

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
January 9, 2020
Superintendent's Conference Room – Wellesley Middle School**

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 AM. Those present included Chair Melissa Martin, Vice Chair Linda Chow, Secretary Matt Kelley, member Jim Roberti, and member Sharon Gray. Superintendent David Lussier joined the meeting later.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Chow distributed draft minutes of the January 2, 2020 open session.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Ms. Gray, the Committee **VOTED unanimously** to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2019 and December 19, 2019 open sessions.

The Committee briefly discussed the draft January 2, 2020 open session minutes and made several non-substantive changes.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Ms. Chow, the Committee **VOTED 3-0** to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2020 open session, as amended. Mr. Kelley and Mr. Roberti abstained.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Ms. Chow, the Committee **VOTED unanimously** to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2019 open session.

REPORTS

Ms. Martin reported on the updated schedule for the Middle School Building Systems project, and distributed several documents on the topic. She reported that the contractor has indicated that, in order to meet an expedited schedule for the project, funds would need to be available by the beginning of December, 2020. The updated project schedule provides for a Special Town Meeting on October 26 and 27, 2020, followed by a town-wide debt exclusion vote on December 1, 2020.

Dr. Lussier reported that he is following up on the Committee's vote to approve removal of the large oak tree at the Hunnewell School. He is coordinating with the Department of Public Works to ensure that an appropriate amount of wood from the tree is saved, to be used in the new Hunnewell School for some sort of recognition and acknowledgment of the old school and tree.

Dr. Lussier distributed a draft copy of warrant articles for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting.

Ms. Chow reported that work on the District progress report is continuing, and asked Dr. Lussier if there would be a section on the recent strategic plan work. Dr. Lussier indicated that he thought a small section on the work would be appropriate.

Ms. Gray reported that she had met with the Town Moderator to discuss a plan for presenting the results of the Hardy/Upham feasibility study at the 2020 Annual Town Meeting. The current plan is to keep Article 2 open in order to present the study later in the meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Martin entertained a motion to enter executive session in order to comply with M.G.L. c. 30A § 22 to review minutes from the January 2, 2020 executive session, to invite Dr. David Lussier into the executive session, and to return to open session at the conclusion of the executive session.

MOVED: Ms. Gray. **SECONDED:** Mr. Kelley. **ROLL CALL:** Mr. Kelley – Yes, Ms. Gray – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes, Mr. Roberti – Yes, Ms. Chow – Yes.

The Committee entered executive session at 10:34 AM and returned to open session at 10:43 AM.

SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE (SBC) WORKPLAN

Ms. Martin noted that she had added the SBC workplan item to the agenda with less than 48 hours' notice, as the topic had not been anticipated by her, as Chair, prior to that. She added the topic as a follow-up to discussion that occurred at the Committee's January 7, 2020 meeting, and immediately updated the posted agenda.

Ms. Gray led a discussion of the SBC workplan and schedule with respect to the Hardy/Upham project. The Committee discussed potential options for sequences of votes by the SBC, the School Committee, and the Board of Selectmen (BOS). Ms. Gray distributed remarks that were made at the October 2018 Special Town Meeting regarding a commitment to present the results of the Hardy/Upham feasibility study. The Committee discussed the intent of the commitment and how to best provide Town Meeting the opportunity to weigh in on the project recommendation.

The Committee reached consensus on the following sequence:

1. The SBC approves its recommendation and corresponding Preferred Schematic Report (PSR).
2. The SBC presents the PSR to Town Meeting for feedback and discussion.
3. The SC and BOS deliberate and ultimately vote on whether or not to approve the PSR.
4. If approved, the SBC submits the PSR to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA).

MASC CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

Ms. Martin led a discussion of the Committee's experience attending the joint MASC/MASS Annual Conference in November, 2019.

Ms. Martin reported on a session regarding school committee self-evaluation and distributed documents from the session.

Ms. Martin reported on a session regarding superintendent evaluation. She noted that it is an option to evaluate the superintendent only every other year, although there was consensus that the Committee should continue its current practice of an annual evaluation. Several members noted that it was helpful for Dr. Lussier to complete a self-evaluation as part of the last evaluation cycle.

Ms. Chow reported on a session regarding the role of the school committee chair, relationships and financial reporting between school committees and municipal finance departments, and conduct of meetings (particularly including a suggestion to submit questions regarding meeting topics prior to the meeting, if possible).

Mr. Roberti reported on sessions he attended as part of the required education for newly-elected school committee members. Topics of interest included the appropriate level of detail in meeting minutes, the approval process for minutes, and the appropriate level of detail in meeting presentations.

Ms. Gray reported on several sessions related to school facilities management.

Dr. Lussier discussed the case study presented regarding the recent teachers' strike in Dedham, and noted that events there have import for Wellesley as well as many surrounding districts.

Dr. Lussier reported on sessions regarding the challenges of communication in a world increasingly driven by social media; complimented the keynote session on diversity, noting that the view of diversity presented seemed to be very much in line with how it is viewed in Wellesley, and reported that the Diversity, Equity and Leadership Council (DELIC) had discussed the presentation; and reported on a session regarding the MAPLE Consortium and his interest in potentially partnering with them in the future.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOALS

Ms. Martin led a discussion of goals for the Committee. She distributed and discussed several documents, including Policy BAA – School Committee Leadership Development, Policy BCA – School Committee Member Code of Conduct, and draft goals from October 31, 2018.

The Committee reviewed the previous draft goals in detail, noting some that had been completed, others that had not, and others that were not as relevant to current work. The Committee agreed to revisit goal setting at a future retreat.

Mr. Kelley discussed preliminary work he had done to develop a School Committee Handbook.

The Committee reviewed Policy BCA as a group, emphasizing the importance of upholding decisions made by the Committee and supporting the work of the Committee within the community.

ADJOURNMENT

At 12:12 PM, upon a motion made by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Ms. Gray, the Committee **VOTED unanimously** to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Kelley
Secretary

DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS USED

Major Project Financing Schedule
Fall 2020 STM and Debt Exclusion Ballot Vote Schedule
2020 Election Calendar
Draft Jan 2, 2020 open session minutes
2020 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles
Email: STM October 2018
SBC Meeting Work Plan
Eight characteristics of effective school boards: At a glance
Governance Rubric for Continuous Improvement
BAA - School Committee Leadership Development
BCA - School Committee Member Code of Conduct
SY18-19 School Committee Goals (Draft 10/31/2018)