

Central Berkshire Regional School Committee
Regular Meeting

Thursday, July 24, 2008

A regular meeting of the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee, held at Becket Washington School, Becket, MA on Thursday, July 24, 2008, was called to order by Chair Susan Carroll-Lombardi at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members Bantjes, J. Chivers, L. Chivers, Farley, Goddard, Gordon, Henderson, Hopper, Les, Morton, Welts, Yates, and Carroll-Lombardi.

Absent: Members Grallert and Harvey.

Also Present: Superintendent Donna Harlan, Assistant Superintendent James Stankiewicz, Business Manager Marge Foster, Recording Secretary Mary Jo Keiper, and Members of the Audience.

For the record, Chair Carroll-Lombardi does not vote unless noted.

ARTICLE 9485 RESPONSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

Dalton Select Board member Stu Sargent expressed to the Committee his disagreement with the elimination of the School Resource Officer, citing safety issues. He suggested the entire town of Dalton has been jeopardized by the Committee's action and that the matter should have been put to a vote of the parents. He stated he would continue to encourage reinstatement of the officer at the high school. Chair Carroll-Lombardi thanked Mr. Sargent for bringing his concerns to the Committee.

ARTICLE 9486 STUDENT AFFAIRS

A. Wahconah Report

Principal Jim Conro was in the audience and reported they are ready to welcome an excellent group of new teachers to their already excellent staff.

ARTICLE 9487 SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 26, 2008

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 26, 2008, as printed.

Ayes: Eleven members.

Nays: None.

Abstention: Member J. Chivers.

Motion carried.

ARTICLE 9488 FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Warrants

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2008-52, in the total amount of \$405,251.23, as printed.

Warrant No. 2008-52, dated June 30, 2008

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Operating Expense	\$358,599.70
Federal Funds	\$22,262.01
Circuit Breaker	\$7,137.00
School Lunch	\$11,868.48
WRHS Student Activity Fund	\$2,769.73
WRHS Girls' Soccer Revolving	\$199.31
WRHS Swimming Revolving	\$1,050.00
WRHS Boys' Track Revolving	\$50.00
WRHS Girls' Track Revolving	\$150.00
CBRSD Gift Revolving	\$165.00
2008 Scholarships	<u>\$1,000.00</u>
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	\$405,251.23

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2008-53, in the total amount of -\$3,871.12, as printed.

Warrant No. 2008-53, dated June 30, 2008

Accounts Payable

Operating Expense	<u>(\$3,871.12)</u>
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	<u>(\$3,871.12)</u>

Business Administrator Foster reported the negative amount was due to voided duplicate checks.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2009-1, in the total amount of \$323,509.36, as printed.

Warrant No. 2009-1, dated July 10, 2008 (previously signed)

Accounts Payable

Operating Expense	<u>\$323,509.36</u>
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	<u>\$323,509.36</u>

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2009-02, dated July 10, 2008, Payroll/Salaries, in the total amount of \$188,015.92.

Business Administrator Foster stated this warrant and those which follow have been done on the new accounting system. Future warrants will be set up with more detail, such as those the Committee is used to seeing.

Ayes: Ten members.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Members Hopper and Welts.
Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2009-02D, dated July 10, 2008, Payroll/Deductions, in the total amount of \$44,159.13.

Ayes: Ten members.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Members Hopper and Welts.
Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2009-03, dated July 24, 2008, Accounts Payable, in the total amount of \$454,348.12.

Ayes: Eleven members.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Member Welts.
Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2009-04, dated July 24, 2008, Payroll/Salaries, in the total amount of \$109,557.16.

Ayes: Ten members.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Members Hopper and Welts.
Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2009-04D, dated July 24, 2008, Payroll/Deductions, in the total amount of \$43,992.73.

Ayes: Ten members.
Nays: None.
Abstentions: Members Hopper and Welts.
Motion carried.

B. Gifts and Contributions

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee accepts the gift of \$500 from Shawn P. Murray to the C.B.R.S.D. General Scholarship Fund, in memory of Sally Billick, as recommended by the district treasurer.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Chair acknowledged the generosity of the donor.

ARTICLE 9489 COMMUNICATIONS

A. Report of the Chair

In response to a statement by Dalton Select Board member Bill Chabot regarding the district's foundation budget, the Chair cited a recent press release from the Governor showing school districts average a budget 18% above their foundation limit and every school district in the state is at least at its foundation level.

The Governor will hold a "town meeting" in Great Barrington on August 4th, time and location to be announced.

A letter of invitation has been sent to Representative Guyer and Senator Downing to attend an upcoming school committee meeting. Representative Guyer has indicated he would visit the Committee in September.

The Chair distributed a self-evaluation form from MASC, stating it was much like the form used last year. She asked members to read it and let her know within the week if they wished to make any changes. She will bring the form back to the August meeting. It is recommended by MASC that a special meeting be set with the self-evaluation the only agenda item. The process will be completed before November.

ARTICLE 9490 SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

1. Education

Member J. Chivers will set a meeting in August.

2. Finance

Member L. Chivers reported the subcommittee had met and considered an increase in the athletic user fee and an increase in the price of school lunch.

a. Increase in Athletic User Fee

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves an increase in the student athletic fee from \$120.00 per season to \$150.00 per season for all athletes effective the 2008-09 school year, with a 50% reduction in the fee for a second member of the same family (\$75.00) and no fee for the third (or additional) members of the same family, as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee.

The Chair recognized Athletic Director Robert Powell. Mr. Powell stated the last increase was in 2005; the department has been level funded for the last four or five years; gate fees depend on scheduling and reaching the championship competitions; there was no drop in participation the last time the fee was increased. Mr. Powell thanked his coaching staff and booster clubs for their hard work and assistance. Ms. Chivers noted there is a waiver process for hardship.

The Committee discussed the fee increase; the district's responsibility to fully fund the athletic program; the generosity of booster clubs; and the history of athletic budget reductions.

Ayes: Ten members.
Nays: Members Farley and Welts.
Motion carried.

b. Increase in Price of School Lunch and School Breakfast

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the following increases in school lunch prices effective September 2, 2008, as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:

- *regular student lunch from \$1.75 to \$2.00*
- *regular student breakfast from \$1.00 to \$1.25*

(No changes will be made to reduced-price meals.)

Ms. Chivers noted the subcommittee's recommendation responded to several concerns, including skyrocketing food prices. She noted, however, a higher rate of free and reduced lunches increases district revenues. The administration was encouraged to get the word out early, well before school starts.

Ayes: Ten members.
Nays: Members Goddard and Welts.
Motion carried.

3. Policy Review

Member Bantjes reported the Committee had met prior to the School Committee meeting and would meet again on August 28th.

a. Second Reading Policy Revision

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves second reading revisions to Appendix B: District By-Laws, as shown (in the agenda packet) and recommended by the Policy Review Subcommittee.

Ayes: Twelve Members voting.
Nays: None.
Motion carried.

4. Personnel

a. Superintendent's Evaluation

Member Les reported that 13 out of 15 evaluations were returned. He distributed the compilation of results and reviewed the composite scores for each area of responsibility. Dr. Harlan's overall score was 2.41 out of a possible 3.0, an increase from the previous year. Mr. Les stated a summary of comments would be made available upon request. The Chair thanked Member Less and the subcommittee for their time.

b. Ratification of Custodians' Contract

- Executive Session (Strategy with Regard to Negotiations)

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To go into executive Session at 7:40 p.m. in accordance with MGL Chapter 39, Section 23B, "to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining..."

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Members Bantjes, J. Chivers, L. Chivers, Farley, Goddard, Gordon, Henderson, Hopper, Les, Morton, Welts, Yates, and Carroll-Lombardi.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Chair stated the Committee would return to open session following executive session.

The Committee came out of executive session at 7:50 p.m.

WHEREAS, Local 204, Council 93, AFSCME (AFL-CIO), Central Berkshire Custodians, on July 7, 2008 ratified the Memorandum of Understanding between that unit and the Central Berkshire Regional School District, covering successor contracts for the period July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2011, it was

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER GORDON

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee ratifies the Memorandum of Understanding between the custodians and the Central Berkshire Regional School District covering successor contracts for the period July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2011, as recommended by the Committee's bargaining team.

Ayes: Eleven members.

Nays: None.

Abstention: Member Welts.

Motion carried.

The Chair thanked Members Henderson and J. Chivers, the custodians, and central office staff.

B. Others

1. Wahconah Building Committee

a. Appointment of Building Committee Members

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee appoints the following members to serve on the Wahconah Building Committee:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Administrator or manager of a town | Rita Furlong, Becket (designee) |
| 2. One member of the School Committee | Billie Henderson, Dalton |
| 3. Superintendent of Schools | Donna Harlan |
| 4. Local official responsible for building maintenance | Marge Foster |
| 5. School Committee Chair | Susan Carroll-Lombardi, Dalton |
| 6. School Principal | Jim Conro |
| 7. Faculty with knowledge of educational mission ... | John Cramer, Windsor |
| 8. Local budget official or member of finance committee | Jim Huebner, Washington |

Members of the community with architecture, engineering, and/or construction experience to provide advice relative to the effect of the proposed project on the community and to examine building design and construction in terms of its constructability:

9. Bill Goddard, Hinsdale
10. John Les, Becket
11. Jim Drawe, Cummington
12. Jim Chivers, Dalton
13. George Desmarais, Dalton
14. John Bantjes, Windsor
15. Ed Richards, Peru

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Chair thanked those appointed for their willingness to serve and noted additional motions, as recommended by the Building Committee, would come on the addendum under New Business.

2. GIC Committee

Member Welts reported the GIC Committee was unable to meet with Finance Subcommittee because they have not completed a review of figures from the central office administration.

ARTICLE 9491 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

1. Title I Paraprofessionals

Superintendent Harlan reported increases in Title I and Title IIA funding based on increased free and reduced lunch numbers, which will allow additional hours for Title I paraprofessionals in the coming year and the increase from half-time to full-time of the professional development coordinator position. She expressed her gratitude to Food Services Director Rose Goddard. She also thanked Grant Coordinator Laura Dumouchel, and Assistant Superintendent James Stankiewicz for redesigning and rewriting of the two grants.

Dr. Harlan also reported the district is a finalist for a \$38,000 grant from Central Berkshire Fund's Community Impact grant for the Wahconah science lab. She, Principal Conro, and science department chair Shawn Therrien will present the district's proposal on September 11th. The district has already received \$10,000 for the Wahconah science lib renovation from an anonymous donor through the Central Berkshire Fund.

Opening day student speakers will present their speeches to the Committee on September 11th. Special needs students will also speak to the Committee on that date regarding their summer camp experience.

Also reported: the district has received \$15,000 from the state budget for its reading program, due to the efforts of Representative Guyer; the district has applied for two foundation reserve grants; the superintendent and assistant superintendent have been participating in the county's homeless initiative; several emails have been forwarded to the Committee.

The district's CPR final report and corrective action plan have been filed. The Superintendent expressed her thanks to Mr. Stankiewicz, Mrs. Dumouchel and Special Services Director Connie West.

Dr. Harlan attended the MASS Executive Institute, where she received updates on the Mass. Teacher Retirement System, the MSBA, and current case law. She noted the collaborative is moving forward.

B. Recommendations

1. Increase in Title IIA Position to 1.0 FTE

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee increases the position of Title IIA teacher from .5 FTE to 1.0 FTE effective the 2008-09 school year, as recommended by the Superintendent.

This position will be fully funded through the Title IIA grant.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Other

ARTICLE 9492 PERSONNEL

A. Superintendent's Review of Personnel Changes

The following personnel changes were noted; all salaries are set in accordance with current contracts.

- Dolores Farrell, Title I paraprofessional at Becket Washington School, initially appointed September 5, 2000, has resigned effective June 30, 2008.
- Mary Johansmeyer, physical education and health teacher at Craneville School, initially appointed August 31, 2006, has resigned effective July 9, 2008.
- Michelle Kasala, special services secretary, has been increased from 24 hours/week to 32 hours/week effective July 1, 2008.
- Wendy Provencher has been appointed project secretary in the special services office, 8 hours/week, effective July 1, 2008, at Step 4.
- Karen Accardi has been appointed half-time grade 1 or 2 teacher at Craneville School, effective August 28, 2008, at step A-9 (pro-rated at 50%).
- Meghan Coakley has been appointed grade 5 teacher at Craneville School, effective August 28, 2008, at step A-2.
- Nicole Cote has been appointed science teacher at Wahconah Regional High School, effective August 28, 2008, at step A-5.
- Ann Grees has been appointed .8 physical education teacher at Becket Washington and Craneville Schools, effective August 28, 2008, at step A-12 (pro-rated at 80%).
- Michael Hogue has been appointed learning center teacher (social studies/math) at Nessacus Regional Middle School, effective August 28, 2008, at step B-5.

- Devika Muruga has been appointed mathematics teacher at Nessacus Regional Middle School, effective August 28, 2008, at step A-1.
- Robin Veilleux has been appointed preschool teacher at Berkshire Trail Elementary School, effective August 28, 2008, at step A-2.
- Abigail Wood has been appointed grade 3 teacher at Craneville School, effective November 3, 2008, at step A-1 (pro-rated for late start).
- Rhonda Bilodeau has been appointed secretary to the principal at Kittredge School, 35 hours/week, school year plus four weeks, effective on or about October 1, 2008.
- Kerry Ryan has been appointed Supervisor of Physical Education and Wellness, effective the 2008-09 school year.
- Pamela Fortlage-Gold has been appointed Supervisor of Fine and Performing Arts, effective the 2008-09 school year.
- Andrew Liebenow has been appointed paraprofessional at Nessacus Regional Middle School, 6 hours/day, effective August 30, 2008.

Superintendent Harlan pointed out that transfers often occur, resulting in openings elsewhere.

ARTICLE 9493 OLD BUSINESS

A. Fuel Oil Price, FY-2009

Business Administrator Foster reported on gas, fuel oil and electric costs in the district. In answer to a question raised at a previous meeting, she stated the district belongs to the Lower Pioneer Valley Collaborative and that group has yet to lock in a fuel oil price for the coming heating season. The district has a three-year contract at \$1.28/therm for natural gas and has pre-purchased 4,000 gallons of propane at \$2.70/gallon.

B. Executive Session (Strategy Regarding Negotiations)

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To move item B. Executive Session regarding negotiations to the end of the meeting.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9494 NEW BUSINESS

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the addition of new business to the agenda.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

A. Purchase of Science Lab Supplies (WRHS)

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee authorizes the purchase of \$24,200 of the listed science lab supplies compiled by Shawn Therrien from VWR/American Scientific to be delivered before the start of the 2008-09 school year, as recommended by the Wahconah Building Committee.

Member Bantjes stated this was the lower of two bids from the state bid list. It was also reported that Sabic might have some decommissioned lab furniture, although some units would need retrofitting.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Purchase of Furniture (WRHS)

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee authorizes the purchase of all of the furniture recommended by Jim Conro and Marty Phillips from the "State Bid List" (W.B. Mason), with the exception of 7 library tables and 40 library chairs, spending up to \$100,000. (660 student desks, 188 student chairs, 6 folding tables, 32 science tables w/resin tops, 2 folding cafeteria tables, 20 double pedestal teacher's desks, 8 teacher's arm chairs and 6 4-drawer file cabinets), as recommended by the Wahconah Building Committee.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Purchase of Work Benches and Stools (WRHS Shop)

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee authorizes the purchase of 3 maple top work benches and 20 oak stools for use in the shop at Wahconah spending up to \$5,600, as recommended by the Wahconah Building Committee.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Purchase of Drafting Tables and Chairs (WRHS)

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee authorizes the purchase of 17 CAD/Drafting tables and 17 drafting chairs spending up to \$17,000, as recommended by the Wahconah Building Committee.

Member Bantjes stated this is direct replacement of existing equipment.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

E. Purchase of Table Tops, Stool Tops, Sewing Tables and Chairs (WRHS)

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee authorizes the purchase of 10 replacement cafeteria table tops, 48 replacement cafeteria stool tops, 10 sewing tables, 6 adjustable armless chairs and 10 folding table arm chairs spending up to \$4,200, as recommended by the Wahconah Building Committee.

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

F. Payment of Electrician (WRHS Auditorium)

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee authorizes the payment of an electrician up to \$5,000 to address the electrical wiring issues in the auditorium, as recommended by the Wahconah Building Committee.

Member Bantjes noted this work would take care of several electrical hazards (safety issues) in the lighting above the stage.

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

G. Authorization for BAN (WRHS)

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee authorizes the borrowing of \$175,000 in a bond anticipation note or more if the bond rules make it more expensive to borrow less than \$200,000, as recommended by the Wahconah Building Committee.

Member Bantjes stated the BAN approval would pay for all the items just approved. Because it had been learned there would be no advantage to borrowing a higher amount, the following amendment was made:

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To amend the motion as follows: That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee authorizes the borrowing of \$175,000 in a bond anticipation note, as recommended by the Wahconah Building Committee.

VOTE ON THE AMENDMENT

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

VOTE ON THE AMENDED MOTION

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

Member Henderson reported all 15 members had been in attendance at the meeting on July 22nd.

ARTICLE 9495 REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMITTEE

Member Hopper reported he had the privilege of speaking in the culinary summer exploratory arts program. He received very good questions and one of the students completed an application to work at Old Country Buffet. Mr. Hopper also ate at the students' luncheon. He stated it was a very good program.

The Committee returned to Article 9493, Old Business.

B. Executive Session (Strategy Regarding Negotiations)

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To go into executive Session at 8.25 p.m. in accordance with MGL Chapter 39, Section 23B, 3. "...to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel..."

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Members Bantjes, J. Chivers, L. Chivers, Farley, Goddard, Gordon, Henderson, Hopper, Les, Morton, Welts, Yates, and Carroll-Lombardi.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Chair stated the Committee would return to open session only to adjourn.

The Committee came out of executive session at 9:30 p.m.

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To adjourn the meeting at 9:31 p.m.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.