

2026-06-29 Selectboard Minutes – DRAFT

Town of Warwick Minutes of Hybrid Meeting of the Warwick Selectboard Warwick Community School Monday, June 29, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Selectboard Members Present: Alan Genovese, Chair, STRPB Chair, WCSD School Committee; Keith Ross, Vice Chair; Brian Snell, Clerk

Others Present: David Young, Town Coordinator; Diana Noble, Assistant to the Town Coordinator; Sue O'Reilly-McRae; Jess Marshall, WCS Director of Operations; Clyde Perkins Sr.; Bruce Kilhart; Nancy Kilhart; Signe Friedrichs, Finance Committee; Laurie Crane, Finance Committee; Robin Brown, parent and WCS Chef; Miranda Kingfisher, WCSD School Committee; Louise Doud, WCSD School Committee; Dawn Magi; David Koester; John Gagliani; John Bradford; Janice Starmer; Jaylin Dibble; Dan Dibble, WCS Volunteer; Greg Snedeker of Gill, STRPB Vice Chair; Kaila Woodson; Nancy Harnden;

Others Present via Zoom: Claudia Lewis; Zach Marti; Andrea Woods; Jill DeLisle, Finance Committee Chair; Tracy Styles; Nadia Woodson Marti

CALL TO ORDER – Genovese called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

I. Announcements, and introductions

- A. Genovese explained that Ross would lead the discussion about the Six Town Regionalization Planning Board (STRPB), as Genovese is Chair of the STRPB as well as Chair of the Selectboard.
- B. Snell reminded the group that he would recuse himself from the discussion of the STRPB, but that he has resigned from all work and volunteering at the Warwick Community School, and thus, he hoped that he will be able to participate in future discussions after getting the go-ahead from legal counsel.

II. Discussion of Six Town Regional Planning Board Regional Agreement and STRPB Recommendations

- A. Ross opened the discussion, inviting all present to share by going around the room.
 - i. Jaylin Dibble – Concerned about our school losing its autonomy.
 - ii. Dan Dibble – Opposed regionalization, drawing parallels to church consolidations that reduced local decision-making. He expressed concern that Warwick's individualized approach to meeting students' needs would be lost under a larger district.
 - iii. Janice Starmer – Said the town had spent years working to establish Warwick Community School after unsuccessful efforts to gain autonomy within Pioneer. She argued that the six-town plan would eventually lead to loss of local control, place-based programming,

fundraising opportunities, and ultimately the possible closure of the school despite language intended to protect it.

- iv. Laurie Crane – Recalled attending Pioneer School Committee meetings during the effort to keep Warwick's school open and felt the town had been treated disrespectfully. She expressed skepticism that regionalization would save money and believed it could ultimately result in Warwick's school closing.
- v. Heather Berlin's comments, read by Janice Starmer – Acknowledged the educational opportunities available through larger secondary schools but emphasized the importance of preserving Warwick Community School and maintaining local autonomy while continuing existing tuition options.
- vi. Louise Doude – Opposed the six-town proposal, stating it would reduce local control and eliminate Warwick's ability to pursue grants and fundraising tailored to its educational model. She suggested that other regional partnerships for secondary education should remain options while keeping Warwick's elementary school independent.
- vii. John Gagliani – Said he wanted to hear all available options before reaching a conclusion. While recognizing concerns about taxes and an aging population, he also noted that sharing costs with other communities could provide benefits and encouraged keeping an open mind.
- viii. David Koester – Asked what options would remain for Warwick students after elementary school if Warwick chose not to join the proposed regional district.
- ix. Robin Brown – Opposed regionalization, sharing her family's experience with special education services. She credited Warwick Community School with helping her autistic daughter thrive and praised the school's individualized support for students with diverse learning needs.
- x. Miranda Kingfisher – Opposed the six-town plan, saying many of the perceived benefits had already been achieved without regionalization. She expressed concern about losing local governance, curriculum flexibility, fundraising opportunities, grant funding, and the ability to retain Warwick's staff while noting that secondary school options already exist through tuition agreements.
- xi. Kaila Woodson said she believed remaining outside the six-town district was in the best interest of Warwick's youngest and most vulnerable students.
- xii. Nancy Harnden – Expressed concern about Warwick having limited influence within a larger regional district based on past experiences with Pioneer. She also emphasized the importance of clearly explaining the financial implications to taxpayers before any decision is made.
- xiii. Jess Marshall – Encouraged a transparent public process with broad community involvement. She felt it was too soon to pursue regionalization, suggesting the town continue strengthening its current school model while gathering additional financial information and evaluating future options.
- xiv. Signe Friedrichs – She saw no clear educational or financial advantage to regionalizing at the elementary level. She supported preserving Warwick's locally focused educational approach while maintaining existing secondary school choices.
- xv. Sue O'Reilly-McRae – Opposed returning to a regional elementary structure, citing the community's previous experience with school closure efforts. She emphasized the importance of local leadership, educational innovation, and improving collaboration between the School Committee and Finance Committee rather than pursuing regionalization.

- xvi. Diana Noble – Questioned several financial assumptions in the proposal, including transportation costs, capital expenses, and projected savings. She expressed concern that regionalization could weaken Warwick's innovative educational model and grant funding while encouraging continued public discussion and support for the current district.
- xvii. Clyde Perkins Sr. – Questioned whether consolidation would address underlying financial challenges, arguing that similar proposals had been presented repeatedly over the years without solving long-term issues. He expressed concern that administrative interests were driving the proposal more than community needs.
- xviii. David Young – Opposed regionalization at this time, stating that Warwick had not yet realized the full potential of its current school model. While supporting regional collaboration at the secondary level, he believed the six-town proposal would reduce local leadership and autonomy before Warwick had fully developed its own educational program.
- xix. Jill DeLisle – She believed the timing was not right for regionalization and questioned whether it would produce meaningful financial savings once capital costs were considered. She supported allowing the matter to go before the voters but stated that she did not support the proposal.
- xx. Claudia Lewis – Praised Warwick Community School and expressed concern that regionalization could eventually lead to the loss of its superintendent, teachers, local curriculum, and community character. She emphasized that a strong elementary school is important for attracting young families and sustaining the town.
- xxi. Andrea Woods – She believed Warwick's educational program should be allowed additional time to grow before considering regionalization. While expressing concern about relying heavily on grants, she felt the school was moving in a positive direction and supported having the decision made by town vote.
- xxii. Keith Ross – Stated that he could not support the six-town proposal because he opposed representation on the regional school committee being based on population rather than equal representation for each town. He also believed Warwick's unique educational model should remain independent while acknowledging the extensive work completed by the regional planning committee.
- xxiii. Alan Genovese – Spoke in support of the six-town proposal. He explained that the agreement was designed to preserve local elementary schools while distributing financial risk across multiple communities, described protections intended to make school closure difficult, and argued that regionalization would improve long-term sustainability by sharing educational costs and specialized services among six towns.

III. Appearances

- A. Clyde Perkins Sr. – Announced that the Council on Aging is looking for a volunteer administrator. Also, Perkins invited everyone to his 90th birthday party on October 24th.
- B. Dawn Magi – Requested update on location for future Town Meetings. The decision is still in process, and the Town Clerk has put together a straw poll.

IV. Chapter 268 Section 20C and 20D Ethics disclosures or exemptions – none

V. Discussions and reports

- A. **Coordinator Update** – Young will provide updates verbally rather than submitting written reports, as his retirement is imminent. Elevated copper levels had been detected in water at the Town Hall kitchen. Working with the Board of Health, additional testing is underway to determine whether stagnant water in an unused copper pipe is the source before deciding

whether filtration or plumbing modifications are needed. Young also reported that new dishwashers at the school and Town Hall are being adjusted, discussed ongoing efforts to resolve compensation issues affecting the Fire Station solar project (wholesale pricing due to being a municipality), including possible battery storage and microgrid options, and noted that work continues on the Council on Aging formula grant with Liz Whipple.

B. Assistant Coordinator Report

- i. Noble provided an end-of-fiscal-year update, noting that budget closeout work is underway and that approved Highway Department budget transfer documentation had been received. She reported that construction of the early childhood playground is progressing, attorney-to-attorney communications continue regarding the non-Chapter 90 road project dispute from spring of 2025, and recommended holding an executive session if the Board wishes to discuss legal strategy. Because year-end budget transfers may be necessary before the next regular meeting, the Selectboard agreed to tentatively schedule a remote meeting for July 13 if needed.

VI. Actions

- A. Approval of administrative actions taken

B. Annual Appointments for Town Positions, FRCOG Emergency Response and Council

- i. Annual committee appointments were approved, including the removal of Andrea Woods from the Communications Committee at her request.

VII. Citizens' concerns and suggestions for future agenda items

VIII. Minutes of previous meetings

- ***MOTION: Snell moved to accept the minutes from June 10th and June 15th, 2026. 2nd Ross. Voted unanimously.***

IX. Items unanticipated at time of posting.

- A. John Gagliani proposed establishing a rental property permitting and inspection program to help ensure rental housing meets health and safety standards. Opinions differed on the need for this program, but the Board agreed to revisit the topic in the fall after the new Town Coordinator is in place.

ADJOURNMENT: Ross MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:26pm. 2nd Snell. Voted unanimously.

The next meetings will be Monday, July 13 and July 27, 2026.

Respectfully submitted by Heather Berlin, Town Secretary.

Documents consulted at this meeting:

[20260629 Selectboard meeting notice and agenda](#) Download

[Selectboard Agenda 6.29.26 6pm WCS](#) Download

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<u>2026-06-10 Selectboard Minutes – DRAFT</u>	Download
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