

MINUTES
WEST WARWICK SCHOOL COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 7, 2014
JOHN F. DEERING MIDDLE SCHOOL
WEBSTER KNIGHT DRIVE
5:00 P.M.

This meeting was called to order by Sean M. Murphy, Chairperson.

Members Present:

Sean M. Murphy, Chairperson
Elizabeth B. Brunero, Vice-Chairperson
Christopher R. Messier, Clerk
Joseph Florio, Jr.
Stephen H. Lawton

School Committee

Andrew Henneous, Esquire

Attorney Present:

Administrators Present:

Karen A. Tarasevich, Superintendent of Schools
Brian Ackerman, Principal, Maisie Quinn School/
Assistant Special Education Director
Margaret Baker, Director of Financial Operations
Kenneth Townsend, Director of Property Services
Paul Vigeant, Director of Special Education

Recording Secretary:

Michelle M. Colozzo

1. Open Session

Open Session

Mr. Murphy opened the meeting at 5:30 P.M.

2. Roll Call

Roll Call

The following members were present:
Mr. Murphy, Mrs. Brunero, Mr. Messier, Mr. Florio,
and Mr. Lawton.

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**3. Motion to go into
Executive Session**

**Motion to go into Executive Session according to
RI General Laws 42-46-4 and 42-46-5, Subsection
(a) Paragraphs 1 and 2**

MOTION

**MOTION MADE BY CHRISTOPHER R.
MESSIER THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION ACCORDING
TO RI GENERAL LAWS 42-46-4 AND 42-46-5,
SUBSECTION (a), PARAGRAPHS 1 AND 2.**

Motion seconded by Joseph Florio, Jr. The following members voted in the affirmative: Stephen H. Lawton, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., Christopher R. Messier, and Sean M. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.

4. Executive Session

Executive Session

- a) Personnel: Administrative Suspension Hearing**
- b) Contracts**

The School Committee met in Executive Session.

5. Open Session

Open Session

The School Committee returned to Open Session at 6:15 P.M.

6. Roll Call

Roll Call

The following members were present:
Mr. Murphy, Mrs. Brunero, Mr. Messier, Mr. Florio,
and Mr. Lawton.

**7. Motion to Close
Executive Session
Minutes**

Motion to Close Executive Session Minutes

MOTION

**MOTION MADE BY CHRISTOPHER R.
MESSIER THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
CLOSE THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES.**

Motion seconded by Joseph Florio, Jr. The following members voted in the affirmative: Elizabeth B. Brunero, Stephen H. Lawton, Joseph Florio, Jr., Christopher R. Messier, and Sean M. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.

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8. Personnel: Administrative Suspension Hearing

Personnel: Administrative Suspension Hearing

Mr. Murphy asked if there was a motion to table this item.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE TABLE THIS ITEM. Motion seconded by Christopher R. Messier. The following members voted in the affirmative: Elizabeth B. Brunero, Stephen H. Lawton, Christopher R. Messier, Joseph Florio, Jr., and Sean M. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.

9. Discussion/Approval: Formulating Committees

Discussion/Approval: Formulating Committees

Mr. Messier said he has to be on the Policy Committee as the Clerk of the School Committee, but he knows Mr. Florio also wants some input. Mr. Murphy asked are we going to disband all standing committees and re-choose members? Mr. Messier said he wants to be cautious with that without listing everything. He said the Special Education Parents Advisory Committee is by statute. Mr. Henneous suggested going through the committees one by one.

The School Committee discussed the following committees and decided on School Committee representation as listed below:

Facility Needs: Mr. Murphy

Health and Wellness: Mrs. Brunero and Mr. Florio

Policy: Mr. Messier and Mr. Florio

Public Relations: Mr. Florio

Recreation: Mr. Lawton

Safety and Security: Mr. Lawton and Mr. Messier

Technology: Mr. Messier and Mr. Florio

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10. Acceptance of Resignations

Acceptance of Resignations:

a) Principal – Greenbush Elementary School

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the School Committee accept the resignation of Joan DeAngelis, Principal of Greenbush Elementary School, effective January 10, 2014.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY CHRISTOPHER R. MESSIER THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF JOAN DEANGELIS, PRINCIPAL OF GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 10, 2014. Motion seconded by Joseph Florio, Jr. The following members voted in the affirmative: Stephen H. Lawton, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., Christopher R. Messier, and Sean M. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.

Mrs. Tarasevich said she would like to thank Mrs. DeAngelis for her time in the district; she was here for a year and a half as the Principal of Greenbush; she will be missed.

b) Part-Time Custodian – West Warwick Public Schools

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the School Committee accept the resignation of Christopher Richards, Part-Time Custodian for the West Warwick Public Schools, effective December 18, 2013.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR. THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF CHRISTOPHER RICHARDS, EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 18, 2013. Motion seconded by Elizabeth B. Brunero. The following members voted in the affirmative: Stephen H. Lawton, Christopher R. Messier, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., and Sean M. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.

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c) Bus Monitor – West Warwick Public Schools

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the School Committee accept the resignation of Richard Fusco, Bus Monitor for the West Warwick Public Schools, effective December 20, 2013.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY CHRISTOPHER R. MESSIER THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF RICHARD FUSCO, BUS MONITOR FOR THE WEST WARWICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS, EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 20, 2013. Motion seconded by Stephen H. Lawton. The following members voted in the affirmative: Joseph Florio, Jr., Elizabeth B. Brunero, Stephen H. Lawton, Christopher R. Messier, and Sean M. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.

d) Part-Time Teacher Assistant – West Warwick Public Schools

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the School Committee accept the resignation of Lorraine French, Part-Time Teacher Assistant for the West Warwick Public Schools, effective January 3, 2014.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY CHRISTOPHER R. MESSIER THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF LORRAINE FRENCH, PART-TIME TEACHER ASSISTANT FOR THE WEST WARWICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS, EFFECTIVE JANUARY 3, 2014.

Motion seconded by Stephen H. Lawton. The following members voted in the affirmative: Elizabeth B. Brunero, Stephen H. Lawton, Christopher R. Messier, and Sean M. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.

**11. Approval:
Administrative
Transfer**

Approval: Administrative Transfer

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the School Committee approve the administrative transfer of Brian Ackerman from the position of Principal/

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Assistant Special Education Director at Maisie Quinn School to the position of Principal at Greenbush Elementary School, effective January 13, 2014.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY ELIZABETH B. BRUNERO THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSFER OF BRIAN ACKERMAN FROM THE POSITION OF PRINCIPAL/ASSISTANT SPECIAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR AT MAISIE QUINN SCHOOL TO THE POSITION OF PRINCIPAL AT GREENBUSH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

Motion seconded by Stephen H. Lawton, for discussion.

Mr. Messier asked he's not going to be the Assistant Special Education Director, and Mrs. Tarasevich said that is correct.

Mrs. Tarasevich said Mr. Ackerman is under contract until June 30th and at that time, we will write a new contract. Mr. Murphy said he has heard nothing but good things with his current job at Quinn.

Mrs. Tarasevich said it is our good fortune; he has done a great job at Quinn, and he is very excited, and we are too, and the staff at Greenbush is equally excited.

Mr. Florio asked do we have a person to take over his position? Mrs. Tarasevich said we posted the position, and the posting closes tomorrow; interviews will be held at the end of this week to appoint an interim person at Quinn for the rest of the year.

The following members voted in the affirmative: Joseph Florio, Jr., Christopher R. Messier, Stephen H. Lawton, Elizabeth B. Brunero, and Sean M. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.

The School Committee congratulated Mr. Ackerman.

12. Approval: Extension of Parental Leave – Special Education Teacher – John F. Horgan Elementary School

Approval: Extension of Parental Leave – Special Education Teacher – John F. Horgan Elementary School

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Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the School Committee approve the request submitted by Stacy D’Uva, Special Education Teacher at John F. Horgan Elementary School, to extend her parental leave until February 3, 2014.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY CHRISTOPHER R. MESSIER THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE THE REQUEST SUBMITTED BY STACY D’UVA, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER AT JOHN F. HORGAN

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. Motion seconded by Stephen H. Lawton. The following members voted in the affirmative: Elizabeth B. Brunero, Joseph Florio, Jr., Stephen H. Lawton, Christopher R. Messier, and Sean M. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.

13. Consent to Superintendent’s Appointments

Consent to Superintendent’s Appointments

Mrs. Tarasevich recommended that the School Committee give advice and consent to the appointment of Janet Carroll to the position of Title I Coordinator for the West Warwick Public Schools for a period of forty-five (45) days which is the remainder of this school year as an interim position.

Mrs. Tarasevich said we are half-way through the school year. She said she will talk about this again in the spring when she talks about personnel.

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY ELIZABETH B. BRUNERO THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE GIVE ADVICE AND CONSENT TO THE APPOINTMENT OF JANET CARROLL TO THE POSITION OF TITLE 1 COORDINATOR FOR THE WEST WARWICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS, FOR A PERIOD OF FORTY-FIVE DAYS.

Motion seconded by Stephen H. Lawton, for discussion.

Mr. Florio asked what the pay is for this position, and Mrs. Tarasevich said \$300 per day with no benefits, and this is paid out of Title 1 funds, not local funds.

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The following members voted in the affirmative:
Joseph Florio, Jr., Christopher R. Messier, Stephen H. Lawton, Elizabeth B. Brunero, and Sean M. Murphy.
Motion unanimously passed.

14. Audience of Citizens

Audience of Citizens

None.

15. School Committee Discussion for the Good and Welfare of the School System

School Committee Discussion for the Good and Welfare of the School System

Mr. Messier said the only thing on his plate was the heat for the middle school. He said there were a lot of disgruntled parents that we didn't communicate—he just found out tonight what the actual temperature was. Mrs. Tarasevich said she would be happy to address that. Mr. Messier said the biggest thing was no communication—we are doomed if we do and doomed if we don't.

Mrs. Tarasevich said the issue with the heat was the first day back from the break, last Thursday, the heat wasn't turned on in time to heat the building up—the heat was not broken down; as the day went on, the building did heat up; it was the first floor that really was the issue. Throughout the day, the administration, and Brian Dillon as principal, were very proactive to move classrooms. She said she doesn't deny it was cold, but it did warm up during the day. In terms of communication, a few things about that—she is not discounting it was a problem, but she made the decision not to send kids home because when you send kids home during the day, that's a whole different level of problems because there's no one home to receive them or the parents would have to leave work. Also it was lunch time, and she didn't want to send the kids home without lunch.

Mrs. Tarasevich said if there was no heat at all, that would have been different. Mr. Murphy asked how long it took, and Mr. Townsend said four to five

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hours—we immediately turned it up as high as we could—it takes quite a bit of time to warm up. He said the basis of the decision was that the kids were not in harm's way, and we were in the process of getting the building warm.

Mr. Townsend said he agrees with the Superintendent—we don't communicate everything because we don't want to cause panic. Mr. Townsend said we had an issue at Quinn today—we had a broken steam line which caused the kids to evacuate in five degree weather. We immediately got them back in the cafeteria and warmed them up. He said his guys are still working on it. Mr. Townsend said the problem today is that every kid is on the phone texting Mom. He said if it's a real issue, his phone usually rings off the hook.

Mrs. Tarasevich said she got two phone calls. She said she doesn't discount the issue and she does appreciate people's concerns, but with facilities, things are happening all the time. She said we have to be careful about being alarmist. We don't want to overuse the system—as it was, we sent home two messages. Mrs. Tarasevich said if she had gotten an onslaught of calls and concerns, it might have been different, but she didn't. Mr. Messier said the calls came after school, but he told people we would discuss it. Mr. Townsend said we had a mistake, and the employee has been dealt with.

Mr. Florio said Mr. Townsend brought up the kids having cell phones. Mrs. Tarasevich said we do have a Bring Your Own Device policy which allows them to bring devices for academic purposes. Mr. Florio said we had a meeting last year re: security. Mr. Lawton said they are not supposed to use them, but they do. Mr. Florio said he knows there is a procedure in place, and Mrs. Tarasevich said there is. Mr. Messier said if it really was an issue, people would have called earlier during the day. Mr. Florio said his issue was security.

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16. Adjournment

Adjournment

MOTION

MOTION MADE BY JOSEPH FLORIO, JR.
THAT THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN
THE MEETING. Motion seconded by Christopher R. Messier. The following members voted in the affirmative: Stephen H. Lawton, Elizabeth B. Brunero, Christopher R. Messier, Joseph Florio, Jr., and Sean M. Murphy. Motion unanimously passed.

Meeting adjourned at: 6:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher R. Messier, Clerk

Michelle M. Colozzo, Recorder