

WELLFLEET SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, November 1, 2016

Present for the School Committee: Betsy Pontius Jill Putnam, Martha Gordon, Mort Inger and Jan Plaue
Present for the Administration: Thomas Conrad, Superintendent, Giovanna Venditti, Director of Finance and Operations, Dr. Ann Caretti, Director of Student Services, Mary Beth Rodman, Principal

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

CHAIR’S REPORT – Chair Plaue requested the Principal check with the Town regarding funds for the afterschool program.

MEMBERS SPEAK – Mort Inger indicated that he learned the Energy Subcommittee is in its second year but indicated he would keep attending the meetings.

Martha Gordon let members know that she is unable to attend Wellness Subcommittee meetings due to a conflict in her schedule. Chair Plaue indicated she would be the substitute.

CITIZENS SPEAKS – None

PRIORITY BUSINESS

Administrators’ Reports

Principal Rodman’s Report

Principal Rodman’s report was included in the packet. She reported that six guests came to the Community Friends Week; Dan Hoort, Janet Rhinehart, Harry and Mike Terkanian, Martha Gordon and Jan Plaue. She also indicated that she received \$15,000 from the insurance company for mold remediation. The plumbing cost to date is \$32,023.62. WES has paid \$13,807.73 and received a \$5,000 discount. Trident has paid \$18,215.89. Total enrollment for Wellfleet Elementary School is 103 students with a new Grade 5 student enrolling. She reminded the Committee to look at the holiday events listed in her report.

Assistant Superintendent’s Report:

Superintendent Conrad referred to Keith Gauley’s report noting that this information give the Committee a little background in the evaluation process.

Superintendent’s Report:

Superintendent Conrad informed the Committee that he is planning several parent forums in the various towns and that the Wellfleet Parent Forum is scheduled for December 5th at 5:30 p.m. He would like to have a conversation with parents about the revised Wellness Policy and his magnet school concepts.

Superintendent Conrad would like to discuss the Strategic Plan at each school committee meeting in November. The current plan expires in 2017. He reminded the Committee of his Strategic Objectives and suggested the topic could be discussed next month. Eventually he will involve all stakeholders. He would like the strategic plan to be a living document and something people believe in, system-wide and committee-wide. He indicated further discussion will take place at the Joint School Committee meeting and would like to have some sense of how the district will proceed in February. Chair Plaue indicated that in the past the committees had a summer meeting in Brewster with Dr. Minkoff as the facilitator and prior to that plan, Mr. Gradone gathered everyone for an all-day session on Saturday with taxpayers, teachers, and School Committee members. The Superintendent indicated he spent months interviewing stakeholders and that is how he developed these objectives. He also reviewed 1,000 parent surveys from parents. Some of the data suggested looking at other options for programs going forward. He stated he would like to keep this at the board level and have some rich discussions. He informed the Committee that they preparing the budgets and that Principal Rodman has worked very hard on her budget. He reported the Central Office budget is almost complete. Everything is right on schedule with the timeline presented to committees. Principal Rodman and the Superintendent will present the budget in December.

Chair Plaue asked if the Superintendent has met with the Legislative members and he indicated he is waiting until after the election.

Chair Plaue inquired about the proposal for electronic agendas and if the Superintendent had an opinion. The Superintendent stated that the people that are using the iPads are doing fine.

Chair Plaue asked if members were looking toward the future of Wellfleet Elementary School indicating it would be nice to work on something creative. The Superintendent suggested the magnet school concept and hopes for future discussion.

FY17 Budget

Giovanna Venditti reviewed the monthly expenditure report with the Committee noting a negative balance of \$52,552.46. She reviewed the accounts that need corrections and also reported that she still has to reclassify Circuit Breaker funds, Account 4064, Special Needs Teachers, 4070 Educational Assistants, Tuition Revolving Account, the insurance offset, and tuition for Wellfleet student attending WES. When everything is corrected, the balance in the budget will be \$51,511. She also let the Committee know that she has encumbered all the substitute line items, transportation, utilities and she will continue to monitor the budget.

Chair Plaue inquired about the community book this year and Principal Rodman reported that the School Council suggested this be done every other year or every three years.

FY18 Budget Review

Superintendent Conrad distributed the Town of Wellfleet Budget Guidelines that indicated the Town is looking at 2.5%. He also reported that Mr. Nowack, Ms. Venditti and Principal Rodman met with the Town Administrator relative to the capital procedures. Mort Inger inquired about excess vacation time and the

Superintendent indicated that in some contracts, people are allowed to roll vacation time to the next year and in other cases there is some sort of buy back for unused days. The Towns do not have an account to pay for unused vacation time. When the employee leaves the system, this is an unanticipated expense.

Preschool Program

Dr. Ann Caretti addressed the Committee giving them an update on the Integrated Preschool Program at WES. Dr. Caretti thanked everyone for their support of the program. She also gave kudos to teacher, Nancy O'Connell who has met with the directors of the Montessori school and The Children's Place. She reported that Nancy O'Connell will have two new students coming in the afternoon. Chair Plaue thanked Nancy O'Connell for all her efforts. Martha Gordon suggested that parents will talk with one another about the program. Nancy O'Connell felt the Children's Place and the Montessori School were very supportive and will get the word out, especially for the special needs students.

Chair Plaue indicated that she would like to have a 3 and 4 year old program at WES and would like the Montessori school to service the younger children. She would like to see the 4 year old children in a public school and felt it was something to think about for the future.

Dr. Ann Caretti researched this and let the Committee know where the gap is for families. She believes parents want a program that runs from 2:30 – 5:30 so that they have full day coverage, Monday through Friday. The Nauset Integrated Preschool and the Montessori School do not have sessions on Friday. Licensing was discussed and if the after school program could be responsible for this program. Discussion about the vouchers and scholarships took place. Nancy O'Connell indicated that if a parent has a voucher, they cannot take the \$7,000 scholarship and if they give up the voucher they do not get it back. The voucher pays for after school childcare. She also indicated that the \$7,000 scholarship has made it difficult for people to go the Integrated Preschool. Dr. Caretti suggested meeting with the people in town to see where the loop holes are and to see how many kids are going outside of Wellfleet. Chair Plaue indicated she would talk with Suzanne at town hall. Mort Inger suggested the Committee invite her to a meeting. Jill Putnam indicated they should get information on how the voucher will be used.

Comprehensive Plan

The Committee collectively worked on the Comprehensive Plan for the town indicating that work is ongoing with Legislators, MASS and School Superintendents. After much discussion and deliberation it was decided that the committee would add an action step to read: Maintain, expand and develop surround care service for our preschool population. It was also suggested that they add the community partnership list provided by Principal Rodman as well as the concept of a magnet school.

Mort Inger left the meeting at 5:41 p.m.

Chair Plaue indicated that Brian Carlson would like to come to a School Committee meeting.

Town Budget Guidelines – Not available yet.

Reports and Information

Cape Cod Collaborative – No report.

PTA – Betsy Pontius reported that the budget was approved. The FY17 budget is \$19,559 of which they gift the school \$10,000. They are hoping to raise another \$10,000. The Treasurer is staying on to do the tax return. The School Committee may be approached for a T-shirt fundraiser. Betsy Pontius indicated that the Oyster Festival Report will be forthcoming and the Superintendent requested information on the T-Shirt sales.

School Council –Principal Rodman stated they are working on the School Improvement Plan and Annual Coat Swap.

Nauset Preschool – Enrollment in packet.

Negotiations Subcommittee – The Superintendent shared that they have had two meetings with an excellent atmosphere.

Policy Subcommittee – Betsy Pontius indicated that the Policy Subcommittee met and reviewed the revised Wellness Policy. The Policy Subcommittee supports the revision and requested the Wellness Committee to tighten up the language in the rest of the policy.

Transportation Subcommittee – no report.

Substance Abuse Task Force – The Superintendent stated that they will have a report at the Joint Meeting. Martha Gordon informed the committee that they are working on surveys. Actual student surveys, in the draft stages, will be given at various grade levels.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Betsy Pontius, seconded by Martha Gordon, it was voted unanimously, to approve the minutes of October 4, 2016 as amended.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Betsy Pontius, seconded by Jill Putnam, it was voted unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann M. Tefft

Included in packet: Administrative Reports, Expense Reports, Town Budget Guidelines and Minutes