

**WOONSOCKET SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2012  
7:00 P.M. – OPEN SESSION  
Woonsocket Middle School @ Hamlet  
60 Florence Drive  
Woonsocket, RI 02895**

**Call to Order by Vimala Phongsavanh**

**Moment of Silence**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call:**

<b>A. McGuire-Forcier</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>V. Phongsavanh</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>E. Nadeau</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>J. Donlon</b>	<b>Present</b>
<b>C. Roberts</b>	<b>Present</b>

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**V. Phongsavanh** said there is an announcement from Peter Fontaine, Director of Facilities regarding the after school bussing for band. P. Fontaine stated at 11:00 this morning he was handed a list of names of students in the after school band program for bussing; drove the list personally to the bus company; they do not have band on Thursday or Friday so the bus will begin on Monday; he walked into this meeting with someone saying band is cancelled. Band is not cancelled that he knows of; it is starting Monday with bussing.

**Good and Welfare**

**Nicole Denton, Band Director for WMS:** Stated they were told before school started that there will be a bus for band and chorus; handed out this information on instrument night; had 44 kids leave with instruments on that night. She told everyone that band was starting on September 10<sup>th</sup> and when this date came, we were told to cancel because of the bus; she was told on September 12<sup>th</sup> they would have a bus, everything was ready to go and then was told there may not be a bus; she handed over the list of 32 students that need to be on the bus; at 1:20 today was told there is no bus; made calls to parents from 1:20 to 2:15 to advise them band was cancelled; then was told that band and chorus was cancelled indefinitely. We have 200 kids in the band and chorus program between both schools and most of them need bussing. She sent out an email to parents saying what she was told; tired of hearing that the email she sent was her fault because this is not her fault; she was told directly that band and chorus were cancelled until further notice; whether that was right or wrong that is not her fault; in her email she said she wanted them to be aware that there is no bussing; now told there is bussing starting Monday and this is the third time she has been told this; first time oops, second time she is suppose to believe you, and third time she does not believe; these kids need this. She was also told that the bus will not come until 3:30 and be prepared that you will have possibly 100 kids standing and waiting outside for a bus every single day; this is not going to happen; kids will not get home until 5:00. She is bringing this to the Committee because these kids deserve to get the bus and what they need. A. McGuire-Forcier asked who has been telling you this. N. Denton stated Dr. McGee. She said P. Fontaine just let her know that there will be a bus starting Monday; however, it is coming at 3:30 and it is too late for these children; last year was perfect and the bus came about 2:45. She can't keep on telling kids not yet because they are crushed.

**Cindy Stepanian, Parent Advisory Council CoChair, resides on Elm Street:** She has someone watch her children after school and that person asks if they are coming home at 2:00 or 3:00 and everyday she has to tell her she does not know; not knowing what time her children are coming home is nerve racking for her being at work and not knowing what is going on; if we know exactly when this is going to happen, it would be very much appreciated from the parents' point of view. The PAC meeting is next Wednesday, September 19<sup>th</sup> here at the WMS 6:30 to 8:30 in Room 124; advises everyone to use door #3 because there will be a dance going on.

**Ciara Auclair, Grade 6 at WMS:** Thank you for keeping band because my brother is taking this, she has always wanted to take it and looks forward to joining the band. Thank you again.

**Jeffrey Partington, President of the Woonsocket Teachers' Guild:** In support of the teachers in Chicago who are striking against a number of things you may have read in the papers and would like to clarify a couple of things and bring it back to Woonsocket. First, the papers have printed that they are looking for money and they really are not; they are truly looking for better conditions for the children in the city and also want a fair evaluation system. We as teachers in Woonsocket have signed on to PEER evaluations; we are not too sure about the student learning piece but we signed on to the PEER evaluation system; reason is that we think it is important that all teachers get evaluated fairly. A lot of the issues right now on why the teachers are striking are because the city has not always gotten along with the teachers and did not always do what is in the best interest of the students. Would like to commend this group because over the years we have all worked really well together, worked very hard, and have both stood up for the rights and what is right for the students of Woonsocket; just because we are part of a union it does not mean that we are not thinking the same way.

**Recognitions and Announcements – G. Donoyan:**

Donna Coderre, Principal, Leo A. Savoie Elementary School would like to thank the custodians at Savoie for working so hard to clean the school. Nick McDowell and Rene Hebert did an outstanding job and we appreciate it. She would also like to say thank you to the PTA for their warm welcome and the special gift baskets they made for her and for each teacher. They were truly unique and brought many smiles. It's been a great opening!

Karen MacBeth, Principal, Harris Elementary would like it noted that Elaine LaRiviere, fifth grade teacher, for her recent donation of 4 Furniture Educubes. This donation worth over \$500 is just one way our teachers are making sure the learning environment is welcoming and educational sound during this budget crisis. Thank you Ms. LaRiviere for securing such a wonderful donation. Patrick McGee, Principal, Woonsocket Middle School would like to recognize Sandra Costa and the many Middle School faculty and staff who's efforts made the 6th grade barbecue on August 23rd very successful. More than 350 parents and family members were in attendance. Thank you again for all you do for our students and parents. Many thanks go out to Senator Roger Picard and Mrs. Lisa Jacques. Mrs. Jacques informed Senator Picard of Woonsocket High School's dire need for graphing calculators, and he procured a legislative grant of \$3000 to purchase 30 for the Math Department. I personally recognize all the Woonsocket parents and students who came to school eager to learn, dressed in school colors and code and who welcomed all their amazing teachers to a new school year!

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**Motion to receive on file: E. Nadeau                      2<sup>nd</sup>: V. Phongsavanh                      (Unanimously Approved)**

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**Approval of Minutes of August 8, 2012 Open Minutes and August 29, 2012 Open Minutes: J. Donlon**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau                      Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes**

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**Consent Agenda:**

C. Roberts would like to take the professional day request separate; asked if the cost is \$563.00. G. Donoyan stated this agenda item has been tabled at this point in time; it may be discussed at next meeting; and according to this the conference cost is \$63.00 and the other cost is \$563.00, and this is why we are tabling this. C. Roberts said his next question is the \$64,000 for SunLife insurance; what is the amount of time this covers and who. G. Donoyan said district wide insurance. C. Roberts asked if it is for all employees and how long this covers. G. Donoyan stated she thinks it covers all employees and it is the annual contribution to the life insurance.

**Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as a whole with the exception of Professional Development Request: V. Phongsavanh**  
**2<sup>nd</sup>: C. Roberts                      Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes**

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**Communications:** V. Phongsavanh stated there have been some requests to speak into the microphone better because the radio, public television and some of the recorders are not catching it. We all know that agenda items are due on Wednesday prior to the meeting by 12:00 p.m.; it is a rule we set and would like them to follow through with this; please note that after Wednesday at 12:00 p.m. it will not be put on the agenda. There is a meeting with the Budget Commission on October 4, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room. Any items that pass or any items community members are concerned about regarding schools need to be directed to the School Committee or any School Committee Member before going to the Budget Commission; that is the process and wanted to make it known to the public; the Budget Commission deals with a lot of finance issues and we deal with the school side of this; it would be greatly appreciated if the community will do this.

**Committee Reports: None**

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None**

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**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. Discussion/Approval of Positions needed to be Advertised/Posted – G. Donoyan**

G. Donoyan stated what you have before you are vacant positions effective 9-12-12 which are the positions for teachers, non-certified, hourly, stipend and extra-curricular, and administrators and coordinators that have not been filled; many of these have become vacant at the beginning of the school year because of leave of absences; take a look at what we have available especially on the teaching side; would like to recommend with your approval the posting of all the vacant positions. At the right hand corner the funding sources are indicated as to local or grant funded positions; local and grant positions have been approved by this committee, Budget Commission, RIDE, and the federal grants at the federal level. She knows this is last minute to hand this information to the Committee but requests that they give a thorough look and make a determination; would like their approval within the next couple of days to post these positions.

Motion to discuss or approve this agenda item: V. Phongsavanh                      2<sup>nd</sup>: J. Donlon

C. Roberts stated at this time he would want the confidential secretary to the superintendent removed and the executive director of finance. The Budget Commission has not made a decision whether or not we are consolidating that position so to continue on is not the right order to proceed in. In regards to coaches, it looks like the girls basketball team has nobody now, is that accurate. G. Donoyan stated yes. C. Roberts said he would be good with posting everything except the confidential secretary to the superintendent and the executive director of finance and administration.

Motion to approve the list subject to removal of the confidential secretary and the executive director of finance and administration:  
C. Roberts                      2<sup>nd</sup>: A. McGuire-Forcier

C. Roberts said he does not know the direction they are going in with the finance department but they did interview for a controller and the Budget Commission is in agreement that this is the most important position; it could be that in a month or two they would want us to get a finance director so then we post but not until they decide this. As far as the confidential secretary, thinks we have someone doing the job that is capable of doing this and until such time there is a director of curriculum we would have an extra secretary; we do not need someone sitting in a secretary seat with no one in the office. A. McGuire-Forcier asked G. Donoyan if she is asking to approve to post all



G. Donoyan said she will have to get back to on this; thinks the necklace is used when a tooth comes out; she will verify this and get back to her. J. Donlon said under bid #13-05 why do we have to spend \$2,439.49 on a pitching machine; we do have players that can throw back and forth to one another; do they have one now that broke down; he wished that G. Nasuti was here to explain a couple of things; he would like this item tabled until it is explained to them. The other item is the hockey sticks; just realized we have to supply hockey sticks; thought they brought their own in. This is almost \$10,000 worth the money and would like G. Nasuti here to explain this too. G. Donoyan will have G. Nasuti get back to them.

**Motion to table item #43 - baseball pitching machine: J. Donlon** 2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau  
**Roll Call Vote: 3 Yes (EN, CR, JD) 2 No (VP, AMF)**

**Motion to table item #112 and #113 hockey equipment: J. Donlon** 2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau  
**C. Roberts stated they are not highlighted blocks so wonders if this went out as part of the bid and the price came back but is something he is not asking for; the highlighted ones seems to be the winning bid amount and these are not highlighted.**  
**Roll Call Vote: 3 Yes (EN, CR, JD) 2 No (VP, AMF)**

J. Donlon said under bid #13-06 it looks like we are replacing uniforms for one sport each year; this year the girl's basketball program is getting new uniforms; glad to see G. Nasuti replacing these uniforms; good idea to replace each sports uniform each year.

**Motion to approve agenda items 5, 6, 7, and 8: V. Phongsavanh** 2<sup>nd</sup>: A. McGuire-Forcier **Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes**

**6. Discussion/Vote to Appoint Controller – G. Donoyan, C. Roberts**

G. Donoyan stated the Committee does not have anything in their packets at the present moment; we were very fortunate to have a number of very qualified candidates; thankful to have C. Roberts, E. Nadeau, R. Malafrente, John Ward, and Tom Bruce on the interview committee; they forwarded two very highly qualified candidates which Carolyn Diaz and herself interviewed; we do not have a name to present to you at this particular moment but hopes to do so within the next couple of days. C. Roberts echoed G. Donoyan; there were some highly qualified candidates that have experience in an urban school district in roles very similar to a controller; this is the highest priority item. He said if she has a name within the next day or two, he requests that we post for a special meeting to appoint that person.

**7. Discussion/Vote of Administrative Contracts – V. Phongsavanh, C. Roberts**

C. Roberts stated the Governance Subcommittee had a productive meeting the other night; met for three hours; approximately 40 administrative contracts all have different wording, terminology and clauses; started streamlining to get all of the offerings on the same page so when contracts are expiring at the same time so it will be an easier process to handle; a lot of detail and in need of a lot of work; more information with be forthcoming.

**8. Appointment of the Strategic Planning Committee – V. Phongsavanh, E. Nadeau**

V. Phongsavanh handed the committee a list of names to appoint to the Strategic Planning Committee; they passed out letters and put an application process on the website for community members and anyone who would like to join the committee; there are so many people who want to get involved; great to see this; a lot of applications came through with people who want to be part of rebuilding this school district. The strategic plan is a process; it is going to take time; it's laying the foundation for our school department for the next five years. None of the members know that they are being appointed tonight because she wanted the permission of the School Committee before letting the members know; close to 30 members from former students, community members, parents, administrators, a city council member, principals, reps from special education, a lot of different people. First meeting is October 3, 2012 at 4:30 and the location is to be determined.

Motion to appoint members to the Strategic Planning Committee: V. Phongsavanh 2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau, A. McGuire-Forcier

J. Donlon said after looking at this list he does not see anybody from the law enforcement or the fire community on this list; disappointed they did not attempt to get on this committee; knows Chief Carey has been involved in a lot of things; Chief Carey and Chief Lataille might be interested. A. McGuire-Forcier said you have her support and agrees with J. Donlon that it would be nice to have them but this takes hours and hours, this is not an easy task and will take more than just a few meetings. She asked if RIDE or Bryant College or RI School Committee Association were asked to participate because they are willing to help. G. Donoyan said they outreached to RIDE but at this point in time they will participate in helping but cannot participate because there may be a conflict of interest because they also have to approve the strategic plan; in negotiations with professions at the Leadership Institute at Bryant University and spoke to people at Harvard University, the District Management Level, and RI Council Foundation; number of people outside of Woonsocket that are really looking forward in helping us go forward; she will keep the committee updated. C. Roberts asked if this is everyone who has applied. V. Phongsavanh stated yes. C. Roberts thinks what is missing is someone representing the business community; we have a lot of supportive businesses; would like to offer this suggestion. V. Phongsavanh said we have Douglas Brown, who is the President of Kirby. C. Roberts would like to have the President or Vice President of the Student Council at the WHS invited to attend. V. Phongsavanh stated that they will be reach out to law enforcement, additional business members, student council and/or honor society students.

**Motion to appoint members to the Strategic Planning Committee: V. Phongsavanh** 2<sup>nd</sup>: E. Nadeau, A. McGuire-Forcier  
**Roll Call Vote: 5 Yes**

**9. Discussion to Return Second Avenue and Fifth Avenue School back to the City – J. Donlon**

J. Donlon stated we have two school buildings that we are not utilizing anymore for students; would like to know if these buildings have been emptied. If not, how long before they are empty so we can return them back to the city. P. Fontaine stated Second Avenue is almost empty; there is some furniture in two classrooms and then that will be completely empty. Fifth Avenue still has a lot of stuff; next week asking the teachers at Coleman then Globe to take whatever they need for their classrooms; after this, we will be ready to clean it out. In a

couple of weeks we will be completely out of Second Avenue and at the end of October we will be out of Fifth Avenue. J. Donlon asked if the electricity is still on in both buildings. P. Fontaine said yes and he will keep the Committee updated; anything that is good we will move to storage at Summer Street and anything else we will offer to the public according to policy. C. Roberts asked if we still control Summer Street and what is in better condition, Summer or Second Avenue. P. Fontaine said yes we control Summer Street and we use it completely for storage; Second is in better condition than Summer, however; Summer was given to WED at some point in time and Second and Fifth are owned by the city; it is a deed restriction like Barry Field. J. Donlon stated that on the second agenda in October he will have this on the agenda to return these buildings back to the city.

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**Conferences: None**

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**Superintendent's Report:**

G. Donoyan stated that the beginning of each school year brings much excitement; parents, guardians, students, teachers, and administrators of WED are ready for educational successes this school year. We anticipate continued and improved results on our state assessments, the NECAP, improvements in our graduation rates, and overall educational outcomes. Since school began we have enrolled over 100 new students throughout the district; schools are close to peak capacity and yet our teachers are eagerly delivering instruction and our principals are faithfully leading the schools. We are very happy that all of our schools now have permanent leadership. The Strategic Planning Committee will soon meet to begin to design the short and long term priorities that will focus our actions toward excellence going forward. At that time, we will establish our core values, our mission, the school vision, and look forward to the cooperation in the design of systemic goals to drive us forward; thinks it is important that WED improve on its core mission as well as performance targets that the community can see so they will know that each one of their dollars that they have invested into the system results in moving closer to educational targets. The RIDE has established growth models that will offer us an opportunity to analyze how best we are affecting the growth of our students. However, it is unrealistic to expect a community to provide and staff adequate educational programs especially when all the factors around in the world require a rigorous, expanding knowledge, a problem solving aptitude, entrepreneurialism and empathy towards others. The WED stands ready to lead the effort to foster and strengthen this great city's community values and is looking forward to starting this with our new strategic planning process.

**Motion to accept on file: E. Nadeau                      2<sup>nd</sup>: J. Donlon                      (Unanimously Approved)**

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**School Committee Good and Welfare:**

A. McGuire-Forcier: Passed.

V. Phongsavanh: The Martin Luther King Committee at St. James is having an event on September 15<sup>th</sup> to unveil the monument for MLK at the intersection of Mason Street and South Main Street at 10:00 a.m.; a lot of investment to make this happen; great event to honor a great person who really pushed this country forward; looking forward to attend this event. There is a PAC meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup> and encourages many parents to attend this meeting; she will present additional information regarding the WISE committee. Excited about the Strategic Planning Committee and, like this committee here, we are excited in moving the education department forward in making system level changes and really focusing on what is best for the students; investing in our children's future is one of the most important things we can do as a community, as a city; excited and devoted to have endless hours in making this plan work in making WED more transparent and holding people accountable for outcomes and objectives; everything will be posted online and any updates will be on our website; when everyone is involved we are stronger together and we can move forward.

C. Roberts: Passed.

E. Nadeau: Received a call from a parent and apparently the WPD no longer sends out a list of Level II and III sex offenders in the city; knows it is available online but was told that the principals received this and a lot of parents would like to have this information; amazed that this city has so many people that are sex offenders; it's disgusting. The list provides a picture, what they did, and where they live so if your kids are out playing keep an eye out for them. G. Donoyan said according to state law the police department is to have printed all of the sex offender listings and in the past they submitted to each school a packet to be sent home with the children; because of the financial circumstances they cannot do this; we thought about copying but the faces of those individuals cannot be seen so in collaboration with Det. Lt. Christopher Brooks of WPD we are trying to figure out how we can get that information out to parents with the least cost; we encourage parents to go to the WPD website to view online.

J. Donlon: Passed.

**Motion to Adjourn at 8:20 p.m.: A. McGuire-Forcier                      2<sup>nd</sup>: C. Roberts                      (Unanimously Approved)**

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**Respectfully Submitted:**

**Kimberly Blais, WSC Recording Secretary**