

Central Berkshire Regional School Committee  
Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 22, 2022

A regular meeting of the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee, held in-person and remotely at Craneville Elementary School, on Thursday, September 22, 2022, was called to order by Chair Craft-Reiss at 7:00 p.m.

For the record, the chair does not vote unless noted.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL

Present: Members Alpert, Bartels, Case, DiFazio, DiTomasso, Eberwein, Emerson, Gelinas, Lacatell, Lattizzori, Lounsbury, Peters, Stuart, Tucker and Chair Craft-Reiss.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Superintendent Leslie Blake-Davis, Assistant Superintendent Michael Henault, Director of Finance & Operations Gregory Boino, Recording Secretary Michelle White, and Members of the Audience.

Chair Craft-Reiss stated the meeting was being audio and video recorded.

ARTICLE 12467      RESPONSES FROM THE AUDIENCE

Joe Diver said that although a handicap door at Wahconah is not required per building code, he advocates to have one put in; this is meant to be a multi-use building.

Lynn Clemens stated that CDC statistics from 2021 show there are 13.7 % people live with a mobility disability; she requests considering to vote for a push button like the one at Nessacus. The Wahconah was pitched to be a multi-use building and needs to be accessible all.

ARTICLE 12468      STUDENT AFFAIRS

A. Student Reports

1. High School Representative

Sheffield Drewy reported the past few weeks of school have gone smoothly; there was an extracurricular fair for freshman to let them know of all the extracurricular activities to get involved in; clubs are up and running; the Buddy Walk is this weekend; students are adjusting to their schedules; students enjoy the Friday homeroom trivia.

B. Other

ARTICLE 12469      FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Warrants

Member Lacatell reported the warrants were previously signed by members of the School Committee.

<b>Warrant No. PR23-04</b>	<b>August 18, 2022</b>
<b>PAYROLL</b>	
<b>General Fund: Operating Expenses</b>	
<b>Employee Wages</b>	<b>\$ 427,306.60</b>
<b>Other Funds</b>	

Revolving Accounts	\$ -
Grants	\$ 19,886.63
School Lunch	\$ 3,159.42
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$ 23,046.05</b>
<b>Total Payroll</b>	<b>\$ 450,352.65</b>
<b>Employer Medicare</b>	<b>\$ 6,169.14</b>
<b>Total Payroll and Taxes</b>	<b>\$ 456,521.79</b>

<b>Warrant No. PR23-04D</b>	<b>August 18, 2022</b>
<b>PAYROLL DEDUCTION</b>	-
	-
<u><b>Accounts Payable from Agency Accounts</b></u>	
<b>Payroll Deductions</b>	
403B (Various Companies)	\$ 11,120.00
457 (Various Companies)	\$ 10.00
Wage Garnishments	\$ 52.00
Berkshire United Way	\$ 24.00
Union Dues	\$ 253.50
Federal Income Tax	\$ 39,270.80
Berkshire County Retirement	\$ 11,604.17
Mass Teachers Retirement	\$ 81,717.42
OBRA Retirement	\$ 376.58
Medicare Employee Contributions	\$ 6,169.10
Massachusetts Income Tax	\$ 20,074.69
Employee Contributions to Insurances	\$ 268.34
<b>Total Payable</b>	<b>\$ 170,940.60</b>

<b>Warrant No. PR23-05</b>	<b>September 1, 2022</b>
<b>PAYROLL</b>	
<b>General Fund: Operating Expenses</b>	
<b>Employee Wages</b>	<b>\$ 534,597.71</b>
<b>Other Funds</b>	
Revolving Accounts	\$ 4,688.34
Grants	\$ 29,078.65
School Lunch	\$ 4,173.00
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$ 37,939.99</b>
<b>Total Payroll</b>	<b>\$ 572,537.70</b>

<b>Employer Medicare</b>	<b>\$ 7,804.46</b>
<b>Total Payroll and Taxes</b>	<b>\$ 580,342.16</b>

<b>Warrant No. PR23-05D</b>	<b>September 1, 2022</b>
<b>PAYROLL DEDUCTION</b>	
<b><u>Accounts Payable from Agency Accounts</u></b>	
<b>Payroll Deductions</b>	
403B (Various Companies)	\$ 14,682.18
457 (Various Companies)	\$ 10.00
Wage Garnishments	\$ 52.00
Union Dues	\$ 253.50
Federal Income Tax	\$ 50,390.75
Berkshire County Retirement	\$ -
Mass Teachers Retirement	\$ -
OBRA Retirement	\$ 247.01
Medicare Employee Contributions	\$ 7,804.52
Massachusetts Income Tax	\$ 25,324.27
Employee Contributions to Insurances	\$ 116.92
<b>Total Payable</b>	<b>\$ 98,881.15</b>

<b>Warrant #AP23-05</b>	<b>September 9, 2022</b>
<b>ACCOUNTS PAYABLE</b>	
<b>Operating Expenses: General Fund</b>	
Accounts Payable	\$ 355,106.69
Employee Life Insurance District Share	\$ 811.23
Retiree Life & Health Insurance District Share	\$ 303.30
<b>Total General Fund</b>	<b>\$ 356,221.22</b>
<b>Operating Expenses: Other Funds</b>	
Agency: Employee Share Life Insurance	\$ 137.52
Agency: Retiree Share Life Insurance	\$ 136.88
Prior Year Encumbrances	\$ 14,420.96
Grants	\$ 29,401.39
<b>Total Other Funds:</b>	<b>\$ 44,096.75</b>
<b>Revolving</b>	
WRHS Football	\$ 197.76
WRHS Soccer - Boys	\$ 6.00
WRHS Soccer - Girls	\$ 6.00

WRHS Student Activity	\$ 214.58
<b>Total Revolving Funds</b>	<b>\$ 424.34</b>
<b>Total Authorization for Payment</b>	<b>\$ 400,742.31</b>

<b>Warrant No. PR23-06</b>	<b>September 15, 2022</b>
<b>PAYROLL</b>	
<b>General Fund: Operating Expenses</b>	
<b>Employee Wages</b>	<b>\$ 563,064.67</b>
<b>Other Funds</b>	
Revolving Accounts	\$ 5,542.17
Grants	\$ 79,926.30
School Lunch	\$ 12,957.98
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>\$ 98,426.45</b>
<b>Total Payroll</b>	<b>\$ 661,491.12</b>
<b>Employer Medicare</b>	<b>\$ 8,932.93</b>
<b>Total Payroll and Taxes</b>	<b>\$ 670,424.05</b>

<b>Warrant No. PR23-06D</b>	<b>September 15, 2022</b>
<b>PAYROLL DEDUCTION</b>	
	-
	-
<u><b>Accounts Payable from Agency Accounts</b></u>	
<b>Payroll Deductions</b>	
403B (Various Companies)	\$ 15,552.56
457 (Various Companies)	\$ 60.00
Wage Garnishments	\$ 52.00
Union Dues	\$ 5,933.87
Federal Income Tax	\$ 52,321.25
Berkshire County Retirement	\$ -
Mass Teachers Retirement	\$ -
OBRA Retirement	\$ 815.26
Medicare Employee Contributions	\$ 8,932.89
Massachusetts Income Tax	\$ 28,988.58
Employee Contributions to Insurances	\$ 116.92
<b>Total Payable</b>	<b>\$ 112,773.33</b>

B. Gifts and Donations

1. Approval to Establish New Student Activity Accounts

MOVED BY MEMBER LACATELL, SECONDED BY MEMBER ALPERT

*That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves new student activity accounts at Nessacus Regional Middle School for the Class of 2028 and the Class of 2029, as recommended by the District Treasurer.*

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Fifteen members.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: None.

Motion carries unanimously.

2. Fundraising Event for the Student Activity Account

MOVED BY MEMBER LACATELL, SECONDED BY MEMBER LATTIZZORI

*That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the Nessacus Regional Middle School fundraising event of selling baked goods October 17 - October 28, 2022 to raise funds to help defer costs for the end of year eighth grade field trip, as recommended by the District Treasurer.*

Director Boino clarified the baked goods will be sold outside of the school day.

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Fifteen members.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: None.

Motion carries unanimously.

3. Fundraising Event for the Student Council Fund

MOVED BY MEMBER LACATELL, SECONDED BY MEMBER ALPERT

*That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the Annual Craft & Small Business Fair at Wahconah Regional High School on November 19, 2022, to raise funds for the Student Council Fund, as recommended by the District Treasurer.*

It was noted date has been changed to November 20.

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Fifteen members.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: None.

Motion carries unanimously.

4. Acceptance of Donation from the Wahconah Drama Booster Club

MOVED BY MEMBER LACATELL, SECONDED BY MEMBER DITOMASSO

*That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee accepts the donation from the Wahconah Drama Booster Club in the amount \$3,931.27 to be deposited into the Wahconah Student Activities Drama Account, as recommended by the District Treasurer.*

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Fifteen members.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: None.  
Motion carries unanimously.

ARTICLE 12470 SECRETARY’S REPORT

A. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 25, 2022

Member Peters requested that under his report of the Wahconah Building Project to remove the specific name of the track official he talked about.

MOVED BY MEMBER LACATELL, SECONDED BY MEMBER CASE

*To accept the minutes of the regular meeting of August 25, 2022, as amended.*

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Fifteen Members.  
Nays: None.  
Abstentions: None.  
Motion carries unanimously.

B. Minutes of the Special Meeting of September 8, 2022

Member Lounsbury commented that ‘Educators’ was listed twice; the second one should be ‘students’.

MOVED BY MEMBER LACATELL, SECONDED BY MEMBER CASE

*To accept the minutes of the regular meeting of September 8, 2022, as amended.*

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Fifteen members.  
Nays: None.  
Abstentions: None.  
Motion carries unanimously.

ARTICLE 12471 COMMUNICATIONS

C. Report of the Chair

1. MASC Charting the Course Training

Member Lacatell was impressed with the presentation; he came away from each section learning something new; he encourages all members to attend.

2. School Committee Self Evaluation

Chair Craft-Reiss reported Member Peters is working on the collaborations to present in October; Member Peters added that there needs to be context to reflect some ratings; he will reach out to the members.

3. Handicap Door Access at Wahconah Regional High School

Director Boino reported the subcontractors would be at the high school tomorrow to give a price proposal for early next week. Member Peters said that depending on the cost, the School Committee may not have to vote to go forward; the Superintendent can sign off on any allowable change order under a certain dollar amount.

4. November 2022 School Committee Election

Members whose term expires November 2022

Becket	Dr. Barbara Craft-Reiss
Cummington	Todd Emerson

Dalton                      John Bartels, Rob DiFazio, Dr. Amy Gelinas, Ellen Lattizzori  
Hinsdale                  David Stuart

Chair Craft-Reiss stated Member Emerson will be a write in for the election.

ARTICLE 12472          SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Reports

1. Curriculum

a. Report

Member Lattizzori reported the subcommittee met September 12. Topics included the Wahconah student field trip to France and school handbooks.

French teacher Suzanne Moquin spoke briefly of the places the students would visit; there is a sliding scale fee based on the number of students attending; the trip is open for any student, not just for those taking French.

In response how she would handle any medical issues, Ms. Moquin stated she has dealt with this on a prior trip; the high school nurse does review any medical issues prior to the students going on the trip.

Members discussed the cost of the trip and the tight deadline to make a down payment. Ms. Moquin stated there is a fundraising meeting next week with the parents where they will discuss the different types of fundraisers; the purpose of fundraising is for the bus transportation to Boston; she added she is also applying for a grant to offset some of the trip cost; knowing the tight deadline, the company will work with her.

b. Approval of the Overnight Field Trip for Wahconah Students to France

MOVED BY MEMBER LATTIZZORI, SECONDED BY MEMBER CASE

*That Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approve an overnight field trip for Wahconah students to France, April 14 – April 22, 2023, as recommended by the Curriculum Subcommittee.*

ROLL CALL

Ayes:                      Fifteen members.

Nays:                      None.

Abstentions:          None.

Motion carries unanimously.

c. Student Handbooks

Assistant Superintendent Henault said Massachusetts state laws dictate what needs to be in each handbook; the handbooks are reviewed yearly; school councils will work on revamping the handbooks so that is more user friendly.

The next meeting will be October 24 to discuss the family engagement surveys.

2. Finance

a. Report

Member Peters reported the subcommittee met last week to review the budget calendar and guidelines. The next meeting will be October 11.

3. Policy

a. Report

Member DiFazio reported the subcommittee met September 21 to discuss the role and selection of textbooks and curriculum; based on MASC, DESE and state law, it is the School Committee's role to approve major curriculum adoption; the purchase of textbooks and other educational sources is the responsibility of the building principals

under the discretion of the Superintendent. There also was discussion on cell phone use at high and middle schools; high school students can have their phones with them; middle school students must keep the phone in their lockers.

- b. Approval of First Reading Revision Appendix B: District By-Laws, Article III: Organization, Officers, Meetings, Section 3

Member Lacatell recommended making the change in the appendix and add “Should the School Committee Chairperson wish to serve on a special or standing committee as a voting member or chairperson, he/she may do so after a vote of the full School Committee.”

MOVED BY MEMBER DIFAZIO, SECONDED BY MEMBER PETERS

*That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee approves the first reading to Appendix B: District By-Laws, Article III: Organization, Officers, Meetings, Section 3, as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.*

Member Stuart questioned the limit of committees the chair may serve on; he also referred to Policy 1570 and the Chairperson’s voting rights.

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Fourteen members.  
Nays: Member Stuart.  
Abstentions: None.  
Motion carries.

The next meeting date has not been set.

4. Personnel
  - a. Report

Member Lacatell reported the subcommittee has not met; there is a meeting September 28.

5. Safety and Wellness

Member Lounsbury reported the subcommittee met September 21. Nurse Galliher reported to the subcommittee about the number of upper respiratory illnesses in the elementary schools and Covid cases of staff and students at the high school; at school testing has been eliminated; tests are being sent home for symptomatic students; the state no requires reporting cases, but the schools are keeping track, athletes need to be cleared by their physicians per the District Physician before returning. There also was discussion of reestablishing the wellness advisory council; Food Services Director spoke about supply chain no longer is an issue; he is working on providing more fresh produce, breakfast options and overall menu options. The work on Policy 6330 continues and will be sent to the Policy Subcommittee when it is finished. The next meeting will be October 19.

- a. Report

B. Others

6. Wahconah Building Project

- a. Report

Member Peters reported the committee no longer meets bi-weekly; work continues on the small punch list; there are mainly landscape issues.

- b. Town Meeting Dates for the Wahconah Track



Member Peters reported most towns will hold special town meetings to approve replacing the Wahconah track; towns had expressed concerns of maintaining the track and not allowing vehicles on the track. The replacement of the track includes the high jump and long jump areas.

c. Bond Anticipation Notes Approval

MOVED BY MEMBER PETERS, SECONDED BY MEMBER STUART

*That the Central Berkshire Regional School Committees votes to approve the sale of \$7,000,000 4.00 percent General Obligation School Bond Anticipation Notes (the “Notes”) of the District dated September 30, 2022, and payable September 29, 2023 to Jefferies LLC, at par and accrued interest, if any, plus a premium of \$84,560.*

*That in connection with the marketing and sale of the Notes, the preparation and distribution of a Notice of Sale and Preliminary Official Statement dated September 8, 2022 and a final Official Statement dated September 15, 2022, each in such form as may be approved by the District Treasurer, be and hereby are ratified, confirmed, approved and adopted.*

*That District Treasurer and the Chair of the Committee be, and hereby are, authorized to execute and deliver a significant events disclosure undertaking in compliance with SEC Rule 15c2-12 in such form as may be approved by bond counsel to the District, which undertaking shall be incorporated by reference in the Notes for the benefit of the holders of the Notes from time to time.*

*That we authorize and direct the District Treasurer to establish post issuance federal tax compliance procedures and continuing disclosure procedures in such forms as the District Treasurer and bond counsel deem sufficient, or if such procedures are currently in place, to review and update said procedures, in order to monitor and maintain the tax-exempt status of the Notes and to comply with relevant securities laws.*

*That any certificates or documents relating to the Notes (collectively, the “Documents”), may be executed in several counterparts, each of which shall be regarded as an original and all of which shall constitute one and the same document; delivery of an executed counterpart of a signature page to a Document by electronic mail in a “.pdf” file or by other electronic transmission shall be as effective as delivery of a manually executed counterpart signature page to such Document; and electronic signatures on any of the Documents shall be deemed original signatures for the purposes of the Documents and all matters relating thereto, having the same legal effect as original signatures.*

*That each member of the Committee, the District Secretary and the District Treasurer be and hereby are, authorized to take any and all such actions, and execute and deliver such certificates, receipts or other documents as may be determined by them, or any of them, to be necessary or convenient to carry into effect the provisions of the foregoing votes.*

Director Boino added the temporary band will go out for a bond once the project is complete; there had been six bids. Members discussed the possibility of having investors. Director Boino will look into this.

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Fifteen members.  
Nays: None.  
Abstentions: None.  
Motion carries unanimously.

7. Regional Agreement Ad Hoc

a. Report

Member Emerson reported the committee met September 14. All seven towns were present. Discussion included the reorganization of the committee; Co-Chairs Todd Emerson Joe Diver. The decision was made that in order to hold a meeting, four towns must be present instead of the original five towns; there was discussion of possibly letting School Committee members vote. Steve Hemman from Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools (MARS) gave an overview on what the next steps are. Two big areas of concern for the committee are Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) and the annual obligations by each town and the voting process of 16d and 16n. The committee decided to form a subcommittee to look at other possible voting options. The next meeting will be October 12.

Member Lacatell attended the meeting and said he was encouraged by what MARS said.

#### ARTICLE 12473 SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### A. Report

##### 1. Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Blake-Davis’ report can be found filed with the official minutes.

##### 2. The Equity Process Audit

Superintendent Blake-Davis reviewed The Equity Process audit via a PowerPoint presentation (filed with the minutes). The audit was started in the spring and will continue through the school year.

##### 3. Portrait of a Graduate

##### B. Recommendations

##### C. Other

#### ARTICLE 12474 PERSONNEL

##### Superintendent’s Review of Personnel Changes

- Nicole Esposito, Physical Education/Health Teacher at Wahconah High School, appointed effective September 26, 2022.
- Brandon Schneid, Custodian at Becket Washington Elementary School, appointed effective September 14, 2022.
- Ashley Campbell, Paraprofessional at Craneville Elementary School, appointed effective August 29, 2022.
- John Allen, Assistant Cafeteria Cook at Wahconah High School, appointed effective August 29, 2022.
- Holly McGovern, Physical Education Teacher at Nessacus Middle School, appointed effective August 29, 2022.
- Dennis Wilcox, Math Teacher at Nessacus Middle School, appointed effective August 29, 2022.
- Rebekah Hickey, Nurse at Kittredge Elementary School, appointed effective August 29, 2022.
- Kieran Foggon, Paraprofessional at Kittredge Elementary School, appointed effective August 29, 2022.
- James Castagna, Custodian at Kittredge Elementary School, appointed effective August 23, 2022.
- Michelle Curley, Paraprofessional at Craneville Elementary School, appointed effective August 29, 2022.
- Karina Bruno, General Music/Instrument Teacher at Becket Washington and Kittredge Elementary schools, appointed effective August 29, 2022.
- Emily Gunn, Paraprofessional at Becket Washington Elementary School, appointed effective August 29, 2022.
- Curtis Wells, Custodian at Craneville Elementary School, appointed effective August 29, 2022.
- Morrison Robblee, Social Studies Teacher at Nessacus Middle School, appointed effective August 29, 2022.

*Note: All salaries are set in accordance with current contracts.*

ARTICLE 12475 OLD BUSINESS (Unfinished Business)

*(Any business not completed or postponed from a previous meeting, or not covered if a meeting had to be adjourned for any reason prior to concluding entire agenda)*

ARTICLE 12476 NEW BUSINESS (Emergency Business)

*(Unforeseen business developed subsequent to posting of meeting and requiring timely attention. Member requests to place items on a future agenda [without deliberation of the substance of such items])*

Member Lounsbury questioned on whether it was voted upon to allow the chair to vote at subcommittees. The second reading revision to Article III will be voted on at the next meeting.

Members discussed the possibility of having some type of public relations avenue to inform the communities on information in the district. There is a policy that states that information goes to the Superintendent and the Chairs of the School Committee; and then the School Committee members can inform their towns. Further discussion of this topic will be on the next agenda.

Member Tucker suggested hearing student representatives from other schools. Superintendent Blake-Davis will look into this.

ARTICLE 12477 REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMITTEE

Member Stuart mentioned that Kevin Hines, global public speaker, will be speaking to the Wahconah students about mental health and suicide prevention on Monday and again to the public, including other districts, later that night. Chair Craft-Reiss wanted to thank the administrators for all their work done for the district.

MOVED BY MEMBER ALPERT, SECONDED BY MEMBER STUART

*To adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m.*

ROLL CALL

Ayes: Fifteen Members.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: None.

Motion carries unanimously.

**The following were given as handouts or used during the meeting & are filed with the official minutes**

CBRSD Equity Audit Report

**The following documents were emailed to members and are filed with the official minutes**

France Field Trip

Handbook Presentation

Article III

Superintendent's Report

