The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. Those present included Chair Melissa Martin, Vice Chair Linda Chow, members Sharon Gray and Jim Roberti, Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendents Joan Dabrowski and Cindy Mahr. Absent: Matt Kelley. Ms. Martin announced that the meeting was being recorded by local media.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Donald Burgy**, resident of Francis Road, expressed his concern with the Option 1 location for the new lacrosse practice wall at Sprague Field, listing a number of issues that would be impacted by such an installation, including the existing children’s garden and green space.

**Dan Mahoney**, resident at 11 Oak Street, expressed his concern with the Option 3 location for the new lacrosse practice wall, which he noted would result in additional activity to an already-burdened and overused area.

**Betty Besigye**, owner of a condominium on Oak Street, is also concerned with Option 3 which she feels will impede her tenant’s view and use of greenspace.

**RECOGNITIONS**

Dr. Lussier was pleased to announce that **Dr. Charmie Curry**, the new Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion officially started her work on Monday.

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Ms. Chow mentioned that she recently attended the **PTSO meeting** at the high school and appreciated the opportunity provide them with an update on this year’s priorities for WPS. She also reported a Policy Subcommittee meeting was recently held where **Policy JG, Student Enrollment and Assignment Policy**, was reviewed with a focus on placement of siblings of students in Special Ed programs. A followup meeting is needed prior to presenting this to the Committee.

Ms. Martin reminded the Committee of the following events: A presentation to the Advisory Committee on Wednesday evening, September 18th, regarding the **Hunnewell Project**; an **Interboard Meeting** on Thursday evening, September 19th; **Office Hours** will be held at the Tolles-Parsons Center on Thursday morning at 9 am; and the **WEF Spelling Bee** on November 13th. She reported that she met with Marybeth Martello and Fred Bunker of the Sustainable Energy Committee who are developing **Sustainable Building Guidelines** that they plan to present to Annual Town Meeting. They will be presenting to Town boards and committees for feedback. Ms. Martin is pleased to report the **Steam Pipe Project** is moving forward and the boilers have been installed. Kudos to the Facilities Management Department and the contractors on their efficient work in getting this done.
SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT
Dr. Lussier reported that he and other staff members have completed five of the seven elementary schools tours to provide updates on the H/U project and swing space for the Hunnewell project. Turnout has been great, with good questions and dialogue on these very complicated issues. He also reported that the first Teen Center Dance of the year is scheduled for Friday night at the Middle School. This is great opportunity for students to have some social time in a safe environment. Dr. Lussier was pleased to report that the Wellesley Scholarship Foundation has approved an amendment that will allow all graduates of WHS, whether they are residents or not, to be eligible for need-based scholarships.

Dr. Lussier informed the Committee that he and Ms. Martin will be travelling to Washington, DC next week to receive a National Green Ribbon Award for the District’s sustainability efforts throughout Wellesley Public Schools. He noted this reflects substantial internal and external work by a number of partners. He commended Phyllis Theermann of Wellesley Green Schools who worked on this grant application at the State level.

STUDENT ADVISORY
The Committee welcomed this year’s Student Advisory representatives to the School Committee. Rachel White, a sophomore, and Sadhana Mandala, a senior, were present at the meeting. Violet Lahive is the third student representative.

Ms. Mandala is excited about the Director of DEI hire and looks forward to working together with her. She also reported that some teachers are piloting a semester system rather than quarters, and she is looking forward to seeing the progress made with this new system.

CONSENT AGENDA
- Minutes Approval: September 3, 2019 Executive Session
- Trip Approval: Providence Bruins

After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Mr. Roberti, the Committee unanimously VOTED to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

PRACTICE WALL AT SPRAGUE FIELD
The Committee was joined by DPW Director Dave Cohen, Town Engineer Dave Hickey and Wellesley Lacrosse representative Jerry Nigro. Ms. Chow provided an overview of events that have occurred since the June 18th Committee meeting. She reported that Option 2 (near the tennis courts) and Option 4 (in close proximity to Sprague Elementary) were both removed as possible locations for the practice wall. This leaves Options 1 (behind maintenance building) and 3 (near the soccer/lacrosse field), for which detailed installation plans have been prepared and submitted, taking into consideration the FMD’s concerns with placing the wall behind the maintenance building. In addition, approximately 300 letters were sent out to abutters of the property. Feedback was received primarily from Linden Street abutters who were not supportive of Option 3.
Ms. Chow also reported that the Playing Fields Task Force met last week and reaffirmed its recommendation of Option 1. She noted there are still concerns expressed by Dr. Lussier and FMD Director Joe McDonough regarding safety and security of having the wall placed in such a secluded area, behind the maintenance building.

Mr. Hickey reviewed the work done to date on the options based on concerns that have been expressed including the relocation and reorientation of the trash containers and the wall away from the building. He noted that the children’s garden would not be impeded by this adjustment. He also noted that the wall is a precast concrete wall that could be relocated if the space is needed in the future.

The Committee reviewed the options, proposed changes, and asked a number of questions regarding the impact to the areas concerned, including impact on traffic, green space, noise level and cost. It was noted that the plan will need to go before the ZBA for final approval. There was also a question on whether inclusion of Option 2 could be reconsidered. It was decided that this was not feasible, at this time, based on the information communicated to abutters relative to this location.

After a lengthy discussion, the Committee members each expressed their opinion on their preferred option and decided to defer action until the return of Mr. Kelley for his feedback, as well as providing an opportunity for additional community feedback.

**PROPOSED SY19-20 DISTRICT/SUPERINTENDENT GOALS**

Dr. Lussier presented the draft District’s and Superintendent goals for the school year. Committee members, as well as Ms. White and Mandala, asked clarifying questions, with further discussion and action slated for October 29th.

**Redistricting Task Force Charge**

Dr. Lussier explained that in order to conduct the full feasibility studies and analysis at both the Hardy and Upham sites, a redistricting plan around the 6 remaining districts will be required for each scenario: building at Hardy and closing Upham; or building at Upham and closing Hardy. Even though the implementation of the new districts will not occur until the conclusion of the project, this work must be completed within the next four months in order to complete full feasibility studies for each location.

Dr. Lussier indicated that past redistricting work has been done in-house, however, given the complexity of the landscape surrounding this work, it seems appropriate to bring in an external partner with expertise that could provide an independent review and the extra bandwidth needed. Dr. Lussier and Ms. Mahr have been talking with other communities about their experiences and they are hopeful that this plan will be successful here. Dr. Lussier noted that even with the use of an external partner, there will be a need for parent representation from each of the elementary schools, as well as School Committee and staff representation. He hopes to begin this work in October if possible, with an expected completion date of December or early January.

Ms. Martin discussed that the Committee is responsible for providing a charge for the task force and she hopes to allocate ample time to properly develop the charge while
meeting the scheduling plan recommended by the Superintendent. Dr. Lussier noted that hiring an external partner can be done in parallel with the creation of the charge, and once completed, the task force could be activated to begin its work based on the Committee’s charge.

The Committee reviewed the guiding principles used in the previous redistricting work, as well as its policy relative to Attendance Zones to determine what should be included in the current charge to be developed. The Committee discussed the possibility of a member developing a draft charge as a starting point for review. It was noted that Mr. Kelley has worked on these types of charges in the past and may be helpful in the development of the new charge. Ms. Chow offered to work with Mr. Kelley on the charge. Ms. Martin will reach out to Mr. Kelley about working on this charge.

As a matter of process, it was suggested that the Committee members provide their suggestions at the next meeting for Ms. Chow and Mr. Kelley to take and work on to develop the charge. It is hoped to take action on the charge at the October 15 Committee meeting.

Ms. Chow announced that she consulted with Town Counsel relative to her participation in discussions concerning redistricting. Town Counsel believes it is appropriate for Ms. Chow to participate in redistricting conversations since it affects all schools, not just specific schools.

**FY21 BUDGET GUIDELINES**

Dr. Lussier and Ms. Mahr reviewed initial FY21 projections which includes the FY20 budget that was approved at the March Annual Town Meeting totaling $76,783,930. This includes anticipated budget offsets and turnover savings for FY19, collective bargaining adjustments, and General Education and Special Education needs, for an estimated FY21 budget request of $80,089,974, a 4.3 percent increase. In addition, Ms. Mahr included two scenarios that provide for the shortfall that has been identified in FY20 for Out-of-District Special Education costs. Since these costs are for students in out-of-district placements, these are not one-time costs and will need to be built into the base budget going forward. When looking at building FY21, they will need to determine how to resolve this shortfall in FY20 and also determine how to make some assumptions on what the true base cost increase should be for Special Education going forward. Ms. Mahr presented two scenarios for resolution. In the first scenario, the assumption includes half of the shortfall or $500,000 that will be added to the base, increasing the total need to just under 5 percent. If the full shortfall of approximately $1 million is added to the base in FY21, it would bring the total potential increase to 5.6 percent. This is a preliminary review and additional information has been received that may provide for some offsetting costs, but it is a preview of what will be presented in the adjusted FY20 budget. Ms. Mahr wanted to make the Committee aware of this and that it is an increase that will need to be addressed next year.

Dr. Lussier discussed the various methods that should be considered to fund Special Education including use of the Stabilization Fund, carrying over Circuit Breaker reimbursements from one year to the next, the possibility of the Town pre-funding Circuit Breaker, and pre-funding first quarter tuitions for the out of district placements for
the following fiscal year. Each of these methods is dealing with funds that have already been appropriated and applying it in a way that addresses some of the volatility inherent to funding Special Education. He would like to see ongoing conversations with Town representatives regarding how the Town could work towards using some of these methods to best help mitigate these foreseeable issues.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES REVIEW**
Ms. Martin informed the Committee that she and the Superintendent reviewed the Executive Session minutes that have not yet been released to determine if any should be released at this time. After review, it was determined that none can be released due to the nature of the topics of those minutes.

**HUNNEWELL AND HARDY/UPHAM PROJECTS UPDATE**

**Hunnewell School**
Ms. Gray reported that SBC representatives have also been attending the elementary school parent meetings to discuss the proposed internal swing space plan and also provide updates on the Hardy/Upham Project and the redistricting plan. All but two schools have been visited. Hardy and Upham are scheduled for next Monday and Tuesday evenings. There has been great attendance at all the meetings with excellent questions and feedback. She complimented Dr. Lussier on his presentation and the professional manner in which he has conducted the meetings.

There was discussion concerning how the information obtained at these school meetings will be documented and used. It was indicated that notes were taken primarily to provide information to SC and SBC members and for FAQs. The community was encouraged to send any further comments or feedback to the Committee at their earliest convenience.

The Committee then discussed the timetable on making a decision regarding swing space. Ms. Martin hopes to have an overview of the swing space plan so it is clear what the Committee will be taking action on, and then a discussion of the takeaways from the community meetings as well as any additional input that has been received, to then arrive at a decision. There was a request that Dr. Lussier provide a document that would address what the internal swing space would look like and perhaps it could also summarize the broad themes in the feedback received at the community meetings. There was also discussion on the timing of the vote of the School Committee versus the SBC. Because the swing space option is under the sole jurisdiction of the School Committee, it is planned that the Committee will vote on October 1st on whether the Committee supports moving forward with the internal swing space option and continue going forward with the early Hunnewell proposal at this time. The SBC would then address it at its next meeting.

With regard to the Advisory presentation on Wednesday night, only the Hunnewell building option proposal will be addressed, similar to what was presented to the PBC in August.

Ms. Gray informed the Committee that the SBC is continuing its work on a more comprehensive project website that will include FAQs for both the Hunnewell and Hardy/Upham projects.
**PUBLIC COMMENT**
No one present wished to speak

**ADJOURNMENT**
At approximately 9:45 pm, upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Mr. Roberti, the Committee *unanimously VOTED* to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Martin  
Chair

**Documents and Exhibits:**
Trip Approval: Providence Bruins  
Letter to Neighbors: Sprague Field Practice Wall 8/30/19  
Neighbor Feedback: Sprague Field Practice Wall  
Sprague Field Practice Wall Options 1 and 3  
Draft SY19-20 District/Superintendent Goals  
SC Policy JC: Attendance Zones  
FY21 Budget Projections