

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
July 24, 2018
Juliani Room – Town Hall**

OPEN SESSION

The Open Session of the School Committee convened at 6:35 PM. Those present included School Committee Chair Matt Kelley, Vice Chair Melissa Martin, Secretary Linda Chow, members Michael D’Ortenzio Jr. and Sharon Gray; and Superintendent David Lussier.

CITIZENS SPEAK

No one present wished to speak.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Ms. Martin, the Committee ***unanimously VOTED*** to approve the Open Session minutes as amended for June 25 and June 27, 2018.

Upon a motion made by Mr. D’Ortenzio Jr. and seconded by Ms. Gray, the Committee ***VOTED*** to approve the Open Session Minutes for July 11. Ms. Martin and Ms. Chow abstained.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. D’Ortenzio Jr. reported he recently participated in the WPS Administrative Retreat and the Sustainability Energy Committee (SEC) Retreat.

Ms. Martin provided an update on the recent PBC meeting she attended including a discussion on the school security work and ensuring that all schools achieve a level of parity with the work previously done at the Fiske and Schofield Schools. In addition, the PBC signed the contract for the WMS piping project, and Ms. Martin and Ms. Chow recently attended the project’s kickoff meeting.

Ms. Chow indicated she also attended the WPS Administrative Retreat and appreciated the conversations around Social Emotional Learning and Project Based Learning. She also felt the conversation around cultural proficiency was very rich and informative.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

The Committee and Superintendent discussed at length the topic of **student enrollment and assignment**. He reviewed the enrollment numbers at each of the elementary schools and highlighted those sections that are currently at guideline or on the cusp of reaching guideline. He listed those schools and grade levels where students have been reassigned, and discussed the considerations and processes used in reassignments and grade closures. There was a lengthy discussion on how to manage such a complicated process while still being transparent.

After much discussion, the following was decided in order to help with providing clarity on the status of enrollment at the elementary schools:

- Creation of a student enrollment/assignment update section on the *Student Registration, Enrollment and School Assignment* webpage of the District website, with a link on the home page.
- The section would include two categories of updates:
 - The first lists the schools/grade levels where reassignments are currently taking place.
 - The second category would be schools/grades where “enrollment is nearing the high end of class size guidelines and where reassignments could take place in the near future”. This list would include any school/grade either at guideline or within 1 student of the guideline.

This information will then be communicated to realtors asking that they check the webpage for the status at various schools. As always, the WPS Registrar is available to answer questions as appropriate. The contact information for the Registrar will also be clearly posted on the website.

TRACK AND FIELD PHASE II PROJECT

The Committee was joined by Andrew Wrobel, Chair of the Playing Fields Task Force and Recreation Commission who, along with Mr. D’Ortenzio Jr., provided updates on the bathrooms and team room installation project at Hunnewell Field and Hunnewell Park. Proposals were received for this work but were rejected based on the estimated costs provided, which were significantly over budget. A refurbished modular building for the team room and trailer bathrooms are now being considered. This had been originally proposed by the DPW and had been previously approved by Town Meeting. There is also consideration to renting a unit in the fall to receive public feedback. The approval process for this proposal would include discussions with the neighbors, the NRC, Selectmen, Community Preservation Commission, as well as the Design Review Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. It is planned that once approved, the project would be under the supervision of the DPW. Once completed, the Facilities Management Department would then be responsible for the maintenance of the buildings.

Next steps include meeting with the DPW to determine if this work can go forward as planned, with the possibility of the rental of a trailer bathroom for the fall athletic season.

The Committee members agreed that the work should move forward and that the proposed approach seems reasonable to explore; however, it advised against making significant changes to the scope or the style of structures from what was previously approved by Town Meeting.

PLAYING FIELDS TASK FORCE UPDATE

The Committee was then joined by Jerry Nigro, Wellesley Youth Lacrosse (WYLC) coordinator for boys lacrosse, and Matt Fantasia, WYLC coach, who presented a proposal on behalf of the WYLC to install a multi-sport wall near the Sprague fields. Mr. D’Ortenzio

Jr. indicated the Playing Fields Task Force is interested in pursuing this project, but wanted to present it to the Committee for feedback.

The wall is estimated to cost between \$30,000 and \$50,000, with financing to come from the Field Fund. Next steps include conducting studies on placement of the proposed wall, as well as an impact study of erecting a large wall in an open field.

After questions and discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee that this proposal is worthwhile and the next steps should be pursued. The Committee is looking forward to a more defined concept and options at a future date.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND ASSIGNMENT POLICY DISCUSSION

The Committee continued its discussion concerning the **JF – Open Enrollment and Assignment Policy**, which has been addressed at length at previous Committee and Policy Subcommittee meetings, but members wished to review what has been done to date and determine if there is a need to make changes to the policy.

Dr. Lussier provided background on the policy noting that it was developed several years ago when redistricting was being considered. At that time, a committee was formed which included school administrators, faculty and parents to determine the best way to address fluctuations in class sizes that occur in different schools each year. Early in the process it was determined that redistricting would not solve the problem, and the committee worked to determine the best way to address imbalanced grade sections with the desire to remain committed to neighborhood schools, while still allowing parents some flexibility to choose a particular school in the district.

Dr. Lussier reviewed the process used when considering open enrollment requests, including how requests are prioritized: 1st priority: siblings of students who have been reassigned to a school out of their neighborhood, 2nd priority: siblings of students who are enrolled in a special education program in another school, and 3rd priority: students of WPS professional staff, and more importantly, space availability in the school being requested. He noted that over the past several years, since implementation of the policy, most – but not all – open enrollment requests have been fulfilled. He stressed the importance of consistency across the board, from year to year, in applying the standards for granting an open enrollment request.

The Committee discussed a number of scenarios for refining the policy.

The Policy Subcommittee will meet at a future date to discuss the scenarios presented this evening to determine if the policy should be amended, noting that while the policy is working for the majority of students, there may be a way to address some of the issues that have recently come up. Dr. Lussier cautioned the Committee when considering changes to the policy that consistency in applying the process is important and providing added flexibility without clear standards will be difficult for staff to manage in making placement decisions.

HARDY, HUNNEWELL, AND UPHAM PROJECT**Hunnewell Project Update**

Ms. Gray reported that on June 28, the SBC selected SMMA as the lead architect for the Hunnewell Project. The FMD has been negotiating a contract on behalf of the SBC, which is slated for approval on July 26. On July 12, the SBC approved the contract for Compass Project Management as the OPM for the project.

Compass is developing an extensive work plan which includes architectural design services, as well as development of educational programming, communications with other town boards and abutters, review of the building's historical aspects, and focus on the sustainability aspects of the building project.

The Hunnewell kickoff community meeting originally scheduled for September 17 is going to be rescheduled.

Ms. Chow left the meeting at 9:17 PM.

October Special Town Meeting Planning – Hardy/Upham Project

Ms. Gray discussed the schedule leading up to the October 2 Special Town Meeting (STM). The Advisory presentation on the project is scheduled for August 22. September 5 is the Advisory Committee's STM public hearing, and tours of Upham and Hardy are scheduled for September 6 and 12, respectively. These tours are for Town Meeting members to view the buildings, ask questions and learn more about the funding request.

Ms. Gray indicated a meeting is being scheduled with the MSBA to review enrollment data that has been submitted to them as one of the deliverables required to move on to the next round of the project. After this meeting and before October 1, the Committee will determine a design enrollment for the building.

Revised School Building Committee charge

Ms. Gray reported that Jack Morgan has stepped down as Vice Chair and Selectmen liaison to the SBC because he has been elected Chair of the Board of Selectmen. Marjorie Freiman is now the Selectmen's liaison to the SBC, and a separate vote will be taken to appoint the new SBC Vice Chair at its next meeting.

Mr. Kelley discussed that when the SBC was created last year, the School Committee and Board of Selectmen jointly developed and voted upon a charge which reflected the scope of the committee's work and responsibilities. Over the past few months, the group has worked to revise this charge to primarily reflect the MSBA's involvement in the project. He reviewed the changes made to the charge. There was discussion concerning the revision requiring not less than one meeting quarterly of the SBC, School Committee and the Board of Selectmen to discuss the project. It was decided that the statement would read that the boards would meet 'roughly' once per quarter.

After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Ms. Martin and seconded by Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr., the Committee **VOTED** to approve the Charge to the School Building Committee as amended. The vote was 4-0, with Ms. Chow abstaining.

Approval of Facilities Management Department (FMD) Administrative Procedures for the Hunnewell Project

Ms. Gray discussed the proposed FMD memorandum which outlines the logistical procedures for the Hunnewell project.

After a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. and seconded by Ms. Martin, the Committee **VOTED** to approve the Facilities Management Department Administrative Procedures for the Hunnewell project. The vote was 4-0, with Ms. Chow abstaining.

Ms. Chow returned at 9:44 PM.

CITIZENS SPEAK

No one present wished to speak.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Kelley reported that, immediately prior to the beginning of the meeting, Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. requested that the Committee enter into an Executive Session, not anticipated by the Chair, to discuss strategy in preparation for negotiations with the Superintendent.

Mr. Kelley entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel, the individual being David Lussier, the Superintendent of Schools and not to reconvene in open session after the conclusion of the executive session.

MOVED: Ms. Gray; **SECONDED:** Ms. Martin; **ROLL CALL:** Ms. Gray – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes, Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. – Yes, Ms. Chow – Yes, Mr. Kelley – Yes.

VOTE to Approve: Yes – 5, No – 0.

ADJOURNMENT

At approximately 9:50 pm, upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Ms. Chow, the Committee **unanimously VOTED** to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Kelley
Chair

Documents and Exhibits Used

- Enrollment as of 7/23/18
- June 25, 2018 minutes
- June 27, 2018 – open session minutes
- July 11, 2018 minutes
- Wellesley Youth Lacrosse Club (WYLC) handouts – Wall Ball Project draft proposal; photos of multi-sport walls in neighboring towns; specs and invoice for wall in Medfield

- JG - POLICY ON WPS STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT
- Draft Charge to the School Building Committee (SBC), revised as of 7/14/18
- FMD administrative procedures memo