

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
January 22, 2019
Kingsbury Room, Police Station**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. Those present included Committee Chair Matt Kelley, Vice Chair Melissa Martin, Secretary Linda Chow, and members Michael D'Ortenzio Jr. and Sharon Gray; Superintendent David Lussier, and Assistant Superintendents Joan Dabrowski and Cindy Mahr; and Student Advisory member Catelin Magel. Mr. Kelley announced that the meeting is being recorded by local media.

PUBLIC COMMENT No one present wished to speak.

RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Lussier recognized the following individuals and groups:

From K-12 Performing Arts Director Mike LaCava: Unfortunately, a name was left off the recognitions mentioned at the January 8th Committee meeting regarding students selected for the All-Eastern Ensembles: Congratulations to **Sydney Braunstein** who was also selected as a member of the All-Eastern Honors Treble Chorus.

From the PreK-5 Science & Engineering Department Head Carolyn Collins: Thank you to the **47 teachers across the district** who reviewed standards, evaluated curricula, and adapted and/or wrote units, which resulted in the completion of the elementary science orientations and new physical science units implemented in all elementary schools. This new curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts frameworks and provides all K-5 students with rich experiences in all three strands of science, engaging in science practices and includes explicit engineering instruction.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Chow reported she attended the second meeting of **Strategic Planning Advisory Committee**, which was very productive. Parents, students and teachers are well represented in this group which spent the meeting doing a SWOT analysis of the proposed plan. She also attended the **Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast** on Monday, January 21st, with many members of the community. It was an excellent program sponsored by World of Wellesley.

Ms. Gray attended the **School Wellness Advisory Committee** meeting last week where there was good conversation primarily about vaping and juuling and how to communicate with parents on this important topic. The Board of Health is considering some additional restrictions on tobacco products, including limiting usage in town and regulation changes regarding the distance between tobacco product sales and schools.

Mr. D'Ortenzio, Jr. reported the architects have recommended keeping the **softball field** at its current location. This will be discussed at the NRC meeting on Thursday evening. In addition, the **Playing Fields Task Force/DPW field projects** will be presented to the Advisory Committee on February 27th.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Lussier discussed the **challenging weather conditions** of the last few days with a snow and ice storm, noting that there are a number of considerations that go into determining a delayed start or school cancellation. He thanked Transportation Coordinator Deane McGoldrick and his team for coming in on a holiday to check on the busses, and he expressed his appreciation for the partnership with the DPW for its work on snow and ice control.

Dr. Lussier also reported there was a **significant pipe burst** at the Middle School earlier in the day. He thanked the Facilities Management Department and WMS Principal Mark Ito and his team for quick action in resolving the problem.

STUDENT ADVISORY

Ms. Magel reported that **Cotillion** went very well. The semester is ending tomorrow with a scheduled makeup day for students. She mentioned there is some discussion in **Student Congress** about potentially moving from 4 terms to 2 semesters. **Seminar Day** is in the process and scheduled for March 6th.

CONSENT AGENDA

After a brief discussion and an amendment proposed by Ms. Gray on the January 8, 2019 minutes, upon a motion made by Ms. Martin and seconded by Mr. D'Ortenzio, Jr., the Committee **VOTED** to approve the January 8, 2019 Open Session minutes as amended. The vote was 4 in favor; 0 against; 1 abstention.

After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Mr. D'Ortenzio, Jr., and seconded by Ms. Gray, the Committee **unanimously VOTED** to approve the New England Medical Billing Invoice for the quarter ending September 30, 2018.

HUNNEWELL PROJECT SHORT LIST

Ms. Gray presented the tentative short list of four options for building at the Hunnewell School including two new construction and two addition/renovations options, and the pros and cons for each option. Ms. Gray indicated that the options will continue to evolve as they are reviewed and feedback is received.

Committee members discussed the addition/renovation options and their preferences for each proposal. There is general support for orienting the classrooms near the Fuller Brook green space and gym toward the library for both security reasons and learning environments.

Ms. Gray announced that there will be a public forum on January 29th, starting at 7 pm, to provide an opportunity for the public to learn about the process to date and discuss the tentative shortlist of options. In addition, Ms. Gray and Mr. Kelley will be attending the Hunnewell PTO meeting on January 24th to provide to Hunnewell parents an update of the plan, as well as discuss swing space and parking.

Discussion was deferred until later in the meeting.

FY20 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing on the FY20 budget proposal was open at 7:10 pm. Mr. Kelley reviewed the public hearing guidelines and invited anyone who wished to speak to come forward.

The following comments were received:

Glen Magpiong, Wellesley resident and WHS coach, and Wellesley residents Tripp Sheehan and Mary Beth Mohen, all spoke in favor of the proposal to increase the position of the Assistant Athletic Director from .6FTE to 1.0FTE, citing the number of sports teams (98) in the Middle and High School, as well as the number of student-athletes (~1500), coaches (134) and parents (~3000) who are involved in WPS Athletics. In addition, they mentioned the overwhelming administrative responsibilities including attendance at all athletic events-regular season as well as playoffs, coordination of transportation, uniforms and equipment, participation in MIAA meetings/events, and community engagement. There was also concern that with the current staff level and responsibilities, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to implement the recommendations of the Athletic Advisory Council. It was stated that there is tremendous success and growth in WPS Athletics, but with this comes additional responsibilities which must be addressed. The proposed increase in the Assistant Athletic Director's FTE will significantly help manage the Athletics Program ever-increasing workload.

Sanford Bogage, WMS Educator and Wellesley Teachers Association President, spoke in support of the Strategic Plan initiatives included in the FY20 budget proposal, specifically the FLES positions, and the increases in math and computer science support. He discussed the WTA's support of initiatives related to social emotional work, the increase in hours of the WHS Academic Resource Center and the WMS Scholars Programs, as well as the addition of the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, a vital role for the District.

Betsy Komjathy, Wellesley resident, spoke in support of the full time Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, noting this was a key recommendation from the racial climate survey.

Public Hearing ended at 7:23 pm

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND LEADERSHIP COUNCIL UPDATE

Drs. Lussier and Dabrowski presented an update of the work of the Diversity, Equity and Leadership Council (DELC). Dr. Lussier reviewed the charge of the group, as well as meeting dates for the past two years, and the DELC members roster.

Dr. Dabrowski reviewed the recommendations from the Kingston Bay report data and ongoing work based on this data and recommendations. She discussed the creation of Action Committees for specific work where they focus on hiring and retention, professional development, curriculum review, parent engagement and school culture. The membership has also been expanded to include WPS staff with experience and

expertise around Gender Identify and Expression (GIE), looking at each Action Committee topic through the lens of GIE.

Dr. Lussier addressed next steps including welcoming and engaging the new METCO Director, Doreen Ward, continuing work on Action Committees, and incorporation of findings and recommendations into the new 5-year Strategic Plan.

Questions were raised concerning how Athletics is included in this work and how equity coaches will be part of the process.

FY20 BUDGET DISCUSSION

The Committee continued its review of the FY20 budget proposals presented by the Administration.

There was discussion and concern expressed with how the Town reached the 3 percent guideline for the Schools and that there was minimal conversation between Town and School representatives on its development. The Committee is in hopes that going forward, there will be more dialogue with Town representatives on the development of guidelines, resulting in a more meaningful number in future years.

The Committee members discussed the percentage increase the Committee would like to meet. Mr. Kelley believes, based on his discussions with the Advisory Committee and Selectmen, that there is a path forward for a budget that comes in at a 3.5 percent guideline. Ms. Mahr informed the Committee that the budget, which is now at a 3.9 percent increase, will require a reduction of \$294,531 to reach 3.5 percent.

The Committee continued its review at each level on an item by item basis, with a goal of reaching the 3.5 percent increase guideline. After a lengthy discussion and deliberation on various requests, the Committee made the following changes to the current budget proposal, which results in a 3.49 percent budget increase over FY19:

- Defer for one year the redefinition of the Director of Library & Technology (.40FTE)
- Eliminate increase in WMS Scholars Program (.20FTE)
- Eliminate increase in WHS Academic Resources Center (.50FTE)
- Eliminate Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

After a lengthy discussion, the Committee asked the Superintendent to review the list and determine a way to include the Director of Diversity, with a not to exceed guideline increase of 3.65 percent.

After the spreadsheet is updated with the proposed changes made this evening, the Administrative team will review it and react to it at the January 29th Committee meeting, with a goal of the Committee voting the budget on February 5th.

HUNNEWELL PROJECT SHORT LIST

Due to the hour, discussion was deferred until the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Wellesley resident Ann Walsh urged the Committee to approve the position of Director of Diversity as it is a much needed position to address all the many important issues raised by DELC and will bring expertise to these issues.

Jane Andrews, Advisory liaison to the School Committee, discussed the importance of clearly explaining to the Advisory Committee and Town Meeting the proposed change in the Special Education funding method, as well as the Strategic Plan initiatives and FTE requests being made in the FY20 budget.

ADJOURNMENT

At approximately 10 pm, upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr., the Committee ***unanimously VOTED*** to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Kelley
Chair

Documents and Exhibits Used:

SMMA Tentative Concept Plans
DELC Presentation
FY20 WPS Budget Overview 1/22/19