

Woodbury School Board Meeting Minutes  
UNAPPROVED  
November 18, 2008

Board Members in Attendance: Matt Hill; Retta Dunlap, Chair; Lindsay Whelan; Chris Casey; Judy Sassi.

Members of the Community in Attendance: Charles Jensen; Stephanie Fraser; Lisa Flood; Lisa Silk; Kim Silk; Chance Payette; Monty Shatney; Robin Grant; Heather Lanphear, Dan Brush, Lara Sobel, Tim Faryniarz.

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:02pm
2. Lindsay made a motion to go into executive session to discuss personnel issues. Motion was seconded by Chris. Board entered executive session at 6:04pm. Board came out of executive session at 6:21pm.
3. Pledge of Allegiance:

Superintendent Mark Andrews sent an email to Retta to be presented to the board. Mark would like to see the recitation of the Pledge moved to the classrooms effective December 1, 2008. This was prompted by reports that some children felt uneasy or unsafe at school.

Board and community discussion followed. Members of the community who have children in WES expressed the desire to leave the recitation of the Pledge in the current format. The children are meeting in the hallway area between the four classrooms each morning to hear announcements and recite the Pledge which is lead by a sixth grader. The parents present at the meeting felt this was working very well and did not want it changed.

Boardmembers discussed Mark's recommendation in light of the motion passed during the November 4, 2008 meeting. At that meeting, the board had voted to support the staff of WES in their efforts to incorporate the Pledge into the daily routine of the school. There were concerns that a motion to approve Mark's recommendation would negate the vote of support given by this motion. There was discussion regarding the role of the board and the fact that the board is not in place to "micro-manage" the school. Lindsay initially made a motion, seconded by Chris, to support the teachers, staff, and principal in their original decision to say the pledge on a daily basis, and that it is up to them to decide where the Pledge is said each day. In discussion, other members of the board stated their belief that this motion was redundant and a retread of the motion made on November 4. Lindsay withdrew this motion.

Lindsay stated that to approve Mark's recommendation would be sending a contradictory message to the school staff. Retta said the motion of November 4, 2008, made it plain that the board left the implementation of the daily recitation of the pledge up to the school staff; the staff is free to decide where the pledge is said---whether in the classroom, in the hall, or at the flagpole---as long as it is done daily. We do not want to

take that freedom away from the staff. Lindsay then made the motion to reject Mark's recommendation to bring the Pledge into the classroom and to leave the Pledge as it is. Chris seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

The board also discussed the "safety issues" mentioned by Mark. Unfortunately, no one had any specific information regarding this comment. There was general discussion that the school policies for visitors may need to be looked at in the future to ensure the safety of the school. Hopefully Mark can provide more information at the next board meeting.

Retta brought up the need to deal with the media regarding the negative publicity the school, town, and board have received. Retta provided an overview of the visit of the press to the school on Friday, November 14, 2008. Retta said someone should be the contact person to deal with the press. She said it does not have to be her, but she is willing to be the contact person, if necessary. Chris felt a singular statement from the board was necessary. Retta suggested a press release. Judy will work on a statement for the board to review at the next meeting.

#### 4. Budget

Retta provided a copy of last year's budget so the board could familiarize themselves with the items in the budget. A discussion which involved community and board members followed. Some areas of interest/concern noted were:

- i. Health insurance cost
- ii. Staff—can there be any reduction?
- iii. Copier lease—are two copiers necessary?
- iv. Phone service—is there a cheaper alternative?
- v. Worker's comp—has this ever been put out to bid?
- vi. Technology services—what exactly is this?
- vii. Health repairs
- viii. Psychological, speech, and occupational therapy services—are these part of special ed?
- ix. Board of education expenses
- x. Pre-K
- xi. Maintenance contracted services
- xii. Transportation

#### 5. Matt made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Lindsay. Meeting adjourned at 9:34pm.