

Draft for Approval, August 2010

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING
Woodstock Academy Board of Trustees
August 19, 2009**

PRESENT: H. Barlow, M. Beckwith, R. Blackmer, G. Carabeau (E), E. Cartier (P), B. Child, S. Fredrickson, J. Gerardi-Voccio (B), E. Higgins, K. Johnston, J. Kaeding, P. Kelly, P. Lynn, D. Morse, Jeri Musumeci, Joe Musumeci (8:45), P. Paquette, A. Spalding, T. Stokes, S. Young

ADMINISTRATION: J. Campbell, K. Caron, A. Cormier, J. Grossman, H. Singleton

GUESTS: Dr. Frank Baran, Ms. Anne Carraher, Ms. Amanda Harrington, Mr. Richard Mellen, Mrs. Marilyn Pomeroy

ABSENT EXCUSED: H. Folsom, G. Garabrant, R. Holland, W. Loftus (W), M. Lyons (B), J. Miragliuolo (P), K. Page (E), J. Rauh, C. Swenson (W), D. Teed

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Sandra Fredrickson at 8:31 p.m.

2. Citizen's Participation

None.

3. Nominating Committee

Mr. Kelly presented the slate of officers for 2009-10: Sandra Fredrickson, President; John Rauh, Vice-President; Philippa Paquette, Secretary; Barbara Child, Assistant Secretary; David Teed, Treasurer; Paul Kelly, Assistant Treasurer.

MOTION: (Kelly, Spalding) To accept the slate of officers for 2009-10 as presented.

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Mr. Kelly presented the Nominating Committee's recommendation for renewal of terms for several Trustees.

MOTION: (Kelly, Stokes) To accept the recommendation of the Nominating Committee to reappoint the following Trustees for 6-year terms: Barbara Child, Alumni Trustee; Henry Folsom, Trustee at Large; Edwin Higgins, Trustee at Large; Kevin Johnston, Trustee at Large; Paul Kelly, Alumni Trustee; and David Morse, Alumni Trustee.

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4. Correspondence

Several pieces of correspondence were received from the USDA regarding the process of approval and loans for the sewer line and the Bentley field project.

Mrs. Fredrickson stated that although the loan for the field project has been approved, the USDA is obligated to us for funds but the Academy is not necessarily obligated to them at this time. She stated this puts us in a position of strength as we move forward with projects.

A letter was received from the Connecticut State Department of Education indicating the opening of collective bargaining for the WAEA teachers' contract this fall.

A letter was received from Delia Fay regarding the plans for the sewer line. Mr. Campbell will report later in the meeting on the status of the project and clarify the needs of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

5. Secretary's Report

MOTION: (Johnston, Blackmer) To accept the minutes of the Regular meeting of June 16, 2009 as presented.

**Abstained – Jeri Musumeci
All Others in Favor**

MOTION: (Blackmer, Johnston) To accept the minutes of the Annual meeting of August 19, 2008 as presented.

**Abstained – Lynn, Paquette
All Others in Favor**

MOTION: (Stokes, Blackmer) To add to New Business as item 9.a., a request for waiver of tuition for an international exchange student from Vietnam, residing in Brooklyn for the school year.

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6. Administrative Reports

a. Headmaster

1) NEASC Report

Mr. Caron noted that Trustees had received a copy of the NEASC report via email. Hard copies were also made available this evening. He urged Trustees to review the report. He stated that although we have come through with high marks, there are things that we need to work on. He stated that we will be using the NEASC report to provide a blueprint to guide us and move forward, continuing school improvement. Mr. Caron stated that this, in addition to NAIS, NASSP, our strategic plan, and other resources will be used to position the Academy as an independent school of excellence. Mr. Caron reviewed the major commendations and recommendations made by the visiting committee in the NEASC report.

Mrs. Fredrickson stated that we will need to keep the report in the forefront of our decision making and that none of the issues raised in the report should come as a surprise.

b. Assistant Headmaster

Mr. Cormier reported on faculty and staffing positions filled over the summer. Joining the Academy staff are Joseph Alaimo, one-semester Spanish position; Marc Perry, English; Tom Young, Math; Amy Couture, 2/3 Math; Robert Reas, Art; Rick Insler, Counseling; Lisa Derrico, DCR para educator; and Cynthia Preston, Intern to fill substitute needs and administrative responsibilities.

c. Dean of Curriculum

Mrs. Singleton stated that she will have an academic report for the September Board meeting that would provide some exciting news on academic achievement. The report will be presented to the Academic Committee first, at their September 14th meeting. She noted professional development work completed over the summer by faculty including that of Jamie Carpenter and Rosalba Onofrio who reviewed and revised the Academy's research manual and produced a useful guide for students to use. The manual is now online under the Bracken Library link on the Academy website.

d. Dean of Students

Mr. Grossman reported on the work that had been completed over the summer including faculty handbooks, the school calendar/student handbook, a handbook for campus supervisors, and various brochures about programs such as freshmen focus and sophomore success. He also reported that senior parking privileges and assignments are underway and approximately 98% of advisor assignments for classes, clubs and activities have been completed.

e. Business Manager

Mr. Campbell reported that the Finance Committee met with the auditor last evening. They have been on campus all summer, compiling the audit of the 2008-09 fiscal year. The committee reviewed a draft of the report which shows an operating deficit of approximately \$11,000.00. He stated that this is consistent with where he thought we would be. The financial statement for the end of June reflects a negative of \$150,000.00. He stated that this takes under account depreciation and accumulated losses in investments. He stated that the Finance Committee will review the audit at their next meeting and will bring it forward to the full Board for approval at the September meeting.

Mr. Campbell reported on changes in IRS reporting. He stated that one change is that the Board will be required to review the informational return to the IRS, Form 990. The auditors want to be sure that the Board members see it as individuals as part of their fiduciary responsibilities. He will send the document to Board members as a PDF file via email. He stated that we are also required to report to the IRS how the form is supplied to Board members and in what format.

Mr. Campbell updated the Board on recent projects. He attended the recent Planning and Zoning Commission meeting for the purposes of review of the project related to overflow parking at the field, which is different from the Bentley improvement project under review. Mr. Campbell stated that the loan process for the sewer project with the USDA is complete with the exception of the Academy making the final commitment.

In terms of approval for work, Mr. Campbell noted that he had just come from the WPCA meeting held tonight. We have received approval of the conceptual design which we have been waiting for some time for. He stated that this now allows us to talk about the business of cost for tie-in. We are also waiting for an easement and we have made some headway in that regard with respect to having communication with the party we have been waiting for.

Mr. Kaeding asked which entity was of concern. Mr. Campbell stated that what we knew of as the property of the Inn at Woodstock Hill had some ownership issues, which was holding us up.

Mr. Campbell commended the maintenance and custodial staff in their effort to get school ready; the financial and technology staff for their help with the audit and the way that it has turned out; and the administrative staff on the remarkable job in having us ready for school.

7. President's Report

a. Trustee/Faculty Reception

Mrs. Fredrickson announced that the annual Trustee/Staff Reception will be held on October 16th at 5:30 p.m. at the Mansion at Bald Hill. She encouraged all Trustees to attend as this is an opportunity for recognize our faculty and staff for service and to meet and thank them personally for all they do for the students at Woodstock Academy.

b. Headmaster's Reception

Mrs. Fredrickson announced that a welcome reception will be held at the home of Mr. Paul Kelly for Headmaster Caron on Sunday, September 20th. Invitations would be forthcoming.

8. Old Business

None.

9. New Business

a. Framework for Advancement

Mr. Caron provided an outline for a framework for advancement in the Board packet (see attached). He has been working on this over the summer as he reviewed the strategic plan, the NEASC report and the history of Woodstock Academy. Mr. Caron noted that this framework outlines what he believes we need to do to move forward. Mr. Caron stated that the Academy is a great institution with a foot in both worlds – New England academies are a unique hybrid as independent schools with a public purpose. Mr. Caron presented the Board with a PowerPoint, expanding upon the outline provided. He expressed the desire for the Board's endorsement to use this as a guide in moving the Academy forward in terms of actions and decisions of the Board, Administration, and faculty.

MOTION: (Kaeding, Jeri Musumeci) To approve the framework for advancement as presented by Headmaster Caron.

Discussion:

Mrs. Fredrickson stated that Mr. Caron had much to learn over the summer and she stated that it was enlightening that he could take all of these documents and synthesize them into a framework to guide the Academy forward. She stated that this will help the Trustees to focus on what needs to be done.

Mr. Musumeci questioned the need for an enrollment management plan and the major recommendation by the NEASC committee. He stated that there must have been something here that would cause them to make that recommendation. Mr. Caron stated that there was not anything specifically, but they are looking at the Academy through independent eyes. He stated that truly independent schools can control their enrollment; they can refuse to accept students. He stated that the Chair of the NEASC committee was from a NE academy that serves the same function as Woodstock Academy. Mr. Caron stated that the commission is looking for us to take a serious look at what we want to be – do we want to be a school of 1200, 2000, or 500? He stated that we need to make some tough decisions about controlling our enrollment. Mr. Caron stated that we seem to have made a commitment to those towns that send students to us and part of the plan is to say we are committed to educating students from those towns. He stated that to the extent the population fluctuates, we accept that as a part of doing business. He stated that there are questions about what we want to do with private pay students – do we actively recruit? Do we want to recruit foreign students? If so, we need a facility for that. Mr. Caron stated that the committee is saying that we need to define what we want to be and how we are going to maintain that.

Mrs. Fredrickson reiterated that we need to define what we want and come up with a plan to manage that. Mr. Higgins questioned, whether within that discussion, we would still emphasize the athletic project. He hoped that we would not abandon that effort. Mr. Caron stated that he knows that the Bentley project has caused some concern. He stated that he slow knows that there is support. He stated that there are competing needs right now in the area of academics, particularly science labs. He stated that as a Board, we need to decide what we want to do and how we want to do it. Bentley is in limbo and efforts are stalled. We need to decide if it is important and at the same time, keep an eye on competing needs. Mrs. Fredrickson stated that Mr. Caron's framework does not take the Bentley project off the table. She stated that we need to continue moving forward and that it is important to look at the major NEASC recommendations. Some will need immediate action. She stated that does not believe that this proposal for a framework for advancement infers that the athletic project is off, but that it represents a framework for us to move forward as a Board.

Vote on the Motion:

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Mrs. Frederickson stated that we will find a methodology to keep this framework in the forefront for everyone.

b. Calendar of Committee Meetings

Mr. Caron presented a proposed calendar for the year representative of all major committees. He stated that in his experience with meeting with multiple boards, putting important meetings in front of everyone is of great help. He stated that it forces administration and staff to meet timelines to that actions and recommendations can be brought before the Board in an efficient and timely fashion.

MOTION: (Jeri Musumeci, Lynn) To accept the calendar of committee meetings as presented.

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c. Exchange Student

Mrs. Fredrickson stated that a request was received from the town of Brooklyn for a waiver of tuition for a foreign exchange student from Vietnam.

MOTION: (Lynn, Blackmer) To approve the request for a waiver of tuition for the Vietnamese exchange student residing in Brooklyn for the school year.

Discussion:

Mrs. Fredrickson noted that for point of reference, it is the Board's policy and practice to allow a tuition waiver for each sending town annually for a foreign exchange student. Mr. Lynn asked if this is a true exchange or additional student. Mr. Caron stated that it is one-way.

Vote on the Motion:

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10. Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

Mr. Kelly noted minutes distributed. All items were discussed previously by Mr. Campbell.

b. Executive Committee

Minutes were provided. Mrs. Fredrickson reported that the committee discussed agenda building and committee structure. The Executive Committee has changed their meetings to a week earlier. This will allow longer time for preparation by the administration for Board meetings and packets will be mailed earlier.

c. Sending Town Tuition Contract Negotiating Committee

Mrs. Fredrickson reported in Mr. Rauh's absence. Both the Brooklyn and Woodstock tuition contracts were discussed. The next meeting is scheduled for September 15th.

11. Town Reports

a. Brooklyn

Mrs. Gerardi-Voccio reported that their board has not met since June. Their first meeting for the year will be tomorrow. A new elementary school principal has been hired. They are still trying to schedule a date for their pre-school dedication.

b. Eastford

Mr. Carabeau reported that teachers have arrived. They anticipate a smooth opening.

c. Pomfret

Ms. Cartier reported that they also anticipate a smooth opening.

d. Woodstock – No report.

MOTION: (Kaeding, Johnston) To adjourn the meeting at 9:46 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Willis
Board Secretary