

## WELLFLEET SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 10, 2106

**Present for the School Committee:** Jan Plaue, Jill Putnam, Mort Inger, Betsy Pontius

**Present for the Administration:** Thomas Conrad, Superintendent, Giovanna Venditti,  
Director of Finance and Operations, and Mary Beth Rodman,  
Principal

**CALL TO ORDER/AGENDA CHANGES** – Chair Plaue called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

**CHAIR’S REPORT** – Chair Plaue reported that she attended a panel discussion on Substance Abuse at the Federated Church in Orleans and that the Superintendent was part of the panel. The movie, “Heroin Cape Cod” was shown. This is a very powerful and upsetting movie. She indicated that the Superintendent did a great job representing our schools.

**MEMBERS SPEAK** – Betsy Pontius addressed the Committee and thanked them for their patience as she successfully completed her course work.

**CITIZENS SPEAKS** – none

### **PRIORITY BUSINESS**

#### **Administrators’ Reports**

##### **Principal Rodman’s Report**

Principal Rodman’s report was included in the packet. She indicated that the Law Day Poster Contest was held and every Fourth Grade Student was recognized. She also reported that the Global Warming Express Scholarship was awarded to Grade 5 student, Amanda Whitcomb. The incoming Kindergarten class has 17 students enrolled.

##### **Assistant Superintendent’s Report:**

Mr. Gauley’s report was included in the packet. Mr. Inger inquired about the summer staff development opportunities for teachers. The Superintendent indicated that he anticipates that the classes will be filled.

##### **Superintendent’s Report:**

The Superintendent thanked the Wellfleet School Committee and Principal Rodman for attending the Town Meeting. He is anxious to meet the new Town Manager in Wellfleet sometime this summer. He also reported that he, Ann Leighton, Spanish Teacher at Nauset Middle School, and Joanne Irish, School Committee Member from Eastham, visited schools in Millis to observe the Spanish Immersion Program. Millis has had this program in place for over 20 years. It begins in Grade 1 with 26 students participating and goes right through to High School. They speak Spanish all day, very fluently, and are only pulled out for two specials. Grades 3 and 4 come together for peer tutoring twice a week. First Grade through Fourth Grade is immersed in five hours of Spanish per day. The Middle School students were not as impressive as the elementary school students. They offer a full cultural and Spanish Immersion class in Fifth Grade. In High School the students are in immersion classes and the Spanish AP Exam is given in the senior year. There are no other languages in the entire system. The Superintendent and the team met and reviewed the pros and cons. They concluded that they are interested in the immersion program but not to that extent. They hope to visit other schools in the near future to observe immersion classes.

The Superintendent distributed the Strategic Objectives and asked members to choose their first and second choice. He indicated that he will gather this information from all school committee members and create an action plan. Whatever objectives are chosen, he hopes a board member or two will enter into the work of researching that particular item. He hopes to bring that work to the Admin Team in the summer meetings. Mort suggested asking Les Loomis or Ed Ebert for their assistance, if he wanted to go outside the District.

### **FY16 Budget Review**

Giovanna Venditti, Director of Operations and Finance, reviewed the expenditure report noting a balance of \$92,176. Principal Rodman reported that a staff member just went out on Family Medical Leave for the remainder of the year and that the substitute line will go up. Ms. Venditti highlighted the variances.

The End-of-Year Spending Plan was distributed. The Committee questioned if the floor coverings were in the Capital Plan and Principal Rodman indicated that this was in addition to the Capital Plan. A draft of the plan is due to the Town Administrator by May 16<sup>th</sup>. Principal Rodman indicated the Habeeb assessment was used and priorities ordered as Habeeb suggested. She added in year 2027 - Replace Exterior Doors – \$25,000 and replace carpet for \$10,000. In 2018 she added (was originally \$40,000) walls around classroom sinks as well as stage curtain for \$20,000. Chair Plaue suggested adding 6 more rugs to 2018 - \$30,000. The Committee decided to remove the stage curtain for 20,000, leaving the 2018 request at \$80,000.

Principal Rodman indicated that there is a new third grade student coming to the school with significant special needs. This may require an out-of-district placement in the fall. Administration is looking at programs that might be beneficial and something closer than Cape Cod Collaborative. They are looking to see if Barnstable has a program that would be tuition-based. The family's plan is to have their child enrolled at Wellfleet Elementary for one year and then move to Eastham. The Committee discussed the total cost for out placing the student being approximately \$13,000 for summer program, \$14,000 for Cape Collaborative, \$4,400 for therapies and transportation and school year tuition 45,000. The Superintendent indicated that Wellfleet could apply for extraordinary relief through the state. Principal Rodman is going to do a site visit and will report back to the Committee. Chair Plaue indicated she would like to try to cover the cost of the program, specialist and transportation. Chair Plaue asked that the Committee revisit this at the June meeting.

### **Motion:**

On a motion by Mort Inger, seconded by Jill Putnam, it was voted unanimously to approve the changes to the capital plan. (subtract the stage curtain and add the carpet - \$80,000)

Principal Rodman will update the Capital Plan and send to the Town Administrator.

The Committee will vote the end-of-year spending plan in June.

### **Visioning**

Chair Plaue led the discussion and indicated that the visioning event was done in Wellfleet a few years back by Skye Cole-Frey. She thought the Union 54 Committee could get together in the summer and talk about where they would like the district to go in the future. She suggested that this could be framed with the Superintendent's list of strategic objectives. She reminded the Committee that Principal Rodman chose #1. Global Education, #2. Length of School Day and #3. Purpose of Electives. Ms. Pontius commented that the Committee needs to recognize that whatever steps the committee takes, it means learning for the teachers and staff. She also stated that any initiative should be done strategically and reminded everyone that the Responsive Classroom is the foundation of Wellfleet Elementary School.

She did not think they should start something new, but build on what is already working. Chair Plaue would like committee members to think of long range and short range plans. Principal Rodman stated that when you add something else to the program, it gets fragmented. Once there is too much, you are not doing anything well.

Chair Plaue suggested a campaign for getting all the children who live in Wellfleet to attend Wellfleet Elementary School. She also suggested looking into extending the day and the year. She would not change what teachers teach, but the longer day would open up new kinds of possibilities for extra help and enrichment. Mort Inger commented that there are too many things going on at school and that the Principal needs to take time to look at global education. He does not see where she has time to do this with the list of things she does. Jill Putnam researched a longer school day and the results were not favorable. She indicated that the study suggested the way to go was to offer choice after school enrichment. She felt uneasy about suggesting extending the day. She stated that Nauset and WES do a good job and if there are too many new changes, it may impact the quality of the program. She also mentioned that children have sports and religion classes. Introverts may want to go home and pursue their own interests. Betsy Pontius reminded the committee that WES has summer Math Camp and the day is extended already with enrichment programs. She suggested the Committee take a very careful look at all of this.

Jill Putnam stated that she would like to pursue a regional approach to offering a language at the elementary level. She indicated that WES has been talking about this for years. She also stated that WES is a community school and must reflect the community. The arts and music is what makes WES so special. She believes WES does such a good job.

The Superintendent indicated that this was a great discussion. He also reminded the Committee that much of his strategic objectives came from data. It is not his plan but created so that the Boards could look at it. As far as the longer day, he suggested that the pace is too much and that there could be time set aside so that kids can go outside and get fresh air, take a short walk in between subjects. He also stated that rolling out any new initiative takes a huge amount of time. The later start time for high school students took six years to come to fruition. In a regional sense, he would like to have a master strategic plan. He does not anticipate researching more than one or two of these objectives and it is near impossible to do all six.

Chair Plaue asked that Committee members give their first two choices to the Superintendent. This will be discussed at a Joint Meeting in August.

### **School Committee Meeting Dates**

Chair Plaue indicated that the second Tuesday of the month has some conflicts in the 2016-2017 calendar. Members were in agreement that they could be flexible and meet on the first Tuesday in those months.

### **REPORTS AND INFORMATION**

Cape Cod Collaborative - Jill Putnam reported that the Articles of Agreement has been signed and sent to the Commissioner. They are also continuing discussion regarding the Director's Evaluation. They have also been interviewing for the Business manager's position and have it down to three finalists. Way Point is having a Golf Tournament at Bay Point Country Club to raise funds.

PTA – Principal Rodman reported that parents have offered to take the officer positions in the PTA.

School Council – Principal Rodman indicated that there was no quorum. She did let them know that they will continue to work on the Improvement Plan for 2017 – 2020.

Transportation Subcommittee – No report. The Superintendent indicated that there will be a meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup> to continue the talk about savings and bus transportation.

Substance Abuse Task Force –No report. The Superintendent indicated that the subcommittee is continuing their work focusing on planning and surveys in Grades 7 – 11.

Preschool projections – Principal Rodman indicated in FY19 she will need a second classroom. She indicated that children cannot be more than 4 years apart in the same classroom.

The Superintendent indicated that some members of the Central Office Team will be working 4 ten-hour days over the summer months.

**Approval of Minutes –**

On a motion by Mort Inger, seconded by Betsy Pontius, it was voted unanimously (4-0) of April 12, 2016.

**Adjournment**

On a motion by Mort Inger, seconded by Betsy Pontius, it was voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann M. Tefft

Included in packet: Administrative Reports, Expense Report, and Strategic Objectives, handouts: End of Year Spending Plan, Considerations for SIP 2017-2020, Prekindergarten Projections, PreK enrollment.