

Central Berkshire Regional School Committee

Regular Meeting

Thursday, October 25, 2007

A regular meeting of the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee, held at Craneville School, Dalton, MA on Thursday, October 25, 2007, was called to order by Chair Susan Carroll-Lombardi at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Members Bantjes, J. Chivers, L. Chivers, Farley, Goddard (7:40 p.m.), Gordon, Grallert, Henderson, Hopper, Les, Shugrue, and Carroll-Lombardi.

Also Present: Superintendent Donna Harlan, Assistant Superintendent James Stankiewicz, Business Manager Tensel, CBEA Executive Secretary Joanne Dowling, Student Representative Patrick Nguyen, Recording Secretary Mary Jo Keiper, and Members of the Audience. (Member Morton took his seat following appointment.)

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

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To move Article 9329 – Student Affairs, A. Wahconah Report, ahead of Article 9328, Responses from the Audience.

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Patrick Nguyen stated he was reporting to the Committee for the first time. The 2007-08 year is off to a good start: 400 students attend the first two dances; students have welcomed new and veteran teachers; Virtual High School has been well-received; the theme for academic decathlon this year will be the Civil War; the yearbook committee is soliciting ads; first edition of the Wahconah Word is available totally on line (James Parkington is the editor); the fall production, "Dark of the Moon" will be presented next week Thursday through Saturday; fall sports are coming to an end. The Chair thanked Mr. Nguyen for his report.

ARTICLE 9328 RESPONSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

CBEA Executive Secretary Joanne Dowling stated that she was disappointed her appeal at the last school committee meeting to go back to the table for negotiations was unsuccessful. At the first mediation session, the Association will ask the mediator if mediation is warranted.

Nessacus teacher Mary Cherry told the Committee she was stunned at the freezing of the budget so early in the year. She questioned the use of money to reorganize and upgrade the central office. She felt it was poor management to freeze the budget at this point in the year.

CBEA Vice President Jared Shannon addressed the Committee. He had come to the district believing it was the best; joined the bargaining committee because he believed the sides could come up with a reasonable compromise and fair contract; and asked the Committee to direct its negotiators to treat teachers with respect and deliver a fair contract.

The Chair thanked those in attendance for coming to the meeting.

ARTICLE 9329 STUDENT AFFAIRS

A. Wahconah Report – Taken up previously.

B. Presentation of Certificate of Academic Excellence to Eliza Keith

Presentation of the award was delayed due to the late arrival of Eliza Keith, who was playing in a scheduled volleyball match.

ARTICLE 9330 SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. Minutes of Regular Meeting of October 11, 2007

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 11, 2007, as printed.

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9331 FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Warrants

MOVED BY MEMBER CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2008-15, in the total amount of \$794,561.10, as printed.

Warrant No. 2008-15, dated October 18, 2007

PAYROLL

Operating Expenses	\$481,460.27
School Lunch	\$16,118.81
Girls' Soccer Revolving	\$142.00
Berkshire Trail Preschool	\$1,796.23
Federal Funds	<u>\$51,493.90</u>
Sub-total	\$551,011.21
FICA (Operating)	<u>\$6,136.04</u>
Total Payroll	\$557,147.25
Transfers (Deductions)	<u>\$237,413.85</u>
TOTAL PAYROLL & DEDUCTIONS	\$794,561.10

Ayes: Nine members.

Nays: None.

Abstention: Member Hopper.

Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2008-16, in the total amount of \$623,318.83, as printed.

Warrant No. 2008-16, dated October 25, 2007

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Operating Expenses

Accounts Payable	\$91,754.31	
Insurance Payment	<u>\$316,898.55</u>	
		\$408,652.86
Transfers		\$67,749.79
Federal Funds		\$29,358.02
Circuit Breaker		\$60,356.09
School Lunch		\$35,633.55
Reimbursable Property Damage		\$133.84
Athletic Independent Games		\$2,677.04
WRHS Student Activity Fund		\$12,375.03
NRMS Student Activity Fund		\$2,500.00
Literacy Learning Class Revolving		\$93.11
WRHS Boys' Soccer Revolving		\$695.25
WRHS Girls' Soccer Revolving		\$981.50
WRHS Football Revolving		\$705.62
WRHS Cross Country Revolving		\$146.25
WRHS Cheerleading Revolving		\$88.88
WRHS Volleyball Revolving		<u>\$1,172.00</u>
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE		\$623,318.83

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9332 COMMUNICATIONS

A. Report of the Chair

The Chair distributed a letter from the fifth grade teachers at Craneville School, requesting the splitting of four sections into five, and a copy of the class-size language from the teachers' contract.

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To form a class size committee for grade 5 at Craneville School.

In response to a question regarding space for an additional class, Principal Deborah Bevan stated the only space available would be the music room.

Ayes: Ten members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Chair reported she has sent an article from the school committee to Principals for inclusion in their November newsletters. She attended a meeting with school district representatives and the Dalton Select Board. She deferred reporting on that meeting to the Superintendent's report later in the meeting.

B. Vacancy – Hinsdale Representative

1. Letter from David Morton

Committee members were directed to Mr. Morton's letter and completed survey in the printed agenda.

2. Interview and Appointment of Hinsdale Representative

Mr. Morton stated he would like to enhance his knowledge of the schools and contribute to the work of the Committee. He has the time available to serve.

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To nominate David Morton Hinsdale representative to the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee.

Ayes: Ten members present.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Chair welcomed Mr. Morton. Superintendent Harlan swore him in and he took his seat at the table.

C. Official Delegate – MASC/MASS Joint Conference

Member L. Chivers was selected on August 23rd to serve as alternate delegate. However, since the resolutions are minor issues for our district and she was only able to go for the voting day, Ms. Chivers will not attend. Mr. Morton and Mrs. Grallert will take a look at the information regarding the conference.

ARTICLE 9333 SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To move B. – Others, 1. Craneville Short-term Capital Bonding Committee and 2. Wahconah Building Needs Study Committee to this point in the agenda.

Ayes: Eleven members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried.

B. Others

1. Craneville Short-Term Capital Bonding Committee

Richard Lacatell addressed the Committee. He distributed a handout, entitled Craneville Floor Replacement Project, and proceeded to review the document. He talked about the background of the flooring in the building; the School Committee and town votes to date; the actions taken by the short-term capital bonding committee to this point; the decision to recommend carpet tiles; and, the importance of maintenance, health and safety issues.

Mrs. Goddard arrived during this presentation.

Michael Jamrog addressed the Committee regarding life cycle cost issues, noting the costs of carpet and tile do not differ significantly and vary considerably with the degree of maintenance.

The short-term bonding committee encouraged the School Committee to vote on November 8th to incur debt for this capital bonding project, allowing for a Dalton vote on November 19th, designer selection in December, a bid award in March, and installation during the summer of 2008. Mr. Lacatell thanked the

Committee and answered questions. The Chair thanked the Craneville committee members for their comprehensive work and stated the finance subcommittee would consider their request on November 8th at 6:45 p.m.

Presentation of Certificate of Academic Excellence to Eliza Keith

Eliza Keith and her parents arrived and Superintendent Harlan presented the Superintendents' Certificate of Academic Excellence to Miss Keith, noting her many academic and extra-curricular accomplishments, and congratulating her on the award. Chair Carroll-Lombardi also congratulated Eliza and Mrs. Keith thanked the district for its part in Eliza's success at school.

2. Wahconah Building Needs Study Committee

James Huebner presented the consensus view of the Wahconah Building Needs Study Committee. Those projects receiving immediate priority total \$589,710. The full cost of all other recommendations is approximately \$4.4 million. The preliminary recommendation document, distributed to the School Committee by Mr. Huebner, is attached to the official minutes. Mr. Huebner introduced other members of the building needs study committee, each of whom presented an executive summary on a specific group of projects:

- Jim Chivers – Science lab projects, \$101,418
- Jan Huebner – Auditorium projects, \$50,000 plus \$150,000 from fundraising
- George Desmarais – Safety and security projects, \$334,300
- Rick Wagner – Building and grounds projects, \$1,055,400
- Billie Henderson – Gymnasium and locker room projects, \$875,000
- William Drosehn – Energy and weatherization projects, \$2,120,000

Members of the building needs study committee answered questions as they arose, noting the building is in good shape, state funding will not be available for a long time, and monies appropriated now will be well spent. Mr. Huebner thanked the Committee for their patience and recognized two members of his committee who had not spoken but were in attendance: Kelly Markland and Principal Jim Conro. The Chair thanked them all for their work.

The Committee took a brief recess.

A. Reports

1. Education

Member J. Chivers reported the Education Subcommittee would meet on October 29, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. at Nessacus.

2. Finance

Member L. Chivers reported the subcommittee had met and discussed capital costs for pre-K students as requested by a Dalton selectman, restructuring, and retiree insurance noting Central Berkshire retirees pay one of the lowest contributions in the county. They also looked at staffing information, assessment information, and received an update on the proposed project manager. Meetings are scheduled for November 8th at 6:45 p.m. and November 15th at 7:00 p.m., both at Nessacus.

a. Quarterly Report

The quarterly report was distributed and is attached to the official minutes.

Member Henderson had compiled a listing of requests from groups or individuals to the School Committee or various subcommittees since 2006, asking that certain needs be addressed. She distributed that list to members.

3. Policy Review

Member Bantjes reported a meeting is scheduled for November 14th at 7:00 p.m. in the Central Office.

4. Personnel

Member Les reported the subcommittee has not met and has no meeting scheduled.

ARTICLE 9334 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

Superintendent Harlan announced that Business Manager Bob Tensel would retire on June 30, 2008 and read his letter to the Committee. She noted Bob's many accomplishment, stating she would miss him greatly. A search committee will be formed with input from Chair Carroll-Lombardi and Finance Subcommittee Chair L. Chivers.

1. Quarterly Report on District Improvement Plan

The quarterly report was distributed and is filed with the official minutes. Questions regarding the school reports should be addressed to the principals.

The Superintendent reported she and others have visited Dalton and Cummington select boards and visits are scheduled with the other towns, except for Washington which has yet to contact the central office.

B. Recommendations – None.

C. Other – None.

ARTICLE 9335 PERSONNEL

A. Superintendent's Review of Personnel Changes

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

- Grace Lacy has been appointed assistant cafeteria cook, approximately 3 hours/day, at Nessacus Regional Middle School, effective October 1, 2007.
- Nancy Hopper has been appointed school nurse at Craneville School, effective October 9, 2007, at step B-7.
- Mary Wood has been appointed assistant cafeteria cook, approximately 2 hours/day, at Berkshire Trail Elementary School, effective October 9, 2007.
- Ginger Sumner has been appointed family and consumer science teacher at Wahconah Regional High School, effective October 10, 2007, at step A-8.
- Kellie-Jean Sprague, paraprofessional at Kittredge School, initially appointed April 23, 2007, has resigned effective October 12, 2007.

MOVED BY J. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To continue the meeting beyond 10:00 p.m.

Ayes: Ten members.
Nays: Members Farley and Hopper.
Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9336 OLD BUSINESS

The Superintendent will make sure all approved school committee minutes are posted on the district website.

The Chair stated she would ask the Committee to return to Old Business following Remarks for the Good of the Committee, in order to go into executive session.

ARTICLE 9337 NEW BUSINESS

None.

ARTICLE 9338 REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMITTEE

Member Les reported his daughter, a freshman at Western New England College, was finding her classes easier than those at Wahconah, particularly business and calculus.

Member Gordon reported his 40th high school class reunion had been fabulous, noting the presentation on Wahconah earlier in the agenda and the lasting importance of one's high school years.

The Committee returned to Article 9336, Old Business.

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER GODDARD

To go into executive session at 10:01 p.m. in accordance with MGL Chapter 39, Section 23B, 3. "To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation...including the resolution of grievances pursuant to the collective bargaining agreement."

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Members Bantjes, J. Chivers, L. Chivers, Farley, Goddard, Gordon, Grallert, Henderson, Hopper, Les, Morton, Shugrue, and Carroll-Lombardi.
Nays: None.
Motion carried unanimously.

The Committee came out of executive session at 10:47 p.m.

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To adjourn the meeting at 10:48 p.m.

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