

Board of Education Minutes  
Tri-Board Meeting  
April 28, 2016

**DRAFT**

A joint meeting of the Boards of Selectmen, Finance and Education was held on Thursday, April 28, 2016, at 7:00 p.m. in the Wheeler High School Shaw Media Center. Present for the Board of Selectmen were Mr. Murphy, Mr. Mullane, and Mr. Donahue; present for the Board of Finance were Mr. Pavlovics, Mrs. Howell, and Mr. Testa; and present for the Board of Education were Mr. Karpinski, Mr. Carlson, and Mrs. Wagner. Also present were Mr. Nero and members of the Ad Hoc Committee. The meeting started at 7:08 p.m. Mr. Donahue said the resolution has been through all three boards. The town meeting will be on May 9<sup>th</sup> with a referendum to be held on May 16<sup>th</sup>. It will be a full-day referendum.

2. Public Comments – M. Donahue (BOS) – None.

3. Proposal Status and Referendum Timeline – M. Urgo – Mr. Urgo reviewed some of the changes since the last Tri-Board meeting was held. He reviewed the space standard waivers. He said we are a very good candidate to receive that. He reviewed the “piecemeal” approach. He reviewed the cost of the last project in today’s dollars. Mr. Urgo reviewed the language that will be on the ballot. Mr. Urgo reviewed the projected mil rate increase of 2.8 with the space waiver and 3.03 without the waiver. He gave some examples of what the monthly cost for the homeowner would be per month based on the style of house they owned. He went over the cost benefits of proceeding with the project now and included the 2.875% USDA rate and the reimbursement rate of 46.07% from the state. Mr. Donahue said the timeline has been laid out. He said the selectmen will have some information available beforehand. Mr. Carlson asked what the next step would be if the referendum passes. Mr. Nero said we would have to sit with the architect at that time. He elaborated. There was discussion and Mr. Urgo had comment. Mr. Donahue explained that some of the wording in the resolution will be having the Ad Hoc take over as the building committee and he elaborated. Mrs. Wagner asked about a professional to oversee the project. Mr. Donahue explained that there would be one and had further comment. Mr. Pavlovics questioned the conversion of the Ad Hoc Committee and Mr. Donahue explained. Mrs. Howell asked about information being sent out to the citizens. There was discussion. A postcard will be sent out with the information on the referendum. Mr. Mullane had comment. Mrs. Wagner asked about getting more voting signs out in the town. There was discussion. Mr. Murphy said he would be working with the building committee to get the application to the USDA to have it ready to go after the referendum. He elaborated. Mr. Karpinski asked about the USDA funding. Mr. Murphy explained it is a loan program and he has met with them. They finance smaller towns. Further questions were asked and answered.

4. General Discussion – Boards – Mr. Donahue said this meeting was called at the last meeting to see where we are. He had further comment. Mr. Borden commented on the tax information that was presented. He had comment about not getting that information out. He thought if we could get the tax information on the web site it would be helpful. Mr. Nero had comment about information that gets circulated. There was discussion. Mrs. Wagner had comment on the tax information. Mr. Murphy had comment about the information that would be included in the town meeting package. Mr. Pavlovics had comment about the information. Mr. Murphy had comment and asked if any board members had hesitation about anything presented and if they did, to say so. Mr. Pavlovics had further comment. Mrs. Wagner had further comment about information on a mailer. Mr. Testa and Mr. Pavlovics had further comment. Mr. Nero commented on

what the Board of Finance voted on at their meeting. Mr. Carlson felt that the Board of Finance should release a number rather than it coming from the Ad Hoc Committee. There was further discussion. Mr. Donahue said he has heard through the discussion that everyone wants the numbers presented to be accurate before they go out. Mr. Donahue said he didn't object to getting the Ad Hoc Committee's information out to the public. He had further comment. A citizen thought that the projected mil rate would be a good thing to put on the postcard that is going out. He elaborated. He suggested putting the wording of the referendum out as well. He said the sooner you get the information out for review the better. He had further comment. Mr. Donahue asked questions of the citizen and discussion ensued about disseminating the information. Mrs. Howell asked about getting the town meeting packet on the web site for the public to review. Mr. Murphy commented. There was further comment. Mrs. Mehringer-Macina, citizen, had comment about getting the information out. Mr. Pavlovics had comment on the mailer. He had further comment. Mrs. Wagner commented on having information being at the activities going on around town. There was further comment. Mr. Carlson commented on the reason the Tri-Board had been set up was to have better communication between the Boards. He elaborated. He spoke of the negativity that has come out. He spoke of the requests that have been coming in to the superintendent's office and the amount of time that it has taken to answer these questions. Mr. Carlson commented on email communication he has received from a board of finance member. He elaborated and had further comment. He asked that there be respect between board members. Mr. Donahue said in the past there was a policy of having board chairs communicate with each other. Mr. Carlson said we don't always agree on where we want to go but we are still neighbors. Mrs. Wagner asked if maybe we should go back to that policy. Mr. Carlson said he doesn't mind answering anyone but as long as it is respectful. Mr. Urgo said as we start to forecast unknowns, there are the things that we may know about and those we don't. We never speak of the revenue when forecasting. He elaborated. Mr. Urgo said he would appreciate the Board of Finance looking at the numbers. Mrs. Kincaid, citizen, asked what the next steps would be. Mr. Donahue said the committees will be getting together. Ms. Amy French, citizen, asked about the PTO sending something out. Mr. Nero said any town agency cannot do it. He said from this point on since the town meeting has been called, we are on "government time" now. Mr. Murphy said he will share an attorney's opinion on this type of thing for what should and should not be done. He said the wording is "town resources" and he elaborated. Mr. Nero asked about the PTO sending out a flyer in the backpack. Ms. French clarified email communication as well and the answer was no. Laura Tillinghast, citizen, had comment on the information that needs to go out. She said it is our responsibility to get it out there. Mr. Borden had comment about information going out. He felt we are in the dark ages with communication. He had further comment.

5. Next Meeting – R. Carlson (BOE) – Mr. Donahue asked if the Boards wanted to get together again next month. Mr. Carlson felt it was important to keep meeting. He said a lot of good comes out of these meetings. Mr. Urgo had comment about the meetings from a citizen at the Board of Finance meeting. He had further comment.

6. Public Comments – Covered above in item 4.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to The Board of Education