

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Session – January 19, 2012

A Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Thursday, January 19, 2012, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Barb Fletcher, Chair
Beth Butler, Vice Chair
Malcolm Astley
Ellen Grieco (arrived at 7:30 p.m.)
Shawn Kinney (absent)

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent of Schools

Brad J. Crozier
Assistant Superintendent

Marlene M. Dodyk
Director of Student Services

Geoffrey S. MacDonald
Business Administrator

Also: Cherry Karlson, Finance Committee

Chair Barb Fletcher convened the regular meeting at 7:05 P.M.

1. **Comments & Written Statements from the Public:**
There were no public comments or written statements.
2. **Operating Budget Worksession:**
Barb Fletcher announced the format and order of the meeting.

Cherry Karlson reviewed with the School Committee the timeline of the budget process and addressed the School Committee's request to extend the time needed to present their budget to the Finance Committee. Based on discussions with Paul Grasso, the other FinCom liaison for the schools, and looking at meeting dates, they agreed to extend the date for the School Committee to present its recommended FY13 budget to the Finance Committee to January 26. This will allow the FinCom to meet its deadlines for this budget process.

Cherry Karlson answered questions from the School Committee and stated that dates are driven by Town Meeting, which are almost identical to last year. She will continue to forward questions from the FinCom to the School Committee Chair.

Review of Outstanding Questions:

The School Committee discussed the following questions that were raised at the last meeting.

What's the student to staff ratio over time?

Brad Crozier reviewed the handout given to the School Committee regarding the student to staff ratio.

Do we support the fee structures?

Barb Fletcher stated that the FY13 budget does not assume any changes to the fee structure. Geoff MacDonald stated that there was a correction in the transportation offset by \$8,100 based on revised information regarding the number of high school students projected to ride the bus given the increase in parking spaces available for FY13. Based on transportation fees from other communities, Wayland's fees are in the middle to the lower end of the spectrum.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Session – January 19, 2012

Barb stated that the School Committee will vote on the fees individually or list them together when voting on the FY13 budget. She also reminded the Committee members to file their disclosure form before voting on the FY13 budget.

It was suggested that the School Committee consider the philosophy of fees prior to the School Committee's FY14 budget discussion and Committee members agreed to do so.

What has been our budget in the 1980 dollars?

Geoff MacDonald updated a CIP chart from 2001-2012 and noted that 3.2% is the current inflation rate. He stated that the chart compares the special school appropriation to what the actual purchasing power would be in 1980 dollars.

What have been the reasons for the increases year to year and the breakdown of the increase from FY12 - 13?

The School Committee reviewed the Budget Driver History and looked at the major components of each budget as it was developed. In terms of the savings analysis, the School Committee reviewed the FY11 actuals and FY12 actuals that were grouped into savings and new costs. How the FinCom's budget guideline was developed was also reviewed.

The administrators answered questions from the School Committee.

What provisions are there, if any, for contingency?

The circuit breaker was identified as one possible source for contingency funds. Potential areas of risk include a sudden influx of students, increase in the cost of utilities, equipment failure, special education services, and level of circuit breaker funding.

How are we able to grow when constrained by funding?

Barb stated that savings can be identified by tightening up the budget, negotiating utility and transportation contracts and finding efficiencies and using those savings to put into new initiatives that will allow growth to the program. Malcolm commented that the Suburban Coalition is helpful at the state level in trying to get additional funding for municipalities and is a worthwhile effort. Paul noted that this is what he considers a leadership challenge for him.

Which of the Abrahams Group recommendations have been implemented into the FY13 budget?

The School Committee reviewed a draft report. It includes ORC input. Any suggested changes should be directed to the Chair. It will be reviewed again at a future meeting.

Barb referred to a document provided by Leisha Simon, which was a list of sustainability of purchases or leasing of computers over a 5-year horizon. The School Committee tabled the discussion to a future meeting.

What are the non-personnel costs related to enrollment?

Paul Stein reviewed the non-personnel costs related to enrollment. He stated that it gives a sense of per pupil costs for non-personnel costs by school and the number of students enrolled.

Future Meetings:

Given the extension that the Finance Committee gave the School Committee, they will work further on the budget at their January 23 and January 24 meetings. Also, before January 26, the School Committee should discuss what the Committee should do if the budget had to be reduced in any way and what the budget would lose, if requested by the Finance Committee. The School Committee asked the administrators to put a reduction list together for the January 24 meeting, if the budget had to be reduced by \$155,000.

The School Committee discussed the goals for Monday night's meeting:

- % increase issue driven by reactions of the public
- whether or not anyone has any particular aspects to this budget that people think should be changed re: funding initiatives
- revolving accounts

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Session – January 19, 2012

Legal opinion re: revolving accounts:

Ellen Grieco stated that she will speak to Attorney Jim Toomey Friday morning at 9:00 a.m., as he comes highly recommended. The School Committee discussed the components of the request as it relates to revolving accounts. She will request a time frame and a cost from Mr. Toomey.

3. **Superintendent's Report:**

Paul Stein spoke about Rachel's Challenge. He noted that there was a student training after the presentation and a student-led club was formed. Their mission is to carry out five challenges. He also noted that their first meeting is January 30.

4. **Followup and Future Agenda Items:**

(a) Middle School Fields:

Barb Fletcher asked Malcolm to follow up with the Recreation Commission to understand what their plans are with regard to Town Meeting and any school property.

(b) Wellness Programs:

Malcolm Astley asked several questions relative to the wellness programs. It was suggested that someone from the town or within the school system who has the expertise in this area attend a future meeting.

5. **Public Comment:**

Louis Jurist commented on fees and recommended that the Committee look at why and when the fees were initiated to get a sense of why they are in place. He stated that fees did not exist a decade ago, but were instituted because programs would be cut. In reference to the athletic fees, he noted that a low level fee was instituted, but the School Committee felt it wasn't fair to single out one team, as the idea was to share the cost amongst athletic teams. He stated that the elementary music fee was instituted because music would have been eliminated and was meant to be self-funding. As far as the transportation and parking fees were concerned, he noted that these fees were to pay for essential programs for students. Finally, he commented on the possible reductions in the budget going forward and asked the School Committee to stay with the guideline and the budget in general.

6. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) by roll call vote to adjourn the Regular Session at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Louis Jurist
Tom Sciacca

Corresponding Documentation:

1. FTE's vs. Enrollment from Staff Deployment Report
2. Projected Elementary Class Sizes for FY13
3. Budget Driver History and Savings Analysis
4. Study of Non-Personnel Costs Relative to Enrollment