

WESTWOOD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Westwood, Massachusetts

**MEETING MINUTES**

**March 9, 2023**

**Attendance and Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm by Chair Charles Donahue. Also present were: Tony Mullin, Maya Khuri Plotkin, Amanda Phillips; and Dorothy Parmelee. Superintendent Emily Parks, and Director of Finance and Operations Lemma Jn-baptiste were present on behalf of the District.

Westwood Media Center was recognized for providing a live-stream of the meeting.

Harley Pease recorded the minutes.

**Superintendent's Report**

*Scholastic Art Awards*

Superintendent Parks congratulated the fourteen students at Westwood High School who earned Scholastic Art Awards.

*Student Opportunity Act FY'23 Progress Report*

Superintendent Parks introduced Director of Student Services Abigail Hanscom to provide details on the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Progress Report.

- WPS received supplemental funding in order to increase student achievement
- WPS identified a subgroup in a grade and content area (students with disabilities, grades 6-8) and have identified and implemented several Evidence Based Practices (EBP's)
- Used data to provide extended instruction, HQ aligned curriculum, and to find and eliminate structural and organization obstacles

*Snow day calendar adjustments*

Superintendent Parks noted that there has been an adjustment to the District Calendar to reflect the impacts of inclement weather this Winter.

- April 14<sup>th</sup> is now an early release day
- June 20 is the new last day of school for students

*Director of Student Services update*

Superintendent Parks announced that the Westwood Public Schools has hired Susan Maselli as the new Director of Student Services. Susan is joining the WPS from Milton Public Schools.

*Grade 5 and 6 programming*

Superintendent Parks announced new programming at grades 5 and 6. The programming is titled "Learning About Ourselves and Others – Building a Community of Respect, Sharing, and Understanding."

- Goal is to help build social and emotional skills.

**Discussion Items**

*FY'24 Budget*

Superintendent Parks presented an updated FY'24 budget.

- When Gov. Healey's budget was released, Chapter 70 state funding allocation for Westwood was *much* higher than expected
- After working with the Town, WPS will be able to work in this funding into the budget
- Using this new source of funding, the proposed cuts to staff will be restored and no longer be cut

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**MOTION** made by Amanda Phillips to open for public deliberation on the FY'24 Budget. Motion seconded by Maya Plotkin.

Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes  
Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

**MOTION** made by Amanda Phillips to close for public deliberation. Motion seconded by Maya Plotkin.

Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes  
Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

SEL Curriculum Pilot Update

Superintendent Parks introduced Social Emotional Learning Coordinator Donna Tobin to provide an update on the SEL Curriculum Pilot.

- There are several SEL practices and resources currently under revision and replacement that include, but are not limited to: Open Circle, Same and Different Like Me
- There are other SEL practices and resources being used that include, but are not limited to: Responsive Classroom, School Based Resource and Practices, and School Wide Activities

School Committee Chair Update/Liaison Reports

Chair's update

Chair Donahue appointed Dori Parmelee to the disability commission.

Chair Donahue announced that the town of Westwood's poet laureate is Lynne Vitti.

Chair Donahue announced several updates to the high school winter sports season.

Chair Donahue provided statistics on MCAS results for Westwood's students.

School building project update

Maya Plotkin provided a video and photos of the new school building.

Maya Plotkin provided rationale for the renaming of the new elementary school.

Maya Plotkin noted that the School Committee would like to re-name the athletic complex with the following name: the Paul R. Hanlon Athletic Complex.

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**MOTION** made by Maya Plotkin delegate the naming of the new elementary school to the students at the Hanlon and Deerfield schools. **MOTION** made by Maya Plotkin to dedicate the playing field complex to the memory of Paul R. Hanlon. Motion seconded by Tony Mullin.

Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes  
Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

Sandra Parlon, one of Paul R. Hanlon's children, provided information about her father to the School Committee.

Mildred Hanlon, one of Paul R. Hanlon's children, provided information about her father to the School Committee.

Policy review subcommittee

Chair Amanda Phillips announced that the policy review subcommittee is still working through Section I.

Superintendent search update

Tony Mullin announced that the search committee is on schedule. 25 candidates applied to the job posting.

Public Comment

Joanna French of Cranston Ave. spoke to the committee about the FY'24 budget. Ms. French thanked the community for stepping up and supporting our schools, teachers, and children for taking action when action was needed.

Ellen Siegel of Alder Rd. spoke in appreciation of the Superintendent, Director of Business and Finance, and School Committee for all of their work regarding the budget and WTA negotiations.

Action Items

**MOTION** made by Tony Mullin to approve February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Maya Plotkin.

Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes  
Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

**MOTION** made by Dori Parmelee to approve the Westwood Achievement Award for Grit and Determination scholarship. Motion seconded by Amanda Phillips.

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Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes  
Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

**MOTION** made by Tony Mullin to approve the Robotics Club competition trips. Motion seconded by Amanda Phillips.

Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes  
Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

**MOTION** made by Maya Plotkin to permit the installation of solar panels on the roof of the new elementary school ("Hanlon-Deerfield Project") and to designate the School Superintendent as the authorized signatory for the District to enter into a Power Purchasing Agreement (PPA) contingent upon the Select Board negotiating an agreement that satisfactorily meets the needs of the District. Motion seconded by Dori Parmelee.

Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes  
Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

**MOTION** made by Maya Plotkin to approve ratification of the 2022-2026 collective bargaining agreement between the Westwood Teachers Association and the Westwood School Committee according to the terms articulated in the tentative agreement dated February 27, 2023. Motion seconded by Tony Mullin.

Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes  
Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

**MOTION** made by Tony Mullin to approve the Westwood Public Schools FY'24 operating budget in the amount of \$54,743,565 and the FY'24 capital budget in the amount of \$1,017,000. Motion seconded by Maya Plotkin.

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Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes  
Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

**MOTION** made by Maya Plotkin of the following:

Having convened in an open meeting on March 9, 2023, prior to the Statement of Interest (SOI) submission closing date, Westwood School Committee has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form for the Sheehan Elementary School located at 549 Pond Street, Westwood, which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future,

Priority 5: Replacement, renovation, or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility; and

Priority 7: Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements;

and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the school district to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Motion seconded by Amanda Phillips.

Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes  
Anthony Mullin: Yes  
Amanda Phillips: Yes  
Maya Plotkin: Yes  
Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

**New Business**

Dori Parmelee asked to invite a community member who has helped with writing a legislative bill with Rep. McMurtry around the needs of special education students to come to the next School Committee meeting.

**Adjournment**

**MOTION** made by Dori Parmelee to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Maya Plotkin.

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Roll-call vote:

Charles Donahue: Yes

Anthony Mullin: Yes

Amanda Phillips: Yes

Maya Plotkin: Yes

Dorothy Parmelee: Yes

**Result: 5-0-0 (Approved)**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51pm.