

**Minutes of the Meeting June 1, 2015**  
**Winchester High School Parent Faculty Association**  
**\*Approved\***

*Attending: Malini Dutta, Mikie Ulwick, Paula Michienzi, Ian McDonnell. Kathy Czeck, Heidi Driscoll, Susan Fagerstrom, Susan Verdicchio, Leah Holber, ,Elena Langlois, Jody Collins Skinner, Lori Scully, Roger Hain, Robert Marx, Susan Wolf, Cindy Bohne, Jenny Rappole, Janice Jens, Michele Nathan, Sean Kiley and Anita Colasante.*

Malini Dutta called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

This is the last PFA meeting for this year. Malini thanked all of the PFA Board for their time—she noted that before she joined the Board, she thought that “things just happened”, but soon realized that there were many hardworking people behind the scenes. Thanks to Lori Scully- her Co-president, Elena Langlois-Secretary, Leah Holber-Treasurer, Anita Colasante and Susan Wolf-Newsletters, Kathy Czeck and Karen Sangster- grants, Paula Michienzi- “the happy face of the PFA”- and her Social Committee, Lisa Vehey- gifts and memorials—it has been a very tough year for this group, Mikie Ulwick- Publicity, and Cheryl Meyers and Julie Piantadosi- Direct Appeal. And many thanks to Principal Sean Kiley who steered us through a difficult, emotional year. Mikie Ulwick will be taking over as Co president with Lori Scully for next year—as Malini steps down.

PFA Business

Secretary’s Report- Minutes of May 4, 2015 meeting were presented. There were no changes. A motion to accept the minutes, as presented, was made and approved.

Treasurer’s Report –Leah Holber presented a recap of the financial situation. The Direct Appeal raised \$26,277, the goal was \$30,000. There are still a few more corporate matching funds to come in from parent’s employers. We have \$19,986 left in the checking account right now, but we still have approximately \$7200 in grants left to pay out, of the total \$13,395 grants money approved. Sean Kiley is going to grant some of his Principal’s discretionary fund back to the PFA.

Q. Was there anything not spent, or purchased, because we did not reach the \$30k goal for Direct Appeal?

A. No—but there were fewer teacher grant requests this year than in the past. The reason for this is likely the HS construction and teachers putting off requests until they have their final space after construction.

A motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report was made and approved.

Construction Update – Presentation by John Danizio, WPS Director of Finance

John presented a slide show of existing (under construction) as well as future WHS. He covered (1) lessons learned (2) Where we are now, and (3) Summer 2015.

1. Lessons Learned: Diesel fumes from construction equipment was a problem identified early on in the project. They have done a lot of hard work on monitoring and working with the contractor to reduce the fumes in the school. Noise control: procedures are in place to reduce noise as much as possible (location of equipment, time of use, etc). Hasn’t always been perfect, but we are hearing complaints and working to rectify. Parking Monitoring: the kids and the faculty are all doing great in this area. This was a big concern—but overall it has

been going very well. Site Traffic and Pedestrian interface: sometimes it is unavoidable, there is a last minute change in site work- but the kids have been great.

2. Where we are now: The bulk of the work is now “behind the curtain”. The building exterior skin will begin in late spring (very soon!) Demolition work on the next phase will begin soon and extend over the summer—to get that done before school starts in the Fall. The Main office staff and functions will once again be relocated to Lincoln School over the summer.
3. Summer 2015: Summer Slammer! Lots of noise, and lots of demo and abatement issues will take place during the summer.

What to expect in September:

New spaces: Dining Commons and media center will be operational  
Music suite and auditorium  
eight new modular classrooms

Q. Will there be an “Acoustical Cloud” over the fly loft in new auditorium?

A. It is in the budget, but once the space is ready, the architects and contractors will decide whether it is necessary. The space is supposed to be very good acoustically, and may not be necessary.

Q. Rumor has it that the auditorium will not be ready for school opening in September.

A. That is likely to be true. Contractor is working hard to get it done ASAP.

Cindy Bohne, Chair of the School Committee, said that the contractors have a drop-dead date of October 23 for it to be finished.

Next Phase of Construction: Gym wing and “C” wing. The athletic programs will be relocated for next academic year. Gym classes will be located in one of the large new instruction spaces. New mods will be open for math classes.

Q. Will parking along Skillings Rd. be improved so that seniors who arrive for 2nd block can actually park there and not get a ticket?

A. We are working with the town to hopefully work this out. We share Skillings Rd parking with the Jenks Center users, so we need to be aware of that.

Q. How is budget doing overall for project?

A. Project is on time and on budget, except for the auditorium.

Q. What is being done about air quality?

A. The air quality is always in a state of flux—we are doing everything required. Diesel particulates became an issue- thought not initially. There are reports on the project websites detailing measurements.

John will ask the Project Manager to address this issue further in detail and put a reply on the WHSproject website.

Q. Is the furniture in the Dining Commons going to be fixed- like the current tables with attached seating?

A. The Commons will hold 450 students—1/2 of the furniture will be fixed ( like we have now) and the other half will be tables and separate chairs. Good for flexibility of use

Special Guest#2 Susan Verdicchio, School Committee member on the Special Town election on Tuesday June 9<sup>th</sup>.

There are two questions on the ballot:

- Flood mitigation culvert on Skillings Field. This is the next part in the larger flood control plan in Winchester. There is contaminated soil that must be removed as part of this project. Skillings Field was once used as a dump site, so there is much contamination lying beneath the current field level.
- Upgrade the baseball field and turn it into a multi-use synthetic turf field

Q. Didn't Town Meeting vote down the turf field? How come this issue is now coming to a town vote?

A. In order to have the issue pass, they need both Town Meeting AND Town election vote to approve. So even though it did not pass the Town Meeting this year, if they get Town election approval, they could go back to Town Meeting in the Fall and try again.

There is a website: [www.skillingsfieldproject.com](http://www.skillingsfieldproject.com) with lots of info.

There were many questions/comments about the pros and cons of turf fields in general.

#### Principals Report: Sean Kiley

Sean says he feels so mentally tough after this year. It was a great year, but at times a difficult one. What would he do differently?? Sean gave a presentation called "Advice to myself- if I could know then what I know now".

1. Have fun every day, celebrate successes
2. Spend time with students. "Students don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care"
3. Maintain a sense of humor
4. Make sure to prioritize
5. Don't take things personally
6. Listen, Listen, and Listen more.
7. Take time for yourself
8. Eat lunch everyday
9. Respect everybody, every day, all day.
10. You cannot do it alone.

He uses his blog as a platform to promote and celebrate curricular and co-curricular activities, and to convey what is right about the school. He sees the benefits of blogging- contains a history of the year and it connects with Alumni.

Sean presented his Vision Statement for WHS and it is no coincidence that begins and ends with the words "Student Learning".

Sean's short term (3 year) goals:

- Personalize
- Engagement
- Rigor/Challenge

He would also like to establish a Principal's Leadership Team

Q. Any strategic or concrete ideas you can share with us tonight?

A. Sean would like to develop an app to do 5 minute instructional observations of teachers. He has also developed a student survey so kids can evaluate teachers. It cannot be mandatory, but given by teachers voluntarily to their students. What teacher would not want to know how they are doing in the eyes of their students?

Q. Would consider a late start time for WHS given the data showing that it might be better for teenagers? Or what about increased breaks between classes?

A. Sean would like to look at all of those ideas and more, including an evening division that might start late and go later—like 10am to 6 pm.

There was discussion about how athletes could do this – and would an evening division not allow athletes to take advantage of it?

Roger Hain and Heidi Driscoll were present and are both members of the School Improvement Council, which is a state mandated committee in each district.

The next PFA meeting will be scheduled in September 2015.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Elena Langlois  
Recording Secretary