

New Salem/Wendell School Committee
Thursday, May 5, 2022, 7 PM

Via Google Meets – Final Minutes

Attending: Carla Halpern, Johanna Bartlett, Mariam Warner, Melinda Hazen, Beth Erviti, Elizabeth Devlin, Barbara Doyle, Steven Blinder, Anna Wetherby (minutes), School Committee Members; [Caitlin Sheridan](#), Director of Operations; [Kelley Sullivan](#), principal

Teachers: Anne Martin, Robyn Vitello, Gosia Spooner, Mandy Higgins, Gillian Budine, Jill Putala

Public: Kelsey Alvarez, Dara LaPlante, Sarah Vular

A. Call Meeting to Order 7:17

B. Public Hearings

- Community Network for Children update – Gillian Budine
 - Annual update on CNC
 - Funded by a grant by Massachusetts Early Education and Care
 - A small percentage of staff salary from the school budgets
 - CNC, public schools, libraries, and a few private programs are the only ones that support the learning of the youngest community members
 - Returning to more programming, especially outside programs
 - Programs continued through the pandemic as much as possible
 - Parent programs continue as well
 - Challenges level funding for the past 8 years: \$83,789
 - Limited supplies and personnel can work on this budget
 - Requests for needs have risen during the pandemic
 - The administrative and staff of U28 are very supportive of the CNC programs
 - Educating the legislature will be important for any increase in funds
 - Johanna and Barbra praise Gillian for her dedication and effort to the work the CNC does

C. Warrants – Record in minutes with numbers

D. Superintendent's Report

- Submitted in writing

E. Director of Finance and Operations Report

- Out of district placement costs will be removed from the budget for the town meetings (\$194,767 reduction to \$65,000)
- Leverett town meeting complete, four more to go

- Going to MASBO conference - for local business officials
- Request for budget basics training for school committee members - how to read the budget sheets

F. Principal's Report

- Selectboards met to discuss PFAS in water- will go ahead with the camera in the well, need a new engineer and present the plans to the DEP
- Two homeschooled students returned to the school, and we are very happy to have them back
- Preparing summer program with ESSER 3 money -pre-k-4 can participate July to August
- Spring concert during the day - in June
- Talent Show and Graduation will take place in the gym this year
- The public is welcome to attend all school events
- Community Sing is happening again, outside
- Adjust councilor will join full-time next year
- School psychologist will join full-time next year
- Looking for sixth-grade teacher for next year. Samm Osborne will be working at J'Duke full time next year

G. Committee Reports

- Report from Mahar Representatives
 - Passed budget
 - Self-evaluation discussion
 - Elected committee members for next year
- Collaborative for Education Services
 - Next meeting June 21, 2022
- Massachusetts Association of School Committees
 - Articles on Federal Appropriation
 - School Committees have the right to verbally censure (not censor) library materials
 - It is hard for school committees to ban books
 - There can be policies for book challenges
 - Good idea to have a policy regarding book censorship
 - Early Ed Commission findings
 - Policies and workshops available
 - Charting the Course for new School Committee members is a very good idea
- Joint Supervisory – Next Meeting – May 16, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.

H. May Items

- 2022 Swift River Community Action Award Recipient –

- Carla moves to nominate Tina Newman as the recipient of the 2022 community action award, Barbara seconds - vote taken by roll call, passes unanimously
- Home School Applications –
 - There has been an update since the agenda was published and the requested material is under review
- Policy Update and Review:
 - First Reading on:
 - JEB – Entrance Age
 - JHD – Observance of Religious Holidays
 - Question about holding school events on any recognized holiday
 - Elizabeth moves to amend this policy - and that no special events be scheduled for major religious holidays; Johanna seconds, (no vote taken) amended language to be sent back to the Policy Committee
 - JI – Students Rights and Responsibilities*
 - Second Reading, First Vote on:
 - IHAMA – Sex Education Curriculum*
 - IHBAA – Observations of Special Education Programs*
 - IJL – Library Material Selection and Adoption*
 - GBK – Staff Complaints and Grievances*
 - HF – School Committee Negotiating Agents*
 - IE – Organization of Instruction*
 - Johanna moves to address all policies in a single vote, Barbara seconds
 - Elizabeth concerned about the language on policy IJL
 - Johanna amends the motion to address policies IHAMA, IHBAA, GBK, HF, IE, Beth 2nds
 - Vote taken by roll call - passes unanimously
 - Beth moves to approve policies IHAMA, IHBAA, GBK, HF, IE, in for the first vote, Barbara 2nds - vote taken by roll call- the first vote passes unanimously
 - Elizabeth moves to send Policy IJL send back to committee to address the inclusion of School librarian bill of rights: “Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.”; Johanna 2nds - vote taken by roll call, passes unanimously
 - First Vote on Deletion of Policy:
 - JHC – Early Dismissal of Student by School Policy*
 - JHD – Observance of Religious Holidays*
 - Johanna moves to vote on the two policies together, Beth 2nds - vote taken by roll call, passes unanimously
 - Beth moves to complete first vote for deletion, Johanna seconds - vote taken by roll call, passes unanimously

I. Future Business

o Next Meeting Date – June 2, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.

o New Salem/Wendell Policy Committee – June 2, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.

Reorganization of committees - request to wait until September

J. Approval of Minutes:

Johanna moves to approve the minutes from April 7, Beth seconded - vote taken by roll call - passes unanimously

K. Adjournment

- Johanna moves to adjourn the meeting, Barbara seconds - meeting adjourned at 8:10