

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE ONLINE MEETING - April 27, 2021, 7:00 PM

Full Recording: [Weston.vod.castus.tv/vod/](https://weston.vod.castus.tv/vod/) (Find timestamps for each section in parentheses)

Documents Used At Meeting:

- [Weston METCO Annual Report](#)
- [Weston METCO Budget Update](#)
- [Memorandum of Agreement with WEA](#) (For Approval)
- [Tree Donation Letter](#) and [Proposal](#) (For Approval)

Call to order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee is called to order by Mr. John Henry, Chair. Participating were Ms. Anita Raman, Vice-chair, Mr. Alex Cobb, Ms. Alyson Muzila; as well as the METCO Representative to Committee Ms. Keitrice Johnson; as well as Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning; and Ms. Sheri Matthews, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; and Dr. Lee McCanne, Director of Technology and School Libraries; and Ms. La Toya Rivers, Weston METCO Director.

Mr. Henry reviews the agenda, explaining that the filling of the vacancy on the school committee will be taken up by the new school committee some time after May 15, 2021. He also previews the May 10 agenda, which will include reports from principals.

Superintendent's report (03:35)

Dr. Connolly highlights various student achievements in academic events and competitions involving Latin, business (through the DECA program), and the National Chemistry Olympiad.

Subcommittee reports (4:40)

- Ms. Muzila discusses the town's Climate Action Resilience Plan (CARP) and its timeline.
- Ms. Raman highlights outstanding work by the PTO and thanks their Board and others.
- Mr. Henry discusses the budget subcommittee and school affairs at May's town meeting.

Update and Discussion re: Expansion of In-Person Learning: (07:55)

Dr. Connolly gives updates on major changes recently including schedules, lunches, and more. WMS and WHS schedules will be extended to full days starting the following day, Wednesday, April 28. Dr. Connolly discusses safety concerns and considerations involved in changes. She also discusses early dismissal days and the benefits of early dismissal days. Dr. Connolly and Dr. Carter also together commend students, families, and staff for their dedication this past year.

Weston METCO Annual Report (12:20)

METCO Director and High School Liason Ms. La Toya Rivers contextualizes the Annual Report and presents highlights, reflecting on recent and ongoing work of the Weston METCO program.

Her presentation includes many impressive student accolades including awards, memberships and leadership positions, musical and artistic accomplishments, community service, college

plans for the class of '21, and more. She goes on to review progress towards goals from last year, including initiatives that Weston METCO students and staff have been and will be part of. Ms. Rivers also talks about the impacts of the pandemic and discussions of racial justice over the past year, and shares some reflections on this unique year, and emphasizes key takeaways. Towards the end of her presentation, she also thanks many community groups like the school committee, volunteer parent groups, student organizations, the other METCO staff, and more.

Committee members thank Ms. Rivers for her presentation. Ms. Muzila asks about after school clubs and athletics. Ms. Raman asks about virtual meetings and benefits to doing that next year. Ms. Johnson asks about one statistic from the presentation, which Ms. Rivers will follow up on. Mr. Henry thanks Ms. Rivers for her report and commentary before introducing Ms. Johnson.

Boston Weston METCO Parent Organization (BWMPO) Annual Report (42:30)

Ms. Keitric Johnson, METCO Representative to the School Committee, as well as the current President of BWMPO, shares some highlights, reflections, and thanks from the past year. She discusses several successful initiatives, including but not limited to their fundraising for the John Hudson Memorial Scholarship Fund, partnering with the PTO and other committees, and many other ways that BWMPO collaborates on and contributes to key district goals. She emphasizes that Weston METCO benefits Weston-resident students as much as the Boston-resident WPS students, and goes on to share some quotes and metaphors that tie her presentation together.

Mr. Henry thanks Ms. Johnson for her presentation and volunteering in the WPS community. Ms. Muzila and Ms. Johnson also discuss the desire from Boston and Weston families for more connections, including virtual and in-person gatherings.

METCO Budget Update (54:20)

Ms. Matthews reviews the budget and funding information for Weston METCO, following from 2020 financial information into the current year, and also looking ahead to 2022 and beyond. Topics included transportation and outside funding sources. The grant amount has continued to increase by single-digit percentages over time, including recent years into this upcoming year.

Ms. Matthews explains the process of the committee authorizing the school administration to begin putting together the annual 2022 METCO Grant Application.

MOTION: Mr. Cobb moves to authorize the school administration to begin to prepare the annual (2022) METCO Grant Application. Ms. Muzila seconds the motion and the committee votes unanimously to approve with Ms. Muzila, Ms. Raman, Mr. Cobb, and Mr. Henry each voting in favor of the motion.

Mr. Henry thanks Ms. Matthews, and also gives thanks again to Ms. Rivers and Ms. Johnson.

Public Comment: (58:06)

Ms. Riola Lazo thanks Ms. Rivers and the school committee. She shares she has been learning more about the need for resilience and enduring collaboration and teamwork, making a sports analogy. She also emphasizes how she has found the technology department to be outstanding in supporting students, families, and staff throughout the pandemic, and thanks WPS families.

Ms. Elizabeth Nagarajah expresses appreciation for the types of conversations had tonight, and hopes they can continue in Weston. She also thanks Ms. Johnson and Ms. Rivers for their work.

Memorandum Of Agreement (MOA) with WEA, re: Changes In Secondary Schools (1:03:15)

Mr. Henry contextualizes the MOA, explaining that it was approved earlier the same day by vote of WEA members. Mr. Henry invites questions from the committee, and Ms. Raman thanks Mr. Henry for his work on the agreement. Mr. Henry thanks the administration, Sue Bairstow and the WEA members as well. Mr. Cobb also thanks Mr. Henry and Ms. Raman for their work on MOA.

MOTION: Mr. Cobb moves to approve the new MOA with WEA. Ms. Muzila seconds the motion and the committee votes unanimously to approve, with Ms. Muzila, Ms. Raman, Mr. Cobb, and Mr. Henry each voting aye in favor of MOA approval.

Approval of warrant (1:05:00)

Ms. Matthews introduces a regular warrant in the amount of \$1,818,708,70.

MOTION: Mr. Cobb moves to approve the warrant. Ms. Raman seconds and the committee votes unanimously to approve, with Ms. Muzila, Ms. Raman, Mr. Cobb, and Mr. Henry each voting aye in favor of warrant approval.

Approval of gifts (1:05:30)

Mr. Henry contextualizes the first gift, tree planting on case campus and a plaque associated with it as well. Dr. Connolly adds some additional details about seating connected to that outdoor area. There is no cost to the schools.

MOTION: Ms. Muzila moves to approve the gift with the caveat that the committee shall delegate to the Superintendent the authority to set up plaques and other additional elements that go along with the tree planting. Raman seconds and Committee members vote unanimously to approve the motion with Ms. Raman, Ms. Muzila, Mr. Cobb, and Mr. Henry all voting aye in favor.

Mr. Henry contextualizes the second gift, which are new “starting blocks” for the pool at the secondary school campus pool. The gift includes funding for the installation of the new blocks.

MOTION: Mr. Cobb moves to approve the gift and Ms. Muzila seconds. Committee members vote unanimously to approve with Raman, Ms. Muzila, Mr. Cobb, and Mr. Henry voting aye in favor.

Adjournment:

MOTION: Mr. Cobb moves to adjourn and Ms. Raman seconds. Committee members vote unanimously to adjourn with Raman, Ms. Muzila, Mr. Cobb, and Mr. Henry voting aye in favor.