The meeting was called to order at 9:40 AM. Those present included School Committee Chair Matt Kelley, Vice Chair Melissa Martin, Secretary Linda Chow, members Sharon Gray and Michael D'Ortenzio Jr.; Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendent Cindy Mahr, and Director of Human Resources Gayle McCracken.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**
At around 9:41 AM, Mr. Kelley entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wellesley Teachers Association because, as Chair, he declared that having such discussion in Open Session would have a detrimental effect on such bargaining; to allow (1) Superintendent David Lussier, (2) Assistant Superintendent Cindy Mahr, and (3) Director of Human Resources Gayle McCracken to participate in the discussion; to comply with M.G.L. c. 30A, §22 to review minutes of the February 12, 2019 Executive Session; and to reconvene in Open Session after the conclusion of the Executive Session.

MOVED: Mr. D’Ortenzio Jr; SECONDED: Ms. Martin; ROLL CALL: Ms. Martin – Yes, Mr. D’Ortenzio Jr. – Yes, Ms. Gray – Yes, Ms. Chow – Yes, Mr. Kelley – Yes. 
VOTE to Approve: Yes – 5, No – 0.

At around 10:50 AM, the Committee reconvened in Open Session.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**
No one was present who wished to speak.

*Mr. Jim Roberti entered the room at approximately 10:51 am.*

**MINUTES APPROVAL**
Before approving the February 12, 2019 minutes, Mr. Kelley expressed interest in wanting to streamline the minutes approval process in the future. He proposed that draft minutes be distributed to the Committee in advance of the meeting when they would be reviewed – this proposed change would require the minutes be posted in draft form as soon as they are distributed. After a brief discussion, the Committee agreed that draft minutes should go to the Chair first who would decide whether or not to post and distribute those minutes in advance.
Following a brief discussion, upon a motion made by Mr. D'Ortenzio, Jr. and seconded by Ms. Martin, the Committee voted 4-0 to approve the February 12, 2019 minutes. Ms. Gray abstained.

**Updates**

Dr. Lussier updated the Committee on the plans for the School Committee meeting to be held in Boston on March 7, 2019. WPS’s METCO Director Ms. Doreen Ward is concerned that only a small number of METCO parents plan on attending so it is possible she will recommend postponing this meeting. Ms. Mahr briefly described the meetings which the Weston district holds in Boston every year.

Dr. Lussier went on to share some takeaways from a conversation he recently had with a Harvard University researcher who has found that METCO students outperform their peers in the Boston Public Schools and charter schools. And while there are lots of positives, there are some negatives; for example, there appears to be a lot of mystery around the METCO admissions process which has led to the perception that districts “cherry pick.”

**Assignments**

Next, the Committee discussed changes to the current assignments given Mr. D’Ortenzio Jr.’s imminent departure from the School Committee:

- **Playing Fields Task Force (PFTF):** Upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Ms. Martin, the Committee unanimously voted to designate Mr. D’Ortenzio Jr. the School Committee’s representative to the PFTF until the end of the school year.

- **Sustainable Energy Committee (SEC):** Mr. D’Ortenzio Jr. has agreed to continue serving on the SEC through the end of the school year, and recommended that Ms. Mahr take over for him as the representative for the Schools at that point in time.

- **Policy Subcommittee:** Mr. Kelley proposed that Ms. Chow be assigned to the Policy subcommittee.

**FY20 Budget**

The Committee discussed whether to take any action on WPS’s FY20 Budget in light of the Board of Selectmen’s discussion at their meeting that they would prefer the School Department’s budget request to be at 3.5% even though they have not asked for a joint meeting or any feedback. Key points of the discussion included the following:

- During a recent Advisory meeting, Advisory Committee member David Murphy had questioned how the guideline from the Board of Selectmen for WPS could be set at 3% when level service already represents an increase of ~2.94%

- A member of the Committee suggested possibly revisiting the categorization of WPS budget items – level service vs. strategic investment vs. other critical need – but the Committee concluded that it was not needed at this time
• The differential between a 3.5% budget and a 3.65% budget is approximately $154,887
• It was noted that there needs to be much more transparency on the part of the Town around revenue assumptions, and that this should occur earlier in the budget process

Following the discussion, the Committee agreed not to take any action at this time and to move forward with the 3.65% budget to the Advisory Meeting on Saturday.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT
Dr. Lussier reported that the Sprague School Principal Susan Snyder has officially announced her retirement at the end of the current school year, following 5 years in Wellesley and close to 40 years in service to several public school districts in Massachusetts. The Administration has been planning for this for a while. Next steps include: holding visioning sessions on March 11 – one with Sprague educators during the day and one with parents that evening; forming an interview team of staff and parents; and holding “Finalist days” the first week of April, with the goal of appointing Ms. Snyder’s successor by the end of April.

Dr. Lussier provided a brief update on the Director of Student Services who remains on a leave of absence. It is not known when she will return. The District has been fortunate to have Ms. Arlene Argir filling in as interim director.

ADJOURNMENT
At approximately 11:45 AM, upon a motion made by Mr. D’Ortenzio Jr. and seconded by Ms. Martin, the Committee unanimously VOTED to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Chow
Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used
• February 12, 2019 Open Session Minutes