

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
May 7, 2019

I. A. Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 7:00 PM at Weston Middle School by Mr. John Henry, Chair. In attendance were Mr. Alex Cobb, Mrs. Danielle Black and Mrs. Rachel Stewart of the School Committee; Cheryl Antoine, METCO Representative to the School Committee; Jeff Beaudoin, Student Member of the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Ms. Sheri Matthews, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations; and Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning. Not present: Ms. Anita Raman of the School Committee.

Also present were Mr. James McLaughlin, Grade 6-12 Math Department Head; Dr. Steve Ribisi, Grade 6-12 Science Department Head; and Tracy Manousaridis, Elementary Math Specialist.

I.B. School Committee Reorganization

Mr. Henry noted that School Committee Reorganization typically occurs after Town Meeting. He congratulated Mrs. Stewart and Ms. Raman on being elected to the Committee and noted Ms. Raman could not attend the meeting as she was at her son's music concert.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Henry as Chair for one year.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Henry and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to appoint Mrs. Black as Vice Chair for one year.

Mr. Henry presented Committee subcommittee assignments for 2019-2020, noting that Mr. Henry and Mr. Cobb will serve on Budget Subcommittee; Mr. Cobb will remain on the Fields Steering Committee, Mrs. Black will continue as liaison to the PBC for Case House Project, Mr. Henry will continue as WEEFC liaison, Mrs. Black will attend EDCO meetings, Mrs. Black and Mr. Henry will work on the Town Report, Ms. Raman and Mr. Henry will work on Policies, Ms. Raman will serve as PTO Representative, Mrs. Stewart will serve on the Sustainability Committee, Mr. Henry will remain on the School Start Time/Scheduling Innovation Steering Committee with a new focus on secondary scheduling, and Committee members will rotate attending SEPAC meetings.

I.C. Chairman's Report – Mr. Henry welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced members of the School Committee and Administration, and reviewed the evening's agenda.

I.D. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Connolly reported that the Weston High School Math Team took first place in their division at the recent New England Math Championship. The team for this meet consisted of seniors Jeff Liu and Sasha Shashkov, junior Andrew Yao, sophomores Ben Chen and Anthony Cui, and freshman William Houston and achieved a perfect score of 18 in the team round. Dr. Connolly expressed congratulations to the students and their advisors, Mary Fierabend and Alison Langsdorf. Dr. Connolly reported that nine Weston students were invited to submit work in the NextUp! Regional Juried Art Show in Wellesley. Helen Townsend received First Place for her ceramic cat and Jackie Liu received Honorable Mention for her painting, Entropy.

In Athletics, Dr. Connolly informed the Committee that Weston hosted the Weston Twilight Meet last weekend where 1,200 athletes, 150 schools, and 2 sites came off about as well as could be expected. She said that many Weston students participated successfully and Bharathis Subbiah was named outstanding female athlete of the meet. Bharathi won the triple jump with a Nationals-qualifying jump of 38-02, then followed that up with a 2nd place in the long jump at 18-2. She noted that jumping over 38 and 18 in the same meet is exceptionally rare, few high school athletes ever achieve it, and no one from Weston ever has before. Mrs. Black expressed appreciation to the community for supporting the Proctor Field and Track renovation that made hosting this type of meet possible.

Mr. Henry reported that he attended all three performances of the High School Theater Company's production of *Fiddler on the Roof* (as a parent of a musician in the production) and indicated how impressed he was by the quality of acting and singing in the wholly enjoyable shows. Dr. Connolly agreed and congratulated all involved in the production.

I.E. Subcommittee Reports – None presented.

I.E. Open Forum – Mr. Henry reviewed some of the guidelines for Open Forum, noting that speakers must wait to be recognized by the Chair; state their name and address; respect the confidentiality of students, families, staff; and refrain from allegations or defaming students or staff.

Dr. John McKenzie expressed appreciation for the district website posting of the upcoming presentations of School Improvement Plans and encouraged members of the community to attend these important and informative presentations. Dr. Connolly noted that Weston Media would be filming the presentations as well.

II.A. Weston Education Enrichment Fund Committee Proposals

Dr. Carter presented three WEEFC proposals for Committee approval, which included support for the Field School STEM Fair, Middle School Sources of Strength Pilot Program, and June Academy.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Henry, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve WEEFC grants as proposed in memo of April 23, 2019 totaling \$10,953.50.

II.B. K-12 Math Department Self-Study Report

Dr. Carter informed the Committee that a district-wide team of teachers comprised of administrators, middle and high school teachers, special education teachers, and elementary teachers worked throughout the year to review how we do math. They conducted a survey, visited other districts, and studied research. Ms. Manousaridis and Mr. McLaughlin They noted the self-study is in preparation for next fall's Math External Program Review. Areas of study included the organizational structure, curriculum, instruction, assessment, access and equity, professionalism and community outreach. Mr. McLaughlin emphasized that movement is supported between math levels, which begin at Grade 6. He noted that math is an evolving discipline with many innovative courses and reported that an Achievement Gap still exists. The report presented some recommendations, including an update of secondary classrooms and furniture to better promote collaboration, the need to ensure fidelity of consistent math instruction in elementary grades. They also want to investigate having math coaches K-12, providing additional professional development in math instruction, and continue to embrace the growth mindset model. Mr. McLaughlin and Ms. Manousaridis indicated that next steps in the process include the external review, recommendations for addressing the achievement gap, and other curriculum areas.

The Committee discussed the report and had opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Cobb asked about the opportunity for parent feedback during the external review and requested the community be made aware the review is taking place and solicited for feedback. Mr. Henry complimented the team for the comprehensive report. They discussed impact of tutoring and outside math programs and if new homework guidelines have helped. Jeff Beaudoin spoke about his positive experience, including being allowed to retake tests. He noted that teachers are focused on students but indicated there are some issues between College Prep and Honors levels. Mr. McLaughlin said, "We have a phenomenal group of teachers who truly care about students." And, "They are doing amazing things in the classes."

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to receive the report.

Mr. Henry request ed that School Committee members email him any further comments, preferably prior to the next meeting.

II.C. Discussion of Proposed June Academy 2020 Student Trip to Jordan

The Committee reviewed the proposed trip to Jordan for June Academy 2020 presented by Angela Lee, Weston High School History teacher. Mr. Henry asked that Ms. Lee continue to keep an eye on security in the area.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mrs. Black and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve June Academy 2020 student trip to Jordan.

II.D. High School/Middle School Sectioning Discussion

Dr. Connolly reported there was no further update since the last meeting but indicated they will provide the Committee with an update again. No action taken.

II.E. Facility Projects Update (Proctor Field, Case House, Case Complex)

Case House – Mrs. Black reported that Gary Jarobski and Jerry McCarty are doing a great job, noted that the PBC is supportive, and change orders have been structural in nature. No action taken.

Mr. Henry noted there have signs for camps on school property, which are not allowed, and which he has removed.

III.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of April 23, 2019.

III.B. Business Actions

Certificate of Warrant

Ms. Matthews presented a Certificate of the Secretary, approval of warrants for payment.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant for payment of \$3,660,456.12 by the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

IV. Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by, at 8: PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session for purposes of discussion of Collective Bargaining and Legal Issues, not to return to regular session, with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, Mrs. Stewart voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

During Executive Session, participants discussed negotiations for the WAPA, WEAAA and the WEA. Various strategies were brought up and discussed. Additionally, participants discussed an open meeting law complaint pertaining to the School Committee. No action taken during Executive Session.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, at 8:55 PM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn from Executive Session, with Mr. Cobb voting aye, Mrs. Black voting aye, Mrs. Stewart voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.

Documents used by Committee:

- Math Self Study Report
- Trip Proposal (Jordan)
- U.S. Safety & Security
- WEEFC Grant Proposals and Description