The meeting was called to order at 1:05 PM. Those present included School Committee Chair Matt Kelley, Vice Chair Melissa Martin, Secretary Linda Chow, members Sharon Gray and Jim Roberti; Superintendent David Lussier and Assistant Superintendent Cindy Mahr.

Mr. Kelley welcomed Mr. Roberti to the Committee following his election on March 5.

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

**REPORTS**
Dr. Lussier informed the Committee that the 2017-2018 District Progress Report should be arriving in every residential mailbox in town by Monday, March 10. The report will be mailed to Boston families as well.

Dr. Lussier updated the Committee on the Administration’s response to the racial incident that occurred at the High School. Principal Dr. Jamie Chisum launched an investigation and sent an email to inform the WHS community. Dr. Lussier followed up with a communication to the entire school community. Educators and students have rallied to show their support for the teacher who received an anonymous email containing racist and inappropriate language.

The Committee was reminded that tonight’s meeting in Boston is intended to be a dialogue meeting between School Committee and Boston families. METCO Director Ms. Doreen Ward will help facilitate the conversation.

Ms. Martin provided an update on the two WMS-related articles for Annual Town Meeting (ATM) as well as the League of Women Voters (LWV) preparation sessions for ATM:
- The Advisory Committee voted unanimously in favor of Article 20 to appropriate funds for WMS building systems study design at its February 27 meeting
- Advisory to vote on Article 19 to appropriate funds for WMS piping construction on March 20 (when the Facilities Management Department should have bids in hand)
- LWV will host 2 ATM prep sessions (March 21 and 24) for Town Meeting Members, and School Committee should be prepared to present on Articles 8, 19 and 20

The Committee was reminded that Wellesley Education Foundation’s “Chair Ceremony,” honoring WPS educators who have served for 25 years in the District, will be held on March 14 starting at 5 PM.
FY20 BUDGET
Mr. Kelley started the discussion by stating that he is not expecting the Committee to take any action during this meeting; as it will be on the agenda of the March 12 meeting. He then reviewed the current status of the FY20 Budget:

- The FY19 adjusted total budget was $74,468,917 and, while the Committee views the FY20 budget as 3.65% over FY19, Town Hall views it as 3.71%
- The Board of Selectmen (BOS) voted to reduce the School Budget increase to 3.5%, sent it to Advisory and plans to have the 3.5% budget as part of the Omnibus Budget
- Deciding not to take action would be the same as agreeing to the lower percentage voted by the BOS. The Committee could make a motion to amend now rather than waiting until the last minute
- There are two additional contextual factors – Executive Director Ms. Blythe Robinson had brought forward a balanced budget with the School Budget at 3.65%, and no other department has had its budget reduced even though several are over guidelines

Mr. Roberti shared a question which he had heard some members of Advisory raise – if last year’s Special Education budget included placeholder funds to cover unexpected expenses, whereas the Special Education budget in FY20 does not, given that it is based primarily on known expenses only, the question arises as to where have those funds been allocated? The Committee discussed and noted that those funds have been redirected to General Education. In the past, any surplus in the Special Education budget would have ended up being turned back to the Town.

Since the last School Committee meeting, Ms. Mahr came up with a proposal that factors in potential changes to the revenue side of the budget. It appears WPS is on track to turn back approximately $360,000 at the end of the school year, largely based on how much had been budgeted in FY19 for out-of-district placements. School Committee could decide to carry forward $155,000 of circuit breaker revenue which in turn could be applied to Special Education expenses, resulting in an offset of 0.15% in expenses. The sources of funds would need to be monitored and the impact of this approach explored further. Before wrapping up the discussion, Mr. Kelley indicated that the Committee probably needs to make a decision at the March 12 meeting. He also asked Dr. Lussier to think about what the Administration would put on a “gap” list to reduce the budget to 3.5%.

ADJOURNMENT
At approximately 2:17 PM, upon a motion made by Ms. Gray and seconded by Mr. Roberti, the Committee unanimously VOTED to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Chow
Secretary