

THE NEW SALEM/WENDELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
FINAL Minutes  
January 8, 2015

PRESENT: Mike Yohan, John DeWitt, Dick Baldwin, Johanna Bartlett, Jessalyn Zaykoski, Carla Halpern, Alyssa Rulf-Fountain, John Fitzgerald, members; Kelley Sullivan, Principal; Robert Mahler, Superintendant; Matt Galman, U28 accountant; Terri Nelson, Jill Putala, teachers.

1. Mike called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Wendell has a new school committee member, Jack Radner.
3. December 4, 2014 minutes: Carla moved to accept the minutes with corrections and Dick seconded. The committee unanimously approved.
4. Warrants signed:
  - a. Bill – 4532, 4534, 4535, 8511, 413, 414, 813, 814.
  - b. Payroll – 4130, 4140, 4141, 4142, 4531, 4533, 8130, 8140.
5. Mahar: Johanna reported that Mahar put out to bid the research on the replacement of the dam. DVA was the only company to put in a bid for the job. Mahar is hoping to hire DVA to present all the options and costs for the repair of the dam and go from there. Carla also reported that there is a new mindscape program at Mahar. She then spoke about the monetary needs of Mahar. She mentioned the need of \$100,000 for the repair of the sprinkler system as well as additional funds for a new dishwasher and the upgrade of the generator.
6. Budget and Personnel: Mike moved to appoint John DeWitt to the B+P, upon his approval. Carla seconded this motion and the committee approved unanimously.
7. Collaborative: Mike reported that CES completed its audit and the audit is available online to all members.
8. Principal's report: Kelley presented an enrollment comparison from the last 14 years showing that SRS enrollment numbers are beginning to increase again. She noted that there are a few changes in the staffing; there is a new secretary, Ariel Barilla, who is being trained by Christine. Christine's last day is January 16<sup>th</sup>, there will be a retirement party for her at the school. Ciji Cody is the new paraprofessional to replace Meghan during her maternity leave and Betsy Bergantino will be the new director of Enchanted Forest. Kelley reported that the Winter Concert was outstanding and the Wendell Craft Fair donated \$1,200 to the music program from the proceeds of the Craft Fair. She also noted that the installment of the new security system by Citizen Security was completed over vacation. Last, she had some good news, she did not need to replace the server. A networking cable had accidentally been plugged into it creating a loop. Once it was unplugged the server was working.
9. Superintendant's Report: Bob spoke to the committee about the Open Meeting Law noting that the only items emailed between members should be scheduling information, agendas, or reports. Bob also reported on the

- regionalization process for Leverett and Shutesbury. He scheduled a forum in each town to have an open discussion about the regionalization process and the regional agreement vs. the union. He had 21 people come to the Leverett meeting. The superintendant search is still underway. There is a 14 member committee with 32 applications. The committee interviewed 8 applicants and moved 2 of these applicants forward. The 2 applicants moved forward are Tara Brandt and Jennifer Haggerty. The public interviews with these candidates will be held January 26, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. at Erving Elementary School. Lastly, Bob reported that the teachers of U28 are now eligible for The Pioneer Valley Excellence in Teaching Awards program that is part of the Harold Grinspoon Charitable Foundation. This is an award honoring teachers in western MA.
10. Review of Expenditure Report: Matt reported that the budget is being watched carefully. He spoke about the cost of electricity, which is predicted to be about \$1,200 over budget. He has been researching different options for electric providers and will continue to research the subject.
  11. NS/W FY16 Budget: Bob reported that he has received a notice from the health insurance provider that there will be a \$7,918 increase in the cost, this changes the assessments for the towns to a overall 9.27% increase for New Salem and an overall 9.81% increase for Wendell. Johanna moved and Alyssa seconded to approve the NS/W FY16 budget for \$2,002,287. This motion was then withdrawn and the item was moved to next month. Johanna moved and Alyssa seconded the alternative method of assessment. The committee unanimously approved this motion.
  12. Community Action Award: The committee discussed potential candidates for the Community Action Award.
  13. Swift River Soccer: Kelley brought up the issue of liability when Swift River Soccer uses the school gym. John F. noted that liability was under an insurance umbrella from the New Salem and Wendell Rec. Departments last year. Kelley will check that it is under the same umbrella this year.
  14. Home School Request: Johanna moved, Alyssa seconded and the committee unanimously approved the home school request.
  15. Robo-calls: Alyssa asked if it was possible for an additional mode of communication to be used between the school and families for cancellations, in addition with the robo-call, such as email or text. Kelley said she would look into this possibility,
  16. Policy Update: IHBGR-R-Home School Policy: Johanna moved to accept the change on IHBG-R and Dick seconded this. The committee unanimously approved. The first read for ACAB has been moved to next meeting.
  17. Carla moved to go into executive session for the purpose of reviewing the minutes without returning to regular session. John F. seconded and the committee approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jessalyn Zaykoski  
Committee Secretary