

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
April 10, 2023 6:00 p.m.
Superintendent's Conference Room**

Call to Order

Committee Chair Leda Eizenberg called the meeting to order at 6pm and announced that it was accessible via conference line and was being recorded for future viewing. Also present were Vice Chair Linda Chow, Members Christina Horner and Catherine Mirick, and Superintendent of Schools David Lussier. Secretary Craig Mack was able to participate via discussion via Zoom, but as it was an in-person meeting he was unable to vote.

Public Comment

There was no one on the line for Public Comment.

Reports

Ms. Mirick shared that the Hardy Groundbreaking had been a wonderful success. Ms. Eizenberg praised the student speaker and the work of the Principal and educators to make the project a learning event for students.

Ms. Eizenberg announced that the order of the agenda would be switched such that we would begin by re-voting Article 19, as the final number had changed. Ms. Mirick explained that an additional bill came in that was paid from Hardy Feasibility, such that the amount requested was \$400 less than previously voted. The new number is 1,070,155.48.

Ms. Mirick sought a motion to approve Article 19 as amended. Ms. Eizenberg moved and Ms. Chow seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Ms. Chow provided an update on Article 17, the Antiracism Antibias Resolution and Request for Equity Funding. A Motion to Amend is being presented to Advisory to split the resolution from the financial request. As the Committee and the DEI Task Force have previously discussed and rejected this idea, we will not be supporting the amendment. Ms. Chow also shared that this evening at Annual Town Meeting a Town Meeting Member will be sharing the racist covenant she found on her deed.

Update on Hunnewell Track & Field Phase II: Consideration of Outside Counsel

Ms. Chow began the update on Hunnewell Track and Field Phase II. She stated that interesting questions and discussions had arisen at the Wetlands Protection Committee (WPC) meeting, and the WPC chair and administrator reminded the WPC of their purview. Ms. Chow reshared the Epsilon consultant letter with the WPC. Supporters of the project also spoke and reminded the WPC that they need to focus on regulations. David Klinch, the Principal from Epsilon suggested retaining outside counsel who specializes in wetlands regulations, bylaws and laws. Ms. Chow has confirmed that School Committee is the only board other than SB that can hire an attorney.

Ms. Horner asked about the process for hiring an attorney. As Barry Fogel was recommended by Epsilon, is there a process to determine that all vendors have access. Ms. Chow explained that because the engagement is less than \$10,000 we don't have to take bids. Dr. Lussier added that when WPS hires a vendor, there is an RFP process. Ms. Eizenberg suggested that in the future the Committee might want to develop a process for ensuring equity and access even for smaller projects. Ms. Mirick asked if we would be using Field Fund money. Ms. Chow explained that the Field Fund money can be used for permitting, and this request falls under permitting. Ms. Eizenberg suggested ensuring that the motion states that WPS funds will not be used for hiring the attorney. Ms. Chow also stated that Mr. Fogel will reduce his fees because we are a school district.

Ms. Chow reminded us that on March 21, she had suggested reengaging Epsilon; this engagement had not required a vote **because the District had engaged Epsilon in the past. At this time, their work will also be paid by money coming from the Field Fund.**

Ms. Mirick moved to move forward with hiring Barry Fogel using Field Fund money. Ms. Eizenberg seconded. Ms. Chow, Ms. Mirick and Ms. Eizenberg voted in support. Ms. Horner voted against. The motion passed three to one.

Ms. Mirick informed the committee that the Climate Action Committee decided against sending another letter about the project as they had already urged energy efficiency.

Ms. Eizenberg sought a motion to enter into Executive Session – Under G.C. c.30A, §21(A), exemption #3 -Strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wellesley Educators Association.

She invited Superintendent Dr. David Lussier, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Sandy Trach, Director of Human Resources Monica Visco, and Labor Counsel Jim Pender and Rick Gello to join the session, and announced that we would be adjourning directly from the Executive Session.

Ms. Chow moved and Ms. Mirick seconded. Ms. Mirick voted yes. Ms. Chow voted yes. Ms. Horner voted yes. Ms. Eizenberg voted yes. The motion carried 4-0 and the Committee moved into Executive Session.

Signed: Leda Eizenberg, Chair