

THE NEW SALEM/WENDELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
FINAL Minutes
June 4, 2015

PRESENT: Mike Yohan, John DeWitt, Jessalyn Zaykoski, Carla Halpern, Alyssa Rulf-Fountain, John Fitzgerald, Jack Radner, Dick Baldwin, members; Bob Mahler, Superintendant; Kelley Sullivan, Principal; Matt Galman, U28 accountant; Mandy Higgins and Trudy Smith, teachers; David Briand, Parent; Dan Hayes, Chair of U28 Committee.

1. Mike called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.
2. Public Hearings: Dan Hayes offered his support in creating a discussion about testing in Massachusetts and bringing communities together to increase their voice. He emphasized that the Collaborative would be a very useful asset in this process. Dan noted that having an organized event to discuss the subject of testing, inviting Glen Koocher and legislatures might get other school committees involved and, in turn, get our voice heard.
3. Minutes – May 7, 2015: The minutes were accepted as amended (Dick was added as present). Jack moved to approve, John F. seconded and the committee approved AIF.
4. Mahar: Carla reported that there is a new program called the Screening and Training on Drug Abuse Issues. This program addresses whether there is a substance abuse problem with students and if there is then how to help. Carla also noted Mahar may introduce a financial literacy requirement.
5. Union 28: Bob reported that the Superintendant Evaluation started. He also noted that the committee discussed advertising for a new business manager. Jess added that the committee also discussed school choice and each school spoke about why they did or did not choose to become a school of choice.
6. Principal's Report: Kelley first spoke about the 100 mile club event Sunday at Mahar where the founder of the club, Kara Lubin and adventure runner Jup Brown attended the event. Kelley said it was a huge success. Kelley also announced that she would be using the money from the Phelps family to work on the Nature Trail. 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students have been doing community service to fix up the nature trail. Kelley also noted that Ed Hines is retiring and his celebration will be after the talent show. Lastly, Kelley said she was glad testing was over and was very thankful to everybody who helped during the whole process.
7. Superintendant's Report: Bob reported that the PARCC test was changed from 2 testing windows to 1 window, similar to MCAS. He also noted that Jen Haggerty has met with all the committees and administrators in preparation for next year. Bob announced that the New Salem school budget was passed. Also, unfortunately, the Early Childhood Special Education Grant that Swift River receives has been cut by 46%. This is a \$13,000 cut. The grant is used toward the preschool teacher's salary. Lastly, Bob noted that there were 18 candidates for the business manager position and 6 will be interviewed next week.

8. Budget: Matt reported there would be a balance of \$1,388 to end the year. John D. moved to transfer the fiscal year 2015 operating budget from Administration \$12,542, Plant and Operations \$10,000, Fixed Costs \$8,185 for a total of \$30,727 to Instruction - \$21, 807, Student Services \$5,785, Fixed Assets \$533, Other School Programs \$2,602 for a total of \$30,727. Jess seconded this motion and the committee approved all in favor.
9. Parking Lot Safety: David Briand met to update the committee on the idea of boulders along the fence in the parking lot for the purpose of safety. He reported that the snow removal company was worried about hitting the boulders with their machinery considering they could not see them in the winter. David then suggested using concrete blocks inside the fence line with gardens around them. Dave, John D. and Kelley decided to use the summer to think of alternatives for safety along the parking lot fence. Carla moved to go forward with the sheep and goat fence along Wendell Road. Dick seconded this and the committee approved unanimously. Dave, John D. and Kelley decided to use the summer to think of alternatives for safety along the parking lot fence.
10. School Choice: The committee had a lengthy discussion about the pros and cons of school choice. They decided to speak about it again next fall.
11. School Choice Subcommittee: no interest
12. MCAS: tabled
13. Carla moved to go into executive session for the purpose of contract negotiations, Dick seconded and the committee agreed AIF.
14. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.