

**WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
OPEN MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2012
6:45PM CLOSED SESSION
7:00 PM – OPEN SESSION
WOONSOCKET MIDDLE SCHOOL
HAMLET BUILDING - 60 FLORENCE DRIVE
WOONSOCKET, RI 02895**

**Call to Order
Moment of Silence
Pledge of Allegiance**

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

COMMITTEE WILL SEEK TO CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH RI LAW: 42-46-5-(a)(1) Job Performance:

Return to Open Session:

PUBLIC GOOD AND WELFARE:

Ms. Althea Forcier; 127 Ledwood Lane, Woonsocket, stated that she has two major concerns regarding Leo A. Savoie School. The first was the fact that there has been no permanent principal at the school and the second thing was the cleanliness of the school. She stated that a substitute principal is great for handling arrival and dismissal times and the flow of discipline problems but there are things that they cannot handle. "Savoie is about to put in paperwork to become a Title I school. The parent involvement piece to become Title I could use more help. They have not had a principal at a PTA Meeting since November. A principal is essential to help plan for events ahead of time and to help substitutes to plan for events that they don't know are going to be there. Teachers and parents are volunteering their time to take part on the SIT Team. This is the third school that I have volunteered for and have never seen as much parent involvement as I have on this SIT Team. We are working to become a full Title I school right now. I haven't seen documentation on this but have been told that a permanent principal is one of the requirements to become a full Title I school. If this is true, I hope we are not rushing to meet deadlines for nothing. During this process of becoming a Title I school, I helped do parent evaluations. Parents were sent home evaluations, evaluating the academic progress of our school. For the most part, parents felt that their child's educational needs were being met, however, when asked to write down any concerns they had with the school, quite a few chose to write about how dirty the school was. I agree with them 100%. So I took the opportunity to take pictures of what parent concerns were and decided to take them to the School Committee." (at this point Ms. Forcier presented pictures to the School Committee.)

Ms. Althea Forcier stated that she met with Dr. Donoyan at a Community Forum on January 24th to express her concerns. She said she notified Dr. Donoyan about the teachers' bathroom that had so much dust that it was hanging in the form of a light string, when there is no light string. "You took note of it and said that you would check on it, but there is no need to rush because two weeks after we met, it fell on a teacher. What is left is what is in the picture."

"My children have only been at Savoie since September. A few weeks into school I noticed a stench coming from the boy's bathroom. When I asked the Principal about this, he remarked that he frequently has children that urinate on the walls. I have since heard that the smell was due to a pipe that broke in the wall on one of the urinals on the wall and the students were still using it. I approached Ms. McGuire/Forcier, because she was in the building on this

particular day that I heard this, before February vacation and the resolution was that the stalls that were causing the problems were being changed. These stalls were changed and the pictures were before the stalls were changed”

“My question is why do we have to wait until the stalls look like this before we have to change them. The girl’s bathroom doors are unfinished and can cause splinters. Not all the doors in the girl’s bathrooms have locks and there is flooring missing from the toilet area. I also showed these pictures to a Woonsocket Police Detective and asked if the bathroom at the Police station looked like this. He replied, “absolutely not,” they are much better than this. The hand washing stations are filthy and could use extra paint. The floor photo shows that the floors are filthy and the corners are filled with dirt and mud. Then when the floors are waxed the corners are filled with this mud. This is bad at Savoie, but I noticed it at all other buildings including the new Middle School. This school is two years old.

“The classroom photos at Savoie showed that when it rains the water drips down the walls on the first and second floors. Then after the rain, comes the mold. One classroom was so bad that after it rained the blinds were so wet that they came crashing down. Good thing a child was not there. The wood that was placed to stop the rain from coming in is warped from water damage. I don’t expect a new roof because I know we cannot afford it. It is rumored that work orders have gone in for some of the concerns that I expressed but didn’t get followed through with, this may be a rumor. I am asking for more accountability for who is responsible for this and for the proper cleaning to get done at Savoie. It doesn’t cost a lot of money for bleach, paint and a vacuum. This should resolve most of the issues I am bringing here today. I have been to a lot of buildings in the City and at the YWCA and their floors are similar to ours and their floors do not look like ours. I brought these pictures so that I should notify the School Committee. I notified Dr. Donoyan and Ms. McGuire/Forcier and I’m not sure if Peter Fontaine is aware, but I want you to know that the next step is to the Department of Health. This is unhealthy for children to be learning in this kind of environment. Thank you.”

Mr. John Ward, President of the City Council: “I am here tonight to express my support for your resolution, Item #5 of the Support of the Senate Bill S2406, which has to do with an amendment to with state law that would change the 60/40% split for the teacher pension contribution to match it to the State share ratio and save the City in excess of 3.3 million dollars. I also passed out to the School Committee an analysis I have done because I was troubled by an article in the Providence Sunday Journal about education funding and a complaint that Woonsocket was not supporting education sufficiently. What I have done is a ten year analysis comparing the City funding of education and the state funding and what it shows over the last ten year is the City has contributed 16.2% more on the annual amount than ten years ago, rising from 11,152 million to 12,964,000, which is about 1.8 million dollars, some would say, gee, that’s not very much. Let’s talk about what the state did to us, to see how we have to close this gap. In the last ten years, our State education aid for FY2011-12 is \$86,000 less than ten years ago. Compared to our highest year which was FY2007-08, education aid has dropped by almost 4.7 million dollars to the City of Woonsocket. Keep in mind that this does not include 2,034,000 dollars which was a federal grant to replace some of the lost State funding that would be in the 2012 number making that rise to about 45 million. Unfortunately, our school department used those 2 million dollars entirely in last year’s expenditures, so the 2.7 million dollar deficit would actually be 4.7, if the money was left to be applied to this year. In any case, we are functioning at 4.7 million less than we were just five years ago. The point I am trying to make to the General Assembly in my argument is that even if you were to take the Governor’s proposed education funding for Woonsocket at 46 million, roughly 46.8 million for next year, that would still have the City of Woonsocket receiving almost 2% less education aid from the State than it did back in 2007-08 before the economy collapsed. And for those who complain about the City not supporting the Education Department besides the 5.-1/2% increase in the last five years and the 16% increase in the last ten years, keep in mind that the school deficit etc. had occurred and the necessity for a deficit for a funding bond, the City is going to be picking up the tab for 1.2 million dollars a year for the next five years, that is going to be used for the prior deficits of the School Department. We are about to address next week, the estimate of the current school year deficit and we still have a 2.7 million dollar deficit for 2011, despite that we used the 2 million dollars in advance that is yet to be addressed. I think the City of Woonsocket is moving in the right direction in funding education and if anyone at the State House wants to have an argument with me about supporting education, I’ll be happy to do it. As a matter of fact, I brought this information to the Speakers office yesterday. In talking about this legislation, I spent about an hour with the Speaker and our local delegation, Lisa Baldelli-Hunt, Jon Brien, and Bob Phillips who were with me, and I met today with the representative of the Treasurers Office and talked with them about the legislation and made my point about how Woonsocket has been cheated out of funding because the funding doesn’t work and the pension adjustment will go a long way towards solving, not just Woonsocket’s problems, more importantly, the City of Providence, Pawtucket, Cranston, North Providence, and all the cities that have been most severely affected by this bad funding formula. I just want to make you aware of this and things are

going to happen fast and I will be asking this School Committee and other School Committee's to support what I think will turn into a budget amendment and not a separate bill, this is fine. We need to get the word out that this needs to change because we need to get other communities to support us. Without this change, I am pessimistic about our ability to operate without raising taxes to such a high degree next year that no one will want to deal with this. It will become a burden that we have never seen before in the City of Woonsocket. It will be measured in multiple millions of dollars rising 10, 12, 15% tax levy increases. I want to make you aware of this, and we will still communicate.

Finally, I want to invite you to the work session that will take place at 6:00 on Monday night where the Council will be updated on the meeting that will take place Monday with the State, because we will apparently have sufficiently closed to finalized estimates of our school year deficit for 2011-12 for the School Department, and after meeting with the State we will begin our discussion of how to resolve the problem. Please ask the members of the School Committee and public to participate and attend so we can begin the conversation about solving our problems. Thank you very much for your time.

Ms. Forcier asked if this was going to be a joint work session between the City Council and School Committee.

Mr. Ward stated that it will be just the Council's work session before the regular meeting but he said that the School Committee should attend because the solutions are going to be City Council solutions. "Mr. Ward asked if the School Committee raised money. Ms. Forcier said no. Mr. Ward stated that everything that is to be discussed." The Council will be discussing how they solve whatever the deficit problem is because the State is not going to wait anymore. The only choices are; we take care of it, or we end up with a budget commission like East Providence where we are dictated to, or we end up in receivership. This is not to belittle the School Committee it is just quick action for everyone to be at the table to be able to hear what is going on. I am sure the Council will welcome any participation. All they will be getting is an update on what happened at the meeting with the State and informing the public where we will go from there or at least discussing the possibilities that are available to us. I will tell you it will not be pleasant."

Ms. Forcier thanked Mr. Ward for the worksheet and asked if there were extra's for the public. Mr. Ward replied yes. She also asked to email it to Mr. Robinson. Ms. Forcier thanked Mr. Ward.

Mr. Partington, President of the Teachers' Guild. Mr. Partington said that he has admonished the Chair from time to time for not putting things on the agenda that were revenue driven. We agree with the Resolution this evening #5 and hopeful that this will pass because it will bring money to the City and reduce costs to the City. Mr. Partington said he would like to give the Superintendent the appeal of all the lay-offs of the 120 Middle School teachers, 130 High School teachers and the 250 Elementary Teachers that were laid off last week. We are not happy about this but understand. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Lynne Kapiskis, Chair of SELAC. She was there to appeal to add an agenda item to the next meeting and was informed by Dr. Donoyan and the Chair that it has been added to the next agenda for March 14th. What we are trying to do in conjunction with the OT's at the elementary level and the Police Department to put together a data base of children in the City who have special needs so that First Responders can be put on notice when responding to a particular location whether there is a special needs child, so they would know what to anticipate with their reactions or behaviors when fire or police show up at that location. It is a database shared by First Responders. What we are looking for is support from the School Committee in terms of two-fold permitting us to put something in the handbooks, perhaps a form or direct people where they can go to get the form. It would be available through Ms. Kapiskis and the Police Department. She would also like it to be handed out at IEP meetings or at least the information to be handed out at IEP meetings. SELAC would absorb the cost of the copies. A packet was given to Dottie and there are samples of the form included in the packet and a news article who was a police officer who was a First Responder of a child who had Autism and was out of control. There is a program that provides training for First Responders that is called ALEC. She said there is no money for this at the moment. She will try to get some grants to get the training for the school department. This is the first step. She also spoke to Chief Carey. He is aware and is in contact with Sergeant Ryan and will assist with whatever they need to do. Her contact information is on the packets in case you have any questions before the next meeting. She will be at the next meeting. Thank You.

Mr. Ackerman also asked Ms. Kapiskis to contact him because he has some questions regarding this issue. Ms. Kapiskis said she would.

RECOGNITIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dr. Donoyan asked to table until the next School Committee meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 19, 2012 Open; January 25, 2012 Open; February 8, 2012 Open; February 22, 2012 Special Open

**Motion to approve: Chris Roberts
All in Favor: Yes**

Seconded by: Mr. Donlon

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve the entire Consent agenda: Ms. Phongsavanh Seconded by: Mr. Donlon

Mr. Roberts asked to pull out Item #2 Purchases and #3 Field trips/Conference Requests in its entirety.

Mr. Roberts asked Dr. Donoyan to give him an overview on EBS Healthcare from Local Funds. Dr. Donoyan stated that EBS is for Occupational Therapist services. One of the OT was on maternity leave. We required by IEP to provide services and this is the vender that supplies the OT. Mr. Roberts asked if this was for the substitute. Dr. Donoyan said yes. Mr. Roberts asked what amount of time does this 55,000 cover. Dr. Donoyan said it started November 21, 2011 through June 2012.

Mr. Roberts asked if the second item was for Consultant for IDEA Grant. Do we know the result of that grant? Dr. Donoyan stated we have the grant for IDEA and it is approved. There is a retired teacher who does all IEP evaluations at the High School per the Federal Law.

Mr. Roberts asked about Robinson & Clapman. He assumed this is an update on the lawsuit with Pawtucket. Dr. Donoyan said yes, this is the Adequacy Suit.

Mr. Roberts said the Met is just tuition. That is it on Purchases.

Mr. Roberts asked about the Field Trip and Conference requests. Mr. Roberts questioned the NEFEP Conference. He asked if all five people were attending at the same time and asked how come they were coming out of different grants. When the title money is awarded, are the line items specific to line items for conferences? Dr. Donoyan said the Accela Grant which is a consolidated resource plan specifically mentions what conference they will be going to, IDEA is for Special Education, and Title II is for Professional Development. Mr. Roberts asked if the Title money could be used for salaries. Dr. Donoyan explained that part of it is. We have almost a million dollars in Title I that goes toward salaries. She said that, we have IDEA that also meets fringe and salary requirements and with Title II we do the same as well. Our Instructional Leaders salaries are taken out of Title II as well. Dr. Donoyan asked Mr. Robert is he thought we could use this to pay for our salary line item. She explained no. It is currently approved for FY12 budget purposes with certain requirements and restrictions. Mr. Roberts asked if the Federal Government would be upset if he voted no and used it for salaries. Dr. Donoyan said he could not do that. It would be against the law. She asked Mr. Roberts to come to the office and she would explain the Accela Grant to him. She said that he could access it from home, it is a public document. She said that there are requirements with this grant. Mr. Roberts said that he just wanted to be sure that this is being used properly and that he can't put it in salary line items. Dr. Donoyan said not this year, but it is a good idea for next year. Dr. Donoyan said we could not supplant.

1. Personnel Actions:
 - Certified Appointments/
 - Non-Certified Appointments
 - Non-Renewals/Terminations

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

EBS Healthcare/Sp. Ed/Contract OT
Services/Local

Robinson & Clapham/Legal Services/Business
Office/Local

June Donovan/Sp. Ed./Consultant/IDEA Grant

The Met/Tuition/District/Local

3. Field Trip/Conference Requests:

NAFEPA CONFERENCE, Washington, DC/McFee /Title I & II Grants

URI SMILE Challenge Weekend, URI Campus/WHS/Perkins Grant

URI Smile Program/Prof. Development/URI Campus/Harris, Bernon/ Title II Grant

URI Smile Program/URI Alton Jones Weekend/Harris/Smile Grant

4. Home Schooling Requests: (1)

Mr. Roberts made a motion to approve the entire consent agenda:
Donlon

Seconded by: John

All in Favor: YES

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

COMMUNICATIONS: Ms. Forcier stated again that there is a special work session at City Hall at 6pm on Monday and everyone should attend because we will find out where we will stand financially for this year. It is extremely important that everyone attend so everyone hears the same thing.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Mr. Roberts said the Finance Sub Committee met following the special School Committee meeting last week. There was a brief presentation from Mr. Partington and we asked for information on early retirement proposal and he is currently gathering more information for us to review. There were just some general budget discussions. There are some items on tonight's agenda that have formal recommendations attached. These are a result of the group meeting and all documents from this meeting were included. This is where the Finance Committee is at the moment.

Ms. Phongsavanh announced that the Health and Wellness Committee will be meeting on Monday, March 5 at 4:00pm at McGee.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion of Woonsocket Post Grad Lock-In - Woonsocket Task Force – A. McGuire Forcier:

Mr. Victor Ramos thanked the Committee for last year's approval of the event. He is here to ask permission again for the lock in. The Post Grad Lock-In was started in 2007 and it is a way to keep the children out of harms way and out of any trouble that may happen on that night. They have worked with the Police Department in previous years and they asked to do a post prom, but the police suggested they do a Post Grad Lock-In because this is when most students get in trouble. As soon as they started the post grad they got a very good turn out. Calls for that night dropped 86%, so they are asking permission to do it again and have use of the High School to throw a big party and keep kids out of harms way.

Motion to approve: Chris Roberts

Seconded by: Vimala Phongsavanh

Further Discussion: Mr. Donlon said he participated in these many years ago and it is great for the children. He asked if this was just for the graduates or if other classmates can attend. Mr. Ramos said it was specific to the graduates. Only seniors can go, but they do ask for 15 or 16 junior volunteers who help run the event for the seniors so they can enjoy it the following year.

The only other are adult volunteers. Last year it was also opened to Beacon Charter School to their graduating seniors. Once they are in they are locked in and cannot leave and there is a Police Officer on duty.

Ms. Forcier said she also thinks this is a wonderful event and keeps children safe and she will be supporting it.

Ms. Phongsavanh, thank you for the Woonsocket Prevention Coalitions commitment to the city and all the work you do. You can put me down to volunteer. Mr. Ramos thanked Ms. Phongsavanh. Thank you.

ROLL CALL: ALL YES

Motion Passed

2. Discussion/Vote Relative to Meal Prices for 2012-2013 Academic Year- A. Forcier/C. Roberts on behalf of the Finance Committee.

Mr. Roberts said that this is formal recommendation by the Finance Sub Committee that we increase the price of paid lunch at the beginning of the 2012-13 academic year. The Elementary lunch will increase from \$1.50 to \$1.65, and secondary school would go from \$1.60 to \$1.75. This recommendation has a couple of items on it for the reason of the increase and the Finance Committee included documentation which shows a comparison of what other districts have been charging currently. There are two things driving the increase. 1.) The Federal Government has determined that a paid lunch will cost \$2.47, and they are requiring in the coming years that we close this gap. 2.) Is to establish a reserve. The lunch fund is separate from the general fund and Sodexo operates our lunch program, but we are required to maintain the capital equipment. This fund had about a half million dollars in it and has slowly been declining to \$80,000 and leaves us in a precarious position if he had a major capital expense. We want to rebuild this fund for emergencies. There would be no change to the breakfast program. It is still Universal Free and this will continue.

Motion to approve by Mr. Roberts:

Seconded by: Chairwoman Forcier

Further Discussion: Mr. Donlon stated that the Finance Sub Committee did a lot of work on this. He mentioned that a lot of other school districts are charging a lot more than Woonsocket and charging for Breakfast. Mr. Donlon said that it would be a pain to come up with change everyday and maybe that they should go to \$2.00 across the board. He said the students are getting free breakfast. He said if the parents are giving them the \$2.00 anyway, they will spend the rest on something else. He said it should be a flat fee across the board.

Mr. Donlon made a motion to make it a \$2.00 flat fee across the board. Chairwoman asked for a second and motion dies for lack of a second.

Ms. Forcier said that we cannot compare Woonsocket to other communities like North Kingstown. She stated in Central Falls these students get free breakfast and lunch. They want to go in small increments. There are a lot of parents that put the money in the lunch account so they do not have to deal with the change. By going slower it would help the working people. We have a group that just miss the income guidelines to get help with lunches and this amount would hurt these people so we tried to be considerate to their needs. We needed to take in consideration the needs of the children in Woonsocket.

Mr. Roberts asked if Ms. Shalvey from Sodexo wanted to comment.

Ms. Shalvey from Sodexo commented that Mr. Roberts referred to the Hungry Free Child Act and they are required to start closing the gap between what you receive for a free meal from the government and what you receive for a reimbursement for a free meal for a paid meal plus the paid fee. So the gap that you are trying to close for the current year in the reimbursement is \$2.79 per lunch meal and the reimbursement plus the average of the \$1.55 right now is \$1.83. So this is

a big gap you have to start working on. The USDA requires that you increase at a .10 cent increment every year. Another part of the Hungry Free Child Act is that next year it is becoming nutrient-based so students can decline less of their meal, so ultimately more food has to be served. So couple that with rising food costs from 2011 to 2012 there has been a 4.4% increase. They are anticipating another increase in food cost of another 21/2 to 31/2%. Mr. Roberts referred to the capital equipment. We are running three vehicles and 11 kitchens. If something goes wrong, Woonsocket will need the funding to repair and replace. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Forcier asked for any further discussion.

Mr. Roberts asked if they are doing enough for the 2012-13 school year, with the .15 cent increase or is this not enough.

Ms. Shalvey said that 29% are paid. For the rest we are getting the full reimbursement. With the new nutrient-based menu if we hit the new requirements and RIDE will come out next year and evaluate us, they are giving us a .6 cent per meal bumper, which will help absorb some of the increase food costs .

Mr. Roberts asked if she was comfortable with the .15 cent increase.

Ms. Shalvey said they have to watch the fund and start building it back up.

No further discussion:

ROLL CALL: All Yes.

3. Discussion/Vote to Accept Discounted Payment from InterLocal Trust –C. Roberts

Mr. Roberts stated that the Woonsocket Education Department currently has an accounts receivable of around \$68,500 from the RI InterLocal Risk Management Trust. The balance is not technically due to us until January 2013. In speaking with the Superintendent and Ms. Dutremble the Trust would make us an immediate payment for a 6% discount and the time value of money would be a benefit. I introduced this tonight because we need all the cash we can get, and if I can get \$65,000 today versus \$68,000 in January of next year, I am fine with this discount. We have a number of bills and vendors that need to be paid, aside from payroll, and \$65,000 is nothing in the grand scheme of what we owe. This is a good faith effort to secure this money and distribute to whoever we can to make some impact. I would ask the support of the Committee to authorize the Superintendent to effectuate this discount

Motion to approve: Ms. Phongsavanh

Seconded by:

Mr. Roberts

Any Discussion:

Mr. Donlon we will get \$68,500 and forfeit 6% discount which comes to \$4,110. This money is payable January 2013. I cannot support this. \$4,110 dollars can by a lot of paper, pencils and supplies. The teachers are saying they buy a lot of supplies on their own. Because of this, I cannot support this. We need to wait until January to get the money. We should be fine doing this. Thank you.

Any further discussion:

Ms. Forcier asked if Dr. Donoyan had any comment.

Dr. Donoyan said that Mr. Donlon brings up a very good point. She said \$4,000 does go a long way and Mr. Roberts also indicated the fact that \$68,000 does not seem like lot money in the grand scheme of the deficit right now. So both bring up very valid points. She stated that she is also looking at a cash flow projection. We are receiving lawyer letters at this point in time. When we find that our cash flow and working with an extra 25 or 30 thousand dollars, we are trying to do

our best to insure that there is a good faith effort to insure that all of our vendors are getting some kind of movement of money. I agree with you. \$4,000 is a lot of money we could use to buy additional supplies, but I think in the short term it is really necessary to make sure that our electricity is intact, and our oil bills are being paid, and certainly our vendors that are providing services are being paid as well. While I don't have a vote on the Committee, I do ask that you reconsider because we do need the cash.

Mr. Roberts said that normally in the regular world, if cash was not a problem he would be 100% on your side. He would never give it up but just think that things are so desperate when you look at the list we haven't given a dime to our heating oil company. We owe the attempt to spread this money around or on the Superintendent where some amount of money to respond to the attorney letter, if that is what she is getting. This is my viewpoint and I will be supporting this.

Ms. Forcier asked if there was any further discussion.

Ms. Forcier stated that she agrees that both have very good points. However, when Dr. Donoyan puts it the way she does and says we are receiving attorney letters and we are being threatened that we are being shut off in different areas, we are being threatened that people won't service. Ms. Forcier asked Dr Donoyan if this \$65,000 would be a great help. Dr. Donoyan stated that anything would be a great help. Ms. Forcier said that she would be supporting this for that reason. Ms. Forcier stated to Mr. Donlon that \$4,000. is a lot to give up, but if we wait until January, meanwhile our electricity gets shut off now. Mr. Donlon said they can't shut it off until April. Ms. Forcier said if she knew if there was some money coming in April because we have to meet payroll, too, and we have a cash flow problem. Ms. Forcier said she will be supporting this reason because they are desperate for money.

Any further discussion:

Mr. Roberts made a motion, Ms. Phongsavanh seconded.

ROLL CALL: Chairwoman Forcier, Vice Chair Phongsavanh, C. Roberts– YES: Mr. Donlon – NO

Motion Passed

4. Discussion/Vote Relative to School and Athletic Field Use Fees –A. Forcier/C. Roberts/ Finance Committee

What you have in front of you is an updated rate schedule for the use fees for education department buildings as well as the athletic fields including Barry Field. There is an updated schedule that shows the resident rate, as well as, the non-resident rate giving the in-City rate a discount. It has been a number of years since these rates have been adjusted and we have a number of properties that need attention, this includes the property at Barry Field as well as the fields around the district. I am asking for support of this tonight. What I would like to ask, if no one has an objection, if Mr. Nasuti, Athletic Director and Mr. Fontaine, the Director of Facilities address the Committee.

Mr. Nasuti mentioned that the athletic facilities are overused and are deteriorating on a regular basis. The facilities at Barry Field, High School Gymnasium, and the High School Auditorium are well in need of repairs. For the last ten years with the cuts in capital improvements, we haven't had any money to repair any of these issues. So, if in fact, you are able to raise some money through fees for everyone, and some of the money can be directed towards these repairs, it would be greatly appreciated and would help our facilities. We do have a lot of people who use it and we get no returns. Many of these groups fundraise to use the facilities. Whatever can be offered to improve our facilities would be a help.

Mr. Fontaine said he will support this motion for a number of reasons. In the five-year capital plan, all the facilities have been addressed; however, as you know the capital budget has been decreased to zero for

the last few years. The facilities are, in fact, owed by the City and taxpayers of Woonsocket and they need to be maintained and kept up. Whatever we can generate, even a little bit, will help the situation. I am fully supporting this. The rates have not been increased in eight years since I have been here. This is a minimum increase and as long as some of these funds can be directed back to the athletics or facilities, I am comfortable with this.

Mr. Donlon asked if these fees are high enough. He feels that they are not high enough for use of the fields. He knows that the soccer team uses Barry Field and it is being destroyed because of the amount of games that they play, when it was originally made for baseball and football.

Mr. Fontaine said that there is a fine line for people who cannot afford it. He said he feels it is necessary and gave the Finance Committee the fees from every school community in the state of what they charge and adjusted according to that. It is not a big increase and certainly we would like more. I'm not sure if we can get more. This is a minimum increase and some of the groups raise quite a bit of money and we think that they can kick in a little bit to help out.

Ms. Forcier asked for further discussion.

Mr. Roberts asked for an amendment to the motion on Section #5. That Fees raised from these rentals are to go 50% to the general fund and 50% to a facilities reserved fund, so we can guarantee to the public that we are doing this not only to raise some additional general revenue, which we need, but to help support our athletic teams at Barry Field and other properties.

Mr. Roberts agrees with Mr. Donlon that we are still being very competitive to be able to rent a brand new gym for an hour for \$30.00 is a great deal. You will see in Section #3 that someone who is a long term or seasonal user we would negotiate a rate to the group. The next step would be for the Finance Committee to meet with you individually so we can slowly build this up as a team process. We need nice fields for our children who are our direct responsibility and at the same time maintain nice facilities for these groups.

Mr. Donlon stated that the money should stay in the school department and not the city fund.

Mr. Roberts said he would like a certain amount to be usable cash and a specific amount to go to athletics and facilities. We do have a general checking account and my desire is for part of it to end up as operating cash.

Dr. Donoyan said that we don't have a petty cash account that we can draw from on a daily basis. What Dr. Donoyan suggested is that 50% goes into an athletic fund, which is necessary, and a certain percentage into a capital or facilities account because as it is right now, as Mr. Fontaine stated our capital improvement account is close to nill. No matter what happens, we will need to use maintenance workers or supplies and materials it would come out of the facilities account anyway. That would be her recommendation.

Motion to approve:

Seconded by:

Ms. Forcier said 50% facilities, 50% capital funds.

Dr. Donoyan said no, 50% athletic and 50% facilities.

Ms. Forcier said 50% athletic and 50% facilities.

Mr. Roberts said the amendment would be that of the fees raised that 50% would go into a facilities reserve account and 50% would go into an athletic reserve account.

Motion on Amendment: Mr. Roberts made the motion that of the fees raised that 50% would go into a facilities reserve account and 50% would go into an athletic reserve account.

Seconded by: Mr. Donlon

ROLL CALL: All Yes.

Motion to approve in its entirety by Mr. Roberts:

Seconded by: Mr. Donlon

Any further Discussion:

ROLL CALL: All Yes.

5. Resolution in Support of RI Senate Bill S2406 – A. Forcier/C. Roberts:

Mr. Roberts read into the record Resolution in Support of Senate Bill S2406

Whereas, the Woonsocket Education Department is currently responsible to fund 60% of the established cost of the employer contribution for teacher pensions in the State system; and

Whereas, the so referenced 'fair funding formula' was enacted to recognize the ability of a community to raise funds in support of education and offer additional and necessary support to urban communities; and

Whereas, continuing to charge the local school district 60% of the established cost of the employer contribution runs directly contrary to the principles of the 'fair funding formula' which recognizes a limited ability by Woonsocket and other urban communities to fund educational costs; and

Whereas, a transition to utilize the formula aid percentage derived through the fair funding formula would result in a net annual savings to Woonsocket of nearly \$3.5 million dollars; and

Whereas, the Woonsocket School Committee must take all necessary actions to ensure that its limited resources are used for the benefit of the entire student population,

It is hereby resolved by the School Committee of the City of Woonsocket as follows:

Section 1: The Woonsocket School Committee (WSC) hereby voices its full and steadfast support for Senate Bill S2406.

Section 2: The WSC requests the full support of our local delegation for the passage of this legislation.

Section 3: The WSC, realizing the strength of numbers, supports other School Committees throughout the State making the same request of our legislature.

Section 4: A copy of this resolution is to be sent by the Superintendent to the Mayor of Woonsocket, the Woonsocket City Council, the local legislative delegation, the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, and a representative of each School Committee in the State.

Section 5: This resolution shall take effect upon passage.

**Motion to approve this Resolution by Chairman Forcier:
Roberts/John Donlon**

Seconded by: Chris

Any further discussion:

Mr. Roberts stated the Mr. Ward's presence at the meeting shows that the City is in full support of this resolution. We all know the Fair Funding Formula is flawed and that is why we are suing the State. But it does a better job in recognizing our ability to contribute these pension dollars and 3.5 million would have a drastic impact on our bottom line as well as a number of other struggling communities. So anyone who is listening, I ask that you contact your Representative or Senator to support this bill. It is not only for Woonsocket, but for the City of Providence. The benefit is for

around 12 million dollars, it has a positive impact on East Providence which has an overseer and has a positive impact on Cranston and I want to acknowledge and thank the Woonsocket Teachers' Guild for their support. We as the School Committee can pass these resolutions and this is when we need the help of the public. We have initiated this and now we need your support.

Any further discussion:

Ms. Forcier agrees with Mr. Roberts and Mr. Ward. Ms. Forcier thanked Mr. Ward for going above and beyond for the community. Ms. Forcier thanked the Union also. She stated that they have to work together and fight for a "fair" funding formula. When the opportunity comes we have to seize it. We have power in numbers. If I showed up at the State House with 200 people behind me, then we would be noticed and have the support of the people. I want to thank everyone and hope they support this resolution by contacting their Reps and Senators.

Motion to Approve: Ms. Forcier

Second: Mr. Roberts/Mr. Donlon

ROLL CALL: All Yes.

6. Resolution in Support of RI Senate Bill S2461 – A. Forcier/C. Roberts:

Mr. Roberts read into the record Resolution in Support of Senate Bill S2461

Whereas, the Woonsocket School Department currently bears the financial burden of educational costs for children in the control of DCYF; and

Whereas, the manner by which the responsibility for financing said education of the child is the last proven residence; and

Whereas, Woonsocket as an urban community has an increased rate of mobility and transient residence resulting in educational expenses being dictated to us by the State of Rhode Island for potentially short-term residents; and

Whereas, the State of Rhode Island recently increased the annual cost to local communities for educating children in DCYF custody to \$51,000; and

Whereas, the Woonsocket School Committee must take all necessary actions to ensure that its limited resources are used for the benefit of the entire student population,

It is hereby resolved by the School Committee of the City of Woonsocket as follows:

Section 1: The Woonsocket School Committee (WSC) hereby voices its full and steadfast support for Senate Bill S2461.

Section 2: The WSC requests the full support of our local delegation for the passage of this legislation.

Section 3: The WSC, realizing the strength of numbers, supports other School Committees throughout the State making the same request of our legislature.

Section 4: A copy of this resolution is to be sent by the Superintendent to the Mayor of Woonsocket, the Woonsocket City Council, the local legislative delegation, the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, and a representative of each School Committee in the State.

Section 5: This resolution shall take effect upon passage.

**Motion to approve this Resolution: C. Roberts
Donlon**

Seconded by: Mr.

increased costs, and a surge in high-needs populations. The issues brought to our urban schools are a drain on our finances, but we must meet our children's needs. Those needs are clearly stipulated by federal regulations and civil liberties. The Woonsocket Education Department has no choice but to incur the cost of providing a free and adequate education to all Woonsocket students as Mr. Roberts indicated. Though the total number of Family Court and DCYF placements changes often, it makes it a moving target. Special Education increases as more children are diagnosed in our system on the Autism spectrum or present as developmentally delayed, blind, emotionally disturbed, hearing or health impaired, learning disabled or multi-handicapped. We have no way of anticipating an actual number of children who may require speech and language or traumatic brain injury support. But we are certain that the Woonsocket Education Department will provide services. Also, enrollments throughout the year vary due to student mobility. Many of our students transfer from other municipalities and other states; others come from international destinations, as also move throughout the city itself from school to school throughout the year. But again, we are certain that the Woonsocket Education Department will provide them the services that they need. Finally, I would be remiss if I did not state this. Our teachers and our teaching staff remains dedicated to our students and, as professionals, will deliver instruction and services to the best of their ability and I thank them everyday for doing so. Thank you.

Motion to approve and place on file: Mr. Donlon

Second by: Mr. Roberts

All in favor: Yes.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOOD AND WELFARE:

A. Forcier: Thank you Mr. Ward for all your time and effort. I want to thank the Union again. I feel the energy is far better than at the last meeting. I feel a positive vibe that we are going to take these things a little more serious and we will team together and do what is best for the children. We will go a lot farther that way. I want to thank all the Director's that showed up tonight. Thank you to Peter, Jonathan and Linda for taking the time to come. I want to thank all the teachers for showing up on Monday because I heard there may be a sick out. I put the money on the teachers and you are the greatest. You know what is important and that our hands are financially tied. We are not proud of the decisions we have to make but they have to be made for the future of Woonsocket. I am not going to kid you, I think we are over our head but I am willing to do whatever needs to be done to keep our schools functioning and educating our children. Thank you all very much.

E. Nadeau: Absent

V. Phongsavanh: I have one comment. I have been in touch with some State leaders and there is a bill going into the State House to move the March 1st date to June 1st date because of what happened last Wednesday to give us more flexibility and more time to put our budget together in a timely manner. That bill is being proposed by Senator DiPalma and Representative Jackson and I will be working hard on getting that pushed through. I would like the support from everyone for this bill because I don't want to see what happened last week, happen again in the future. Thank you.

C. Roberts: Madam Chair, I want to ask everyone for the third time we identified for you tonight, between these two Senate bills about 4 million dollars of savings to the City of Woonsocket. We have gone on the record with resolutions and we have been in contact with these legislators. We are five people as School Committee members and the Superintendent is on our side as well. We are a community of 40,000. So it is time for people to pick up the phone and send letters to your Representatives and Senators to support these Resolutions and Senate Bills. We cannot raise revenue. The 4 million dollars from last year would have been a 1.3 million dollar surplus and it would have had us out of trouble for this year. Please support Senate Bill 2406 and 2461. Thank you.

J. Donlon: I would like to thank the Finance Sub Committee for the great job they have been doing coming up with these cost saving measures. Hopefully, this will come to fruition. Tonight we received pictures from Savoie School. From what I see in these pictures, it's pretty deplorable. I think the maintenance staff needs to get over there and get this mess cleaned up. The stall in the girl's bathroom is unacceptable. The maintenance staff has to clean the place up so the State doesn't come in and close

the school. As far as the Teachers Union, I know last week was a big blow to everyone but I think they realize the financial situation we are in is not a good one. I know their contract is coming due in June 2013, and Mr. Roberts and I are on the Contract Negotiating Committee and would like to extend an invitation to the Teacher's Union to sit down with them as soon as they are able and start working on a new contract for the teachers. Thank you.

Motion to adjourn: Mr. Donlon

Seconded by: Ms. Phongsavanh

All in Favor: Yes

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy DeRemer
Recording Clerk