

Central Berkshire Regional School Committee

Regular Meeting

Thursday, June 11, 2009

A regular meeting of the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee, held at Berkshire Trail Elementary School, Dalton, MA, on Thursday, June 11, 2009, was called to order by Chair Susan Carroll-Lombardi at 7:07 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members Chivers, Conner, Farley, Grallert, Harvey (7:12), Henderson, Hopper, Les, Wagner, Welts and Carroll-Lombardi.

Absent: Members Darby, Goddard, Lacatell and Yates.

Also Present: Superintendent Donna Harlan, Assistant Superintendent James Stankiewicz, Business Manager Marge Foster, CBEA Executive Secretary Joanne Dowling, Recording Secretary Diane Koch, and Members of the Audience.

ARTICLE 9673 RESPONSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

Berkshire Trail Elementary School Principal Laura Dumouchel shared a poster of photos taken at Berkshire Trail Elementary School's Spruce Up Day on June 6, 2009. Mrs. Dumouchel commended volunteers present this evening on a job well done. Many community members, staff and students donated untold hours planting sustainable vegetation on the grounds; removing trees and shrubbery that obstructed the playground; spreading new woodchips on the playground; painting the gymnasium and building entrance and rebuilding and painting the boys' bathroom as well as designing a new school logo. Various fundraisers were held totaling \$1,400 to pay for supplies and Holiday Farm donated plants and compost for the gardens. Mrs. Dumouchel presented certificates to volunteers that were in the audience and read the names of those unable to attend. Mrs. Dumouchel applauded everyone and was enormously grateful for the communities' enthusiastic support.

Karen O'Brien, C.B.E.A. President, read a letter to members expressing concerns with the search process for a new superintendent that included audience members not being allowed to speak at subcommittee meetings, a limited search plan, a weighted search committee and talk of changing the policy to allow an in-house appointment without a search. Mrs. O'Brien encouraged the school committee to conduct a full search, stating the superintendent's position is very important and the search should be conducted the same as the search for principals at Kittredge School and Wahconah Regional High School.

Chair Carroll-Lombardi thanked Mrs. O'Brien adding the policy will be reviewed, but that will not take place until after the search for a new superintendent is complete. The Chair also commented that the make-up of members of the search committee has worked well in the past and there will be focus groups in which the community, staff and students will be involved.

Joanne Dowling, C.B.E.A. Executive Secretary addressed the Committee regarding grievances that have reached the school committee level in the last two years and the hearing process. Mrs. Dowling told the Committee the purpose of the grievance is to resolve issues and stated the current process is unfair and that at one time both parties remained in the room to hear both sides of the grievance. Mrs. Dowling told the Committee that she understands the Committee has received legal advice on the process to follow and asks that the Committee work with the Association on establishing a process that is fair to all.

Chair Carroll-Lombardi thanked Mrs. Dowling and the Committee will take the matter under advisement.

ARTICLE 9674 STUDENT AFFAIRS

The Chair commented that there will be no student report for the months of July and August.

ARTICLE 9675 SECRETARY’S REPORT

A. Minutes of Regular Meeting of May 28, 2009

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER WAGNER

To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 28, 2009, as printed.

Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9676 FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Warrants

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

To approve Warrant No. 2009-49, in the total amount of \$17,760.16, as printed.

Warrant No. 2009-49, dated June 11, 2009

PAYROLL

Operating Expense	<u>\$17,760.16</u>
TOTAL PAYROLL	\$17,760.16

Ayes: Seven members voting.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: Members Chivers, Hopper and Welts.

Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

To approve Warrant No. 2009-49D, in the total amount of \$1,463.15, as printed.

Warrant No. 2009-49D, dated June 11, 2009

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Operating Expense	\$1,211.67
FICA Expense	<u>\$251.48</u>
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	\$1,463.15

Ayes: Seven members voting.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: Members Chivers, Hopper and Welts.

Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

To approve Warrant No. 2009-50, in the total amount of \$48,056.91, as printed.

Warrant No. 2009-50, dated June 11, 2009

PAYROLL

Operating Expense	\$26,592.76
Federal Funds	<u>\$21,464.15</u>
TOTAL PAYROLL	\$48,056.91

Ayes: Seven members voting.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Members Chivers, Hopper and Welts.
Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

To approve Warrant No. 2009-50D, in the total amount of \$3,281.93, as printed.

Warrant No. 2009-50D, dated June 11, 2009

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Operating Expense	\$2,682.26
FICA Expense	<u>\$599.67</u>
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	\$3,281.93

Ayes: Seven members voting.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Members Chivers, Hopper and Welts.
Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

To approve Warrant No. 2009-51, in the total amount of \$564,646.80, as printed.

Warrant No. 2009-51, dated June 11, 2009

PAYROLL

Operating Expense	\$505,326.13
School Lunch	\$12,887.01
Becket Washington Preschool	\$2,331.15
Berkshire Trail Revolving Account	\$185.32
Craneville Homework Club	\$221.85
BHG Wellness	\$500.00
Federal Funds	<u>\$43,195.34</u>
TOTAL PAYROLL	\$564,646.80

Ayes: Seven members voting.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Members Chivers, Hopper and Welts.
Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

To approve Warrant No. 2009-51D, in the total amount of \$104,008.78, as printed.

Warrant No. 2009-51D, dated June 11, 2009

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Operating Expense	\$97,462.14
FICA Expense	<u>\$6,546.64</u>
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	\$104,008.78

Ayes: Seven members voting.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Members Chivers, Hopper and Welts.

Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

To approve Warrant No. 2009-52, in the total amount of \$288,682.36, as printed.

Warrant No. 2009-52, dated June 11, 2009

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

OPERATING EXPENSE

Accounts Payable	\$218,536.43	
Insurance Payment	\$1,003.83	
		<hr/>
		\$219,540.26
Transfers		\$88.59
Federal Funds		\$14,782.41
School Lunch		\$12,064.43
Berkshire Trail Pre-school Revolving		\$1,316.77
Becket Washington Pre-school Revolving		\$252.78
WRHS Softball Revolving		\$374.00
WRHS Baseball Revolving		\$1,156.00
WRHS Tennis Revolving		\$422.00
WRHS Boys' Track Revolving		\$490.62
WRHS Girls' Track Revolving		\$389.00
CBRSD Gift Fund		\$100.00
WRHS Renovation		\$18,953.50
WRHS Science Lab		<u>\$18,752.00</u>
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE		\$288,682.36

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Acceptance of Gifts and Contributions

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER HARVEY

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee accepts the following gifts and contributions, as recommended by the district treasurer:

- \$500 to the CBRSD General Scholarship Fund from Sally M. Soluri in memory of Jim Soluri
- \$500 to the Mary Ano Memorial Scholarship Fund from Alan and Patricia Kirouac
- \$500 to the CBRSD General Scholarship Fund from Kenneth Harrison in memory of Jacqueline Harrison
- \$1000 to the Dorothy Shepard Memorial Scholarship Fund from Patrick and Kelly Cullum
- \$500 to the CBRSD General Scholarship Fund from Alpine Management & Inv. in memory of Sally Billick
- \$1875 to Wahconah Regional High School Art Department, Senior Assembly and Intramural Athletic Program from Berkshire Insurance Group/Berkshire Bank

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9677 COMMUNICATIONS

A. Report of the Chair

1. Dalton Community Cable

Chair Carroll-Lombardi reported that members had received a copy of a letter from Dalton Community Cable in their packets. The Chair recently spoke with Lori Adriance and John Ostresh and was informed that Thom Fenn is willing to continue taping the School Committee meetings. There might be times when Mr. Fenn will be unable to attend the meetings and it was suggested that a student or School Committee member pick up the equipment and set it up to allow the meetings to be recorded on those nights. Chair Carroll-Lombardi thanked Mr. Fenn and all showed their appreciation by applauding.

ARTICLE 9678 SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

1. Education

a. Award of Recognition Credits

MOVED BY MEMBER HENDERSON, SECONDED BY MEMBER WELTS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee awards three recognition credits to Samuel Ernst for the completion of 67.5 hours of training, as recommended by the Education Subcommittee.

Member Henderson with Assistant Superintendent Stankiewicz explained that Mr. Ernst attended an extensive week of training given by MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that was related to his duties as a team coordinator and the Education Subcommittee felt the training was equal to college courses.

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

b. Overnight Field Trip April 16 – 25, 2010

MOVED BY MEMBER HENDERSON, SECONDED BY MEMBER GRALLERT

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves an overnight field trip for Wahconah students to Costa Rica from April 16 – 25, 2010, as recommended by the Education Subcommittee.

Mrs. Henderson introduced Wahconah science teacher April Lesage. Mrs. Lesage reviewed the details of the trip to Costa Rica and told members she had an opportunity to join Hoosac Valley High School on this trip in April. The trip will be offered to seniors and juniors first, is very educational and is a life changing experience. Students would have the opportunity to work with indigenous tribes and assist saving the endangered sea turtles. Discussion followed on the cost of the trip, the limited space (14 students), what if more students are interested, the safety of students, missing school and why the Committee should be voting on a trip a year away.

More discussion took place on the actual approval form and what the cost of substitute teachers will be, and that the form was not complete. The School Committee has asked that these forms be complete before being brought forward for a vote.

MOVED BY MEMBER CONNER

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee sends the approval form back to be completed and show what the cost of substitute teachers would be.

There was no second, motion failed.

Questions and more discussion followed about missing school, how the 14 students will determined and approving a trip a year away.

Ayes: Seven members voting.
Nays: Members Chivers, Connor and Hopper.
Motion carried.

2. Finance

a. FY-2008 Audit

Member Chivers gave members a copy of the FY-2008 Audit report. The District received a good report; one procedure that needs to be addressed is the handling of money for things such as athletic gate receipts. One suggestion would be to use sequentially numbered tickets, thus allowing for procedural tests for accuracy of the receipts. Business Manager Foster was commended on her performance and Central Berkshire is one of a few districts that are squared away in terms of finance. The auditor would like to see an amount of reserved funds available slightly higher than the current amount.

Member Chivers reported the subcommittee had also reviewed the policy for the budget, the budget process and the way the budget is looked at. The next meeting is Thursday, June 18, 7:00 p.m. at Nessacus.

3. Policy Review

a. Approval of Nessacus Student Handbook Changes

MOVED BY MEMBER HOPPER, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the revisions to the Nessacus Student Handbook, as recommended by the Policy Review Subcommittee.

Member Welts told members the Nessacus Handbook is a very good document. It is a rubric around discipline and both staff and students know exactly what consequence each infraction will receive. Only minor language change needed to be made.

Ayes: Ten members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

b. First Reading Policy Revisions

MOVED BY MEMBER HOPPER, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves first reading revisions of Policy 6330: Wellness, as shown (in the agenda packet) and recommended by the Policy Review Subcommittee.

Member Hopper stated the change to the policy allows nurses, physical education teachers and cafeteria staff to submit articles for publication in school newsletters. The next meeting will be June 15 at 7:00.

Ayes: Ten members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting is June 15, 2009, 7:00 p.m. at Nessacus.

4. Personnel

Member Les informed members there are three items on the agenda tonight. There is no date set for another meeting and members were asked to stay at the close of the School Committee meeting to set a date.

a. Formation of Superintendent Search Committee

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the formation of a superintendent search committee to be composed of the Personnel Subcommittee, one town representative, one teacher, one administrator and one support personnel and one parent.

Chair Carroll-Lombardi informed the Committee that the policy bound them to form a Superintendent Search Committee and advertise the position. The Chair asked Glenn Koocher of MASC to review the current policy and his opinion was that the current policy was very rigid and needs to be revised. Discussion followed on the policy, the last revision of the policy being 1974, the restrictiveness of the policy according to MA General Law, and the wording of the motion regarding the Personnel Subcommittee.

MOVED BY MEMBER CARROLL-LOMBARDI, SECONDED BY MEMBER CONNER

To amend the motion: That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the formation of a superintendent search committee to be composed of the Personnel Subcommittee members who are willing and able to serve, one town representative, one teacher, one administrator and one support personnel and one parent.

Further discussion took place about the process of the search and the time involved, that the Committee does not have the ability to appoint someone without a search, a news article noting the limited pool of superintendent candidates in the area, the procedure that will be followed, the school committee having the final vote of approving a candidate, the commitment of personal time involved if serving on the committee and that the search committee should not be limited to only Personnel Subcommittee members.

Chair Carroll-Lombardi withdrew her motion; Member Conner chose to not withdraw his second.

Ayes: Three members voting.

Nays: Members Chivers, Grallert, Harvey, Henderson, Hopper, Les and Welts.

Motion defeated.

MOVED BY MEMBER HARVEY, SECONDED BY MEMBER WELTS

To amend the motion: That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the formation of a superintendent search committee to be composed of four School Committee members to be appointed by the School Committee Chair, one town representative, one teacher, one administrator and one support personnel and one parent.

Ayes: Seven members voting.

Nays: Members Conner, Farley and Wagner.

Motion carried.

Discussion followed on the advantages of changing the Personnel Subcommittee's original motion, that it might be seen as unfair to the Personnel Committee to change the motion and the process for the search in general. In response to a question of who would appoint members of the Search Committee Chair Carroll-Lombardi responded she would as the Chair of the School Committee.

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the formation of a superintendent search committee to be composed of four School Committee members to be appointed by the School Committee Chair, one town representative, one teacher, one administrator and one support personnel and one parent.

Ayes: Eight members voting.
Nays: Member Farley.
Abstentions: Member Wagner.
Motion carried.

b. Superintendent's Salary

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

To go into executive session at 8:45 p.m. in accordance with MGL Chapter 39, 23B, "to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining...including the resolution of grievances pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement."

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Members Chivers, Conner, Farley, Grallert, Harvey (7:12), Henderson, Hopper, Les, Wagner, Welts and Carroll-Lombardi.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

The Chair stated that the Committee would reconvene in open session at the conclusion of executive session.

The Committee came out of executive session at 9:20 p.m.

c. Acting Superintendent

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER HARVEY

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee table the motion to appointment an Acting Superintendent to New Business.

Ayes: Nine members voting.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Member Welts.
Motion carried.

B. Others

1. Wahconah Building Committee

Member Henderson updated the Committee on the progress. The Wahconah Building Committee will be meeting with the Owner's Project Manager next Tuesday, June 16, 2009.

a. Award of Contract for Running Track Repair

MOVED BY MEMBER HENDERSON, SECONDED BY MEMBER WAGNER

That the Central Berkshire Regional School District awards a contract for the repair of the running track to Copeland Coating Company, Inc. in the total amount \$11,000, as recommended by the Wahconah Building Committee.

Ayes: Ten members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

2. Communication Task Force

Member Grallert reported the Communication Task Force had met prior to the School Committee meeting tonight and discussed the timeline for the Strategic Plan, possibility of campaigning in the news media to entice school choice students into the District, and Mr. Les gave a demonstration of the new district website. The next meeting is scheduled for June 25, 6:00 p.m. at Kittredge School.

3. Regional Agreement Review Committee

Superintendent reported the Regional Agreement Review Committee meeting has been rescheduled to June 30, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at Nessacus Regional Middle School.

ARTICLE 9679 SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

Superintendent Harlan updated members on the search for a Building and Grounds Manager. To date there are 13 applications and 10 of the candidates possess the required license. Business Manager Foster has invited economist Richard O’Sullivan from Maryland to speak at the June 25 meeting. Many community partners will be invited to attend. The Superintendent added that Mr. O’Sullivan’s presentation is in line with the pathways that Assistant Superintendent has worked on for years with the high school.

B. Recommendations – None

C. Other

ARTICLE 9680 PERSONNEL

A. Superintendent’s Review of Personnel Changes

There were no personnel changes to report.

Note: All salaries are set in accordance with current contracts.

ARTICLE 9681 OLD BUSINESS – None

ARTICLE 9682 NEW BUSINESS

MOVED BY MEMBER CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER HOPPER

BE IT RESOLVED that the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the addition of new business to the agenda.

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

A. Additional Appropriation for Wahconah Hall Lockers

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

Chair Carroll-Lombardi told members that there was room for more lockers than originally thought and in the interest of time the motion is before the Committee tonight. Business Manager Foster added that there would be no additional installation charge.

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves an additional appropriation of funds for the replacement of Wahconah hall lockers not to exceed \$3,000, pending the vote of the Wahconah Building Committee.

Ayes: Ten members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

B. Cafeteria Reduction in Force

MOVED BY MEMBER CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER HARVEY

It was reported that the ratio of the average number of meals served verses staff is below the state minimum and with the reduction will still be below the state minimum.

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves a reduction in force of a 3 hour assistant cook's position at Wahconah Regional High School, effective June 30, 2009, as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee.

Ayes: Eight members voting.
Nays: Henderson.
Abstentions: Welts.
Motion carried.

C. Waiver of 90 Day Notice of Termination

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee will waive the 90 day notice of termination for retirement, as submitted by Donna L. Harlan on May 14, 2009, due to personal reasons. The School Committee will grant her permission to retire, effective June 30, 2009.

Superintendent Harlan asked the Committee to waive the 90 day notice in her contract and allow her to retire as of June 30, 2009. Dr. Harlan told the Committee it is because of concerns with family in Texas and truly appreciates their understanding.

Ayes: Ten members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

D. Appointment of Acting Superintendent

MOVED BY MEMBER LES, SECONDED BY MEMBER GRALLERT

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee appoints James Stankiewicz Acting Superintendent upon the departure of Donna Harlan, pending agreement on contract terms, in the event a permanent appointment has not been made by that date.

Members commented that you need someone at the head and thanked Mr. Stankiewicz for being there.

Ayes: Nine members voting.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Member Welts
Motion carried.

ARTICLE 9683 REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMITTEE

Member Conner shared with the Committee his concerns that there is a member absent. Chair Carroll-Lombardi commented that the Committee is elected officials and have no power over the situation. Discussion followed on possible solutions, the way the school committee is voted in, that attendance has never been a problem before, passing judgment, extenuating circumstances can happen, and that one should step down if not able to serve.

Member Gallert attended Wahconah Regional High School's graduation ceremonies and that it is fun to watch the students receive their diplomas.

Member Wagner reported his son competed in a science competition at Nessacus then M.C.L.A. and most recently in Worcester at the state level and shared with members his disappointment that Wahconah doesn't participate in the program. In addition, Mr. Wagner spoke about the Edline program that is used at Nessacus and what a wonderful tool it is for parents and the Committee should encourage Wahconah to start using the software as well.

Member Conner remarked that Central Berkshire had one of only two students that went to Worcester for the competition and should keep it up by continuing the program at the high school level.

Member Harvey commended Principal Laura Dumouchel's spruce up project and mentioned trying it again at other schools.

MOVED BY MEMBER CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER LES

To adjourn the meeting at 9:51 p.m.

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.