

Central Berkshire Regional School Committee
Regular Meeting

Thursday, November 8, 2007

A regular meeting of the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee, held at Nessacus Regional Middle School, Dalton, MA on Thursday, November 8, 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 (7:05 p.m.), Grallert, Harvey, Henderson, Hopper, Les, Morton, Shugrue (7:30 p.m.), Welts and Carroll-Lombardi.

Absent: Member Gordon.

Also Present: Superintendent Donna Harlan, Assistant Superintendent James Stankiewicz, CBEA Executive Secretary Joanne Dowling, Recording Secretary Mary Jo Keiper, and Members of the Audience.

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

ARTICLE 9339 REORGANIZATION

Chair Carroll-Lombardi passed the gavel to Vice Chair L. Chivers.

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER LES

To nominate Susan Carroll-Lombardi Chair of the School Committee November 2007 – November 2008.

There were no further nominations.

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To close nominations.

Election of Susan Carroll-Lombardi

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Members Bantjes, J. Chivers, L. Chivers, Farley, Grallert, Harvey, Henderson, Hopper, Les, Morton and Welts.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Carroll-Lombardi assumed the Chair and stated she would continue to work hard for students, citizens and the school committee. She thanked members for their help.

MOVED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To nominate Laurie Chivers Vice Chair of the School Committee November 2007 – November 2008.

There were no further nominations.

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

To close nominations.

Election of Laurie Chivers

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Members Bantjes, J. Chivers, L. Chivers, Farley, Grallert, Harvey, Henderson, Hopper, Les, Morton, Welts and Carroll-Lombardi.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Chivers thanked Committee members.

Member Goddard arrived.

Appointment of District Secretary

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That Donna L. Harlan be appointed District Secretary through November 2008.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Appointment of District Treasurer

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That Michael Kinne be appointed District Treasurer through November 2008.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Appointment of Assistant Treasurer

MOVED BY L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That Susan Carroll-Lombardi be appointed Assistant Treasurer effective November 8, 2007.

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER HENDERSON

To amend the motion to read, "That Susan Carroll-Lombardi be appointed by the School Committee unpaid assistant treasurer effective November 8, 2007."

The vote was taken on the amended motion.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

Appointment of Legal Counsel for the School District

MOVED BY L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & LeHane, LLP be appointed legal counsel for the School District from December 1, 2007 to November 30, 2008.

It was noted the firm has offices in Quincy and Springfield.

Ayes: Eleven members voting.

Nays: Member Farley.

Motion carried.

Appointment of Physician for the School District

MOVED BY L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That Dr. Alan G. Kulberg be appointed physician for the Central Berkshire Regional School District from December 1, 2007 to November 30, 2008.

Ayes: Twelve members voting.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

- Subcommittee Charters

The Chair distributed a check-off sheet, asking members to return their choices by November 14th.

ARTICLE 9340 RESPONSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

Carol Darby, President of CBEA Unit 3, Paraprofessionals, stated several of their members would speak in hopes of helping the Committee to better understand the duties they perform. She also read a supportive letter from the parent of a special needs student. The following paraprofessionals addressed the Committee, each outlining their various job responsibilities and asking the Committee to carefully consider the contract being negotiated: Alma Owen (Wahconah special needs paraprofessional), Bonnie Clark (Craneville library paraprofessional), Lisa Swigart (Kittredge Title I paraprofessional), Jeanne Stritzinger (district-wide COTA). Carol Darby closed by thanking the speakers who had shared their testimonials and asking the Committee to put aside politics for these employees who are asking for a fair contract.

Joanne Dowling, CBEA Executive Secretary, read a petition stating her colleagues would discontinue participation in volunteer activities. She presented the signed petition to Chair Carroll-Lombardi, who thanked them all for attending.

Member Shugrue arrived during responses from the audience.

ARTICLE 9341 STUDENT AFFAIRS

A. Wahconah Report

There was no student present.

The Committee took a short break.

ARTICLE 9342 SECRETARY'S REPORT

A. Minutes of Regular Meeting of October 25, 2007

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 25, 2007, as printed.

Ayes: Thirteen members present.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9343 FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Warrants

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve warrant No. 2008-17, in the total amount of \$699,430.49, as printed.

Warrant No. 2008-17, dated November 1, 2007

PAYROLL

Operating Expenses	\$491,500.50
Berkshire Trail Preschool Revolving	\$1,796.23
Craneville Homework Revolving	\$77.16
WRHS Boys' Soccer Revolving	\$61.00
WRHS Girls' Soccer Revolving	\$71.00
WRHS Cross Country Revolving	\$130.00
School Lunch	\$15,532.78
Federal Funds	<u>\$50,986.40</u>
Sub-total	\$560,155.07
FICA (Operating)	<u>\$6,193.11</u>
Total Payroll	\$566,348.18
Transfers (Deductions)	<u>\$133,082.31</u>
TOTAL PAYROLL & DEDUCTIONS	\$699,430.49

Ayes: Ten members.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: Members Hopper, Morton, Welts.

Motion carried.

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

To approve Warrant No. 2008-18, in the total amount of \$370,787.98, as printed.

Warrant No. 2008-18, dated November 8, 2007

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Operating Expenses

Accounts Payable	\$280,166.01	
Insurance Payment	<u>\$1,056.40</u>	
		\$281,222.41

Transfers	\$177.29
Federal Funds	\$14,331.56
School Lunch	\$18,066.84
PSAT Revolving Fund	\$1,420.00
Athletic Independent Games	\$4,650.42
WRHS Student Activity Fund	\$20,368.74
NRMS Student Activity Fund	\$4,500.00
WRHS Student Fees Revolving	\$70.00
WRHS Boys' Soccer Revolving	\$1,744.50
WRHS Girls' Soccer Revolving	\$844.00
WRHS Football Revolving	\$621.88
WRHS Cross Country Revolving	\$648.25
WRHS Cheerleading Revolving	\$85.62
WRHS Golf Revolving	\$850.00
WRHS Volleyball Revolving	\$54.00
Capital Expense FY-2008	\$18,831.97
Becket SAC	<u>\$2,300.50</u>
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	\$370,787.98

Ayes: Thirteen members present.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Acceptance of Gifts and Contributions

MOVED BY L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee accepts the following contributions:

\$100 to the Judith Farley Scholarship Fund from Linda/Richard Eldridge

\$100 to the Judith Farley Scholarship Fund from William/Lee Desa

\$100 to the Judith Farley Scholarship Fund from Suzanne Consalves

\$100 to the Judith Farley Scholarship Fund from Richard Farley

\$100 to the Judith Farley Scholarship Fund from Gail Goulart

\$100 to the Judith Farley Scholarship Fund from Pamela Reine

\$100 to the Judith Farley Scholarship Fund from T. M. Framing Contractor

\$25 to the Judith Farley Scholarship Fund from Lillian/Frank Marks

\$1,000 to the Peter Cimini Scholarship Fund from Fidelity (matching gift from Jeffrey Cimini)

The Chair expressed her appreciation to all the donors, noting the large number of contributions at this time of year.

Ayes: Thirteen members present.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

ARTICLE 9344 COMMUNICATIONS

A. Report of the Chair

- The Chair reported a Craneville grade 5 class size committee had been formed and the Superintendent would report on that during her report.
- She distributed the revised Points of Interest document, noting it would be attached to the official minutes of the November 8th meeting as well as posted on the district's website.
- Chair Carroll-Lombardi recognized Lori Adriance, Dalton Community Cable secretary, who was taping the school committee meeting. Various concerns were raised regarding the taping: 1) that not all meetings or entire meetings would be taped; 2) that Dalton Community Cable broadcasts only in Dalton (not in the other six communities served by the District); 3) that copies would be made available to interested parties in all member towns; 4) that there might be costs to the district for these copies; 5) that school committee meetings are held in various rooms in six different school buildings, including Becket Washington, Kittredge, and Berkshire Trail. It was noted that the Committee had no choice as to whether or not the meetings would be taped and broadcast, however the Chair will bring the Committee's concerns to John Ostresh at Dalton Community Cable and report back to the Committee on December 13th.

B. Official Delegate – MASC/MASS Joint Conference

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER J. CHIVERS

That Amy Grallert represent the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee as official voting delegate at the annual MASS/MASC Joint Conference November 14-17, 2007.

Ayes: Thirteen members present

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Chair asked that Member Grallert bring back any handouts she receives.

ARTICLE 9345 SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

1. Education

Member J. Chivers reported the subcommittee heard a report from the multi-age classroom committee. Research shows that those schools who use multi-age classes do so out of necessity. It does not seem to produce any real savings. Preparing for MCAS testing makes it more difficult to teach multi-age groups. Mr. Chivers felt the subcommittee would not make a recommendation in favor of multi-age classes at Central Berkshire.

Member Henderson had attended that meeting and read from a prepared statement her own response to the education subcommittee report. She expressed concerns about the Becket Washington Compass School designation having an unfair effect on the teachers in our district who have much larger class sizes. She also felt the multi-age committee report, not supporting multi-age classrooms, did not recognize the inequities in the current structure of the elementary schools and that funding is being taken from the middle and high schools to support very low class sizes in certain elementary schools. She asked the full Committee to find solutions to these inequities and to do it for the FY-09 budget.

Mr. Chivers continued his report. The MCAS report from Principals show all schools, except for a small group at Nessacus, have met adequate yearly progress. He indicated the MCAS test has served its purpose: overall student progress has increased. A subcommittee member is encouraging better communication of the good news in our district and suggested establishing an additional subcommittee for public relations. The Chair will look at that possibility. The next meeting is set for November 13th at 7:00 p.m., when the subcommittee will hear a report on the activities of the resource officer.

2. Finance

Member L. Chivers reported they had met prior to the School Committee meeting and heard a final report from Richard Lacatell on the Craneville carpeting project. She made the following motion.

WHEREAS, the Finance Subcommittee of the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee has recommended that the district include borrowing for extraordinary capital bonding for Craneville School in the FY-2009 budget, it was

MOVED BY MEMBER L. CHIVERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER BANTJES

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the inclusion of borrowing for an extraordinary capital bonding proposal in the FY-2009 budget, in the total amount of \$286,600, for the replacement of carpeting at Craneville School.

It was noted that \$286,600 represents the highest of the bids, all of which were within 10% of each other. Member Hopper expressed concern that this is the second year in a row the district has voted to fund an extraordinary expense and he hoped this bonding would complete Craneville School, as projects identified at Wahconah will need to be addressed.

Ayes: Thirteen members present.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

a. FY-2009 Budget Guidelines & Preparation Schedule

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER HARVEY

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the FY-09 budget guidelines as presented (attached to official minutes) and recommended by the Finance Subcommittee, and

That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the FY-09 budget preparation schedule as presented (attached to official minutes) and recommended by the Finance Subcommittee.

Ayes: Thirteen members present.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 15th at Nessacus.

3. Policy Review

No report.

4. Personnel

The subcommittee has not met. A tentative meeting is set for November 15, jointly with the finance subcommittee, at 7:00 p.m.

B. Others

1. Craneville Short-Term Capital Bonding Committee

Covered under finance subcommittee.

2. Wahconah Building Needs Study Committee

Member Henderson reported the building needs committee is anxious to hear from the finance subcommittee. The group is collecting more concrete estimates for the Wahconah projects as well as engineering costs. The Chair will look at the finance subcommittee agenda.

ARTICLE 9346 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

Superintendent Harlan reported members of the class size committee for Craneville grade 5 will be Jim Stankiewicz and Debbie Bevan, appointed by the School Committee; Joanne Dowling and Peter Bachli (Chris Kwasny alternate), appointed by the Association; and Beth Frederick representing the School Council. Mrs. Bevan will call the committee together early in December.

It was reported during the visit with Windsor town officials that Business Manager Tensel had locked in oil at \$1.8525 and gas at \$2.187. The Superintendent has visited in Cummington, Dalton, Peru and Windsor; a visit to Hinsdale is set for December 6th and the Becket visit is scheduled for January 3rd.

Jim Stankiewicz and Connie West continue to prepare for the Comprehensive Program Review by the DOE – an announcement will be made in the Eagle about the upcoming visit of the auditors on December 3-5, 2007.

The Superintendent reviewed a number of emails she had sent to Committee members.

1. Announcement of Sexual Harassment Investigators

Assistant Superintendent James Stankiewicz and Berkshire Trail Elementary School Principal Laura Dumouchel will serve as sexual harassment investigators for the district.

2. Fund Raiser(s) Approved

The following approved fund raisers were reported: Wahconah Peer Mediation candy bar sale (before and after school only), October 29-November 14, 2007, and Nessacus Travel Club, chocolate sale, November 9 – 30, 2007.

3. First Semester Enrollments – WRHS – Informational.

B. Recommendations

None.

C. Other

None.

ARTICLE 9347 PERSONNEL

A. Superintendent's Review of Personnel Changes

Amy Pharmer has been appointed assistant cafeteria cook, approximately 3 hours/day, at Craneville School, effective September 18, 2007. All salaries are set in accordance with current contracts.

ARTICLE 9348 OLD BUSINESS

None.

ARTICLE 9349 NEW BUSINESS

None.

ARTICLE 9350 REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMITTEE

Member Goddard reported receiving calls from parents of students who had been told by their teachers that “work-to-rule” would be in effect, resulting in cancellation of the prom, senior week activities, etc. She felt the teachers acted unprofessionally in making such statements to their students.

Member Hopper had received his daughter’s first report card from Nessacus and noted it was a great first quarter.

CBEA Executive Secretary Joanne Dowling stated the teachers have not declared “work-to-rule” and that stipend positions would continue in any case. She agreed children should not have been told that programs would not run.

Member Shugrue expressed her appreciation to the parent volunteers at Wahconah who have set up the parent/teacher appointments.

Member Henderson reported on a recent visit from the building inspector to Wahconah. There were concerns about many things in the auditorium area. She noted the rented storage space used by the Apollonian Players is partially paid for by the district and hoped that rental contribution would continue. She suggested someone from the Committee should attend the Players Committee meeting on November 13th as the maintenance of the auditorium is a district responsibility.

MOVED BY MEMBER BANTJES, SECONDED BY MEMBER WELTS

To adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

Ayes: Thirteen members present.

Nays: None.

Motion carried unanimously.