This report is not the actual figures.

Mr. Fontaine stated that he did a three month analysis of the winter months to come up with these figures of all the school for electricity, fuel, during the three month period. The figures that are being discussed may be less, but still have to turn on the heat and electricity. These numbers will be less than this. These figures can be discussed with the Finance Sub-Committee. But it is not 50,000. It is less than that because you still have to heat the building during vacations.

Ms. Forcier said that it will bring to the Finance Sub-Committee meeting for further discussion for the FY2013 budget.

3. Sample Copies of Information of Impact Statements – C. Roberts

Mr. Roberts said he requested this information from Dr. Donoyan from what was used in North Providence, so he is referring this back to her.

Dr. Donoyan said these statements were put together by the Finance Director in North Providence. They offered them to us so we could take a look at how another district who has been in financial difficulties similar to us, what they did to insure whenever there is a new proposal this is the way to look at the cost-effect of the proposal so that the School Committee would have an idea of what it needs to say yes, or how it will effect the budget. This is only for discussion purposes and we could replicate this but it's something to consider using going forward.

Ms. Forcier said it was a great idea and utilize this to make our School Department run better and we should move forward with it.

No further discussion.

4. Discussion of Bussing Contract – P. Fontaine

The Transportation Contract Sub-Committee met to discuss the contract with Durham Bus Services. The bus contract expires in June of 2012. There are two options. You have these documents. I am asking the Committee if you would like to go out to bid or do you want the Sub-Committee, and me to enter into discussion with Durham to extend the contract?

Mr. Roberts said that he believes that the increase of the first year of the contract was nominal. Given that this was a bid from three years ago the fuel prices were at a much lower price and Durham continues to bear. He said it would be in our best interest to authorize an extension of the contract with Durham and Mr. Fontaine should try to have the contract ready for the February 29th meeting. That would be his recommendation.

Ms. Forcier asked if there was anymore discussion.

Motion to authorize to extend a one year option to Durham Bus: Chris Roberts; Second: John Donlon

ROLL CALL: All Yes.

CONFERENCES: NONE

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr Donoyan

Since our last meeting, I am happy to advise the School Committee and community that finances are continuing to be worked on. Our staff is assisting Ms. Dutremble answering questions. We are scrutinizing all expenses contractual or otherwise to insure their appropriateness.

Furthermore, we recognize the importance of the work as we prepare for the preparation of the fiscal year 2013 budget. I want to thank Mr. Thomas Bruce, the City Finance Director for offering the assistant of his staff throughout this period. All the Director's and Principals have been working on enrollment and classroom preparations in anticipation of next years needs. I would like to mention that while the beginning and ending year enrollments may appear to be low, there is much activity and variability within the school year and we want to make sure that we can accommodate children adequately. I'm happy to report out that the first series of the Superintendent's Public Forums was met with very positive feedback in my meetings with the community at large. Finances were a big topic, but more importantly was the issue of an adequate and rigorous education for all students. It's clear in my mind that the community values education and wants to continue to support it the best we can and we will do our best to insure that the return on investment will remain high.

Just today, I was informed that our own Jessica Freshette has been identified in the finalist pool of the Rhode Island State Teacher of the Year. She is a symbol of the dedication and commitment that I witness daily by all of our educators and all employees of the Woonsocket Education Department.

In closing, the staff and I are focused on rebuilding a school department that has a long tradition of excellence.

Motion to receive and place on file: Vimala Phongsavanh Seconded: Chris Roberts

All in Favor: YES

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD AND WELFARE

J. Donlon: We are in receipt in our packets of the Rwanda Trip. When the School Committee approved this trip back in July, was this money approved by the School Committee? Dr. Donoyan said that the entire field trip was approved. What we gave you was an FYI how much it is going to cost considering that we talk about the substitute line, just want you to know that we are \$1,700 over budget at this point and we didn't know we had a deficit. This was important to bring to the attention of the School Committee. We want to support the educational enrichment of or students but it does add a cost.

Mr. Donlon read in the paper that there was a disturbance at the High School involving two young ladies. He didn't get any information on this. You will get the information in your packet this week.

A. Forcier: She asked Peter Fontaine what could be done about the vandalizing of Cass Park. She thanked him and his staff for cleaning the graffiti at the park. Thank you. She asked that people call the police if they see vandalizing of the park. Ms. Forcier said she received complaints and that they were looking for someone to take

the minutes of the School committee meetings and it's in your secretary's job description. Could you comment on this?

Dr. Donoyan said the position was posted because the position that was vacated by someone who held this position for many years. We are following the same protocol. She will look into it. Thank you for bringing it to my attention.

Ms. Forcier said that we are in a financial crisis and why are we paying someone when it is someone else's job description. We are in a hiring freeze. If there is a way of avoiding this it would be appreciated.

E. Nadeau: This is a response to your last question. When I was on the Committee in 70's, the Superintendent's secretary took the minutes of the meeting, and I don't believe that she was paid, but she got comp time for that, and we had some very long meetings. So you have to weigh the fact that if we have long meetings and your giving someone comp time, they are out of the office and not at their job. I don't think it is fair for someone who has a full time job to be required to cover meeting, and we have had meeting that have gone on for many hours. It's not fair to ask her to extend her work day. If they put in a full week it's an additional burden. I think that you should negotiate a price for a recording secretary. It doesn't have to be \$23.00/hr. There are plenty of people looking for work. It could be more in line, but asking the Superintendent's secretary to do the minutes does not sit well with me.

Also, as a member of the School Committee, I don't receive enough information. I am referring to the Finance Sub-Committee. You may be meeting, and asking for people to sit on the committee and present a resume of why they should be on this committee, but you could have people from the outside who know more about what is going on before members of the School Committee. The Sub-Committee should be bringing forward all this information to the members School Committee and I don't think that is happening. We need to be better informed. Going forward it would be nice to have a report before the public knows. This is the most crucial information right now.

V. Phongsavanh: PASS

C. Roberts: Mr. Roberts apologized for not getting the information to the other School Committee members and the Finance Committee members of the Finance sub committee meeting. There is a lot to go through. He said that there will be a meeting on Wednesday and they will have all the information by the February 29th meeting.

Thank you to Globe Park School for inviting us to judge the doors for Math and Science week. I look forward to seeing their work.

**Motion to adjourn by Vimala Phongsavanh
Donlon**

Seconded by: Chris Roberts/John

All in Favor: YES

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy DeRemer
Recording Secretary