



Date Approved/Released: _____

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School Committee Chair: M

JOINT MEETING OF
SCHOOL COMMITTEE/BOARD OF SELECTMEN/TOWN MODERATOR MEETING
Thursday, February 14, 2019 - 6:30 pm
2nd Floor - Town Hall Auditorium

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Call to order: 6:35 pm

School Committee Present: Greg Vine (Chair), Dawn Fronte (Vice-Chair), Larry Murphy, Felicia Nurmsen (Abs), Roann Demanche (Abs), Joan Landers, Interim Superintendent, Richard Ikonen, Business Manager

Board of Selectmen Present: Audrey LaBrie (Chair) M. Barbaro (Vice-Chair), Barbara Anderson, Keith Hickey, Town Manager, Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant

Town Moderator: Rick Morin

3. Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Representative:
 - a. Michael Barbaro spoke about his interest in the position of representative on the committee representing the Town of Winchendon. M. Barbaro was a member of the Winchendon School Committee for nine years and currently serves as a member of the Board of Selectmen. With the changes in the vocation programs throughout the state and the excellent technical programs such as engineering and the robotics currently being offered at Monty Tech. M. Barbaro spoke to the concerns people have regarding the process of admissions at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School and how they affect the finances of the Winchendon Public Schools. M. Barbaro also stated his years of experience and his understanding of the school finances and budgets would be an asset to this position.
- G. Vine opened the floor to questions from the boards. G. Vine started the questions, asking, what is the feasibility of getting the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Committee to open up the district agreement to update and revise to better serve the districts they currently draw students from each year. M. Barbaro stated he agreed it needed to be reopened and reviewed.
- L. Murphy asked about M. Barbaro's vision of this down the road. M. Barbaro believes our lack of AP (advanced placement) courses in the computer age needs to be addressed and offered in our schools to alleviate some of the departures of our students. Murdock

will need to expand the offerings in order to compete with Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School.

Town Moderator, Rick Morin asked if M. Barbaro would like to have a cap on the number of students admitted to Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School. M. Barbaro replied that the way in how they are filling the secondary slots is taking more of our students than other towns. We will need to approach this in a different way and hold to the amount that we had agreed upon. We also need to be sure we are not taking an opportunity away from one of our students.

B. Anderson asked M. Barbaro what his goals would be if he was appointed. M. Barbaro replied that he would like to first understand the financial aspect and see what we are getting for our money, then look at the current agreement and the possibilities of renegotiating the agreement. The last goal would be to see if the programs they currently offer can be taken advantage of by the local community.

G. Vine asked about the opening of the agreement and if M. Barbaro would be looking at the type of students Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School admits and how some students are being left behind due to attendance, behavior and even low-test scores. M. Barbaro stated that unfortunately, statewide test scores are a driving force behind which student go and which stay.

R. Morin said he misunderstood M. Barbaro last answer and asked if he wanted to limit the smart kids from going to Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School. R. Morin stated he would rather have a smart electrician, plumber, and other trades come to his home to work. R. Morin suggests maybe the schools should concentrate on upgrading the schools and not trying to force students to stay.

No other questions were asked, M. Barbaro was thanked.

- b. Ruth DeAmicis – Not in attendance.
- c. Amy Salter – Withdrew her name.
- d. Maureen Ward address the committees, M. Ward has 45 years plus of experience in education. M. Ward has been a Superintendent, Principal and a teacher. She would like to put her expertise to work to assist our students.

G. Vine asked if she would ask to have the agreement reopened. M. Ward stated that yes, she would and that most agreements have a three-year review clause. This process allows for better collaboration. The agreement has been amended a couple of times, so there is an avenue to address the issue and if we go in with an open mind, we can work to get the agreement changed or at least have an open discussion regarding the agreement.

G. Vine ask about the admissions process and how she would work at getting more equality in the students attending vocational school. M. Ward explained that she did speak to the Superintendent at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School and

was told that less than 9% of students applying were turned down. She further explained that the Superintendent said some students need to be in the right setting to shine.

L. Murphy asked if back in the '50s and through the '70s has the vocational schools' missions have changed and if so, what changes does she see. M. Ward replied that the emphasis from woodworking and other trades now are giving way to computer-based skills. These skills are what will move our students into cutting-edge jobs and careers. M. Ward believes the financial aspect of our losing funding is a state funding issue. We offer academics, and we need to expand our programs to include some of the courses and trades offered at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School. We also need to celebrate our students' achievements at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School. Whoever gets the appointment should make sure the Winchendon School Committee receives quarterly reports. M. Ward would like to have students of the quarter and support and be proud of their successes.

L. Murphy stated they system needs to be fair and equitable. M. Ward believes this position is about finances and policies as it relates to the students attending from our district. We will have to work at the changes over time and hopefully we can reach a better place. Both Winchendon Public Schools and Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School only want the best for the students, whether they graduate and go on to college or military or continue their trades in CAD, Woodworking or auto mechanics.

R. Morin voiced his opinion about not undermining a good system but rather work at building ours up to attract student to our district.

B. Anderson asked what M. Ward's goals would be as representative. M. Ward stated that because she is retired, she has the time to look at the whole picture, ask questions about what makes student's successful and why do some fail. Quarterly reports will assist in this process and the more work we do with our school the more successful they can become.

B. Anderson asked about the fairness and equitableness of this system. M. Ward expressed that we are a small community and we are unable to compete with the large and more affluent districts so we will need to work at getting more funding and put our current resources where it will better serve our students and help them be successful.

LaBrie indicated that the representation on the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School committee according to the 2017 town report, only allows us one representative to the technical school whereas other districts have two. We send more students, but we are not fairly represented on the committee. M. Ward agreed.

No further questions were asked, and M. Ward was thanked.

G. Vine polled both committees for their choice. M. Ward was voted unanimously to be appointed the new representative to the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Committee.

The candidates were thanked, and M. Ward stated that she would be available for questions through her email. L. Murphy asked that M. Ward let him know when she would be visiting the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School as he would like to attend.

G. Vine, School Committee Chair called for a recess at 7:07 pm

4. Student Representative Report Chloe Lawrence: None

5. Student/Staff Recognition: Students of the Month for February 2019

Pre-K: Jake Ahola, Grade 2: Ivy Fitzmaurice, Grade 5: Emma Woolfrey,
Grade 8: Paul Lafrennie

6. Citizen Questions and/or Comments:

Suzanne Radar, Library Trustee who is representing the Beals Memorial Library tonight spoke to the committee regarding a program they will be having on Wednesday, February 20th called a Musical Petting Zoo. The Springfield Symphony will be bringing an assortment of instrument for children to pick up and play. This program will give the kids an opportunity to see if they might like to learn to play this instrument.

Another event the library has planned is on Saturday, March 2nd Dr. Seuss Read-A-Thon. Suzanne invited the committee to come and read a book that day. They are hoping to read all 44 Dr. Seuss books. Suzanne passed out the invitation to all. G. Vine asked if they would choice a book, but was told they will be starting at 9:30 am and as people come in they will be handed the book that will be read next until the last book is read at 12:30 pm.

7. Teaching and Learning Highlights: None

6. New Business:

7. Consent Agenda:

- a. Field Trip: CT Science Center trip, Sherri Fairbanks Murdock High School
- b. Field Trip: Inn at East Hill Farm annual trip, Troy NH, for Pre-K

D. Fronte motioned to accept the two field trips on the consent agenda, L. Murphy seconded, G. Vine votes to accept as well. Vote to accept is unanimous.

8. Superintendent Report: None

9. Business Office Report: None

10. Policy Sub Committee: None

11. Old Business: None

12. Future Agenda Items:

- a. Health Center Overview
- b. Consolidation Committee

13. Committee Member Comments:

L. Murphy wanted to say he was looking forward to working with our new Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Representative, D. Maureen Ward to work together at making things fairer and more equitable for our students.

G. Vine echoes L. Murphy's sentiments and thanked Mr. Babraro for his willingness for possibly taking on that role.

14. Executive Session:

L. Murphy move to go into executive session for the sole purpose of discussing strategies for collective bargaining negotiations with the Winchendon Teachers Association, and that open session will have a detrimental effect on this process. The committee will reconvene in open session to vote. D. Fronte seconds. Roll call vote L. Murphy – Aye, D. Fronte – Aye, G. Vine - votes Aye

Reconvened 8:12 pm

G. Vine called to order from the executive session and will first vote on the two contracts that were negotiated with the Winchendon Teachers Association. First contract that runs retroactively from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. This contract does not have many changes but includes a 1% increase in salaries for the last half of the current budget year. There were minor language changes in this contract. L. Murphy made a motion to approve the July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 contract, D. Fronte seconded, all in favor, unanimous vote - Aye for approval.

Second contract the runs from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022. In summary, this contract calls for a 3% raise for each of the 3 year, a gradual decrease of longevity over the three years which at the end of this contract will result in a 50% reduction of current the longevity rates. Sick time buyback in the past was unlimited, this contract will limit the buyback to 184 days which will cap the buyback at \$9,400, and there were some language changes throughout this contract.

L. Murphy commented that if we look at the two contracts combined for the four years, teachers will receive about 6% or 1.5% per year. We feel between the salary agreement, longevity agreement, and sick time buyback agreement we have kept our teachers contracts competitive with other contracts in the area. We have been respectful of the quality of the teachers we have in our district and moving forward we feel we now have the resources available to give the teachers to develop programs to assist in improving student achievement. L. Murphy was proud of the teachers who worked collaboratively with the committee throughout the process. L. Murphy gave a shout out to interest-based bargaining, where the

federal government sends a facilitator for free to help schools and businesses plow through the process to make it as uncontentious as possible. L. Murphy thanked the WTA negotiating team and G. Vine for his support and assistance. G. Vine also thanked the WTA and noted the one-year contract was voted for at 93% and the three-year contract was voted for by 89%. G. vine called for a motion, L. Murphy made the motion to accept the WTA contract for July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2022, D. Fronte seconded the motion, all in favor, L. Murphy, D. Fronte, G. Vine. All saying Aye. Vote to approve unanimous.

Motion to adjourn made by L. Murphy, seconded D. Fronte, G. Vine Aye

15. Adjournment: 8:31 pm

Submitted by Carolyn Hendricks, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and School Committee