

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Special Meeting – January 16, 2015

A Special Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Friday, January 16, 2015, at 9:00 A.M. in the School Committee Conference Room of the Town Building

Present were:

Ellen Grieco, Chair - remotely
Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair
Malcolm Astley
Donna Bouchard
Jeanne Downs

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent

Susan Bottan
Business Administrator

Vice Chair Barb Fletcher convened the Regular Session at 9:07 a.m. She noted that Ellen had submitted her Remote Participation Form and that she was not able to participate for geographic reasons.

1. **Comments and Written Statements from the Public:**

There was no public comment.

2. **Budget Work-session**

The Committee discussed when it would meet with the Finance Committee to present its recommended FY16 Budget. The Committee then discussed what the framework for discussion with the Finance Committee would be. They agreed to come up with a maximum dollar amount for the F16 Budget but explain to the Finance Committee that it plans to work to reduce that amount over the coming weeks. The Committee recognized its responsibility to recommend a budget that supports a quality education and then have Town Meeting decide if it wants to support it.

The Committee continued to review the Superintendent's Budget, with attention to the following areas:

- Recognize the work the School Technology Department has done for the Town.
- Malcolm noted four areas of concern:
 - Health and Wellness coordinator position not being funded.
 - Assistant Principal at Claypit not being recommended as part of the F16 Budget.
 - The staffing levels in the Business Office being very lean.
 - The State's tax structure not providing adequate support.
- The Committee discussed the areas that the Superintendent identified as unmet needs, including the Ramp Up Course and the Reading Specialist. For the Ramp Up Courses, the Committee discussed possibly charging a fee, balancing stress against offering support, and possibly reaching out to other communities to be included in program. The Committee also discussed how the reading specialist helps teachers use data to inform instruction and to differentiate, works within the classrooms to support all students, and ensures that the reading curriculum is delivered equally across the district.
- The Alumni Association was mentioned as a possible additional source of revenue.

The Committee discussed the maximum dollar amount it would present to the Finance Committee. Barb, Jeanne and Ellen indicated that they would like to start at a place where the Committee has expertise, which would be the Superintendent's Budget. Malcolm indicated his interest in adding a Health and Wellness stipend of approximately \$32,000 plus possibly a benefits package. Donna expressed her interest in saving 1% or an additional \$370,000 off of the Superintendent's Recommended Budget.

The Committee agreed on the message it would convey to the Finance Committee, which included the following points:

- The majority of the Committee supports the Superintendent's Recommended Budget as the ceiling.
- One member wanted to add a Health & Wellness Coordinator position.

- One member wanted the Committee to commit to a 1% reduction.
- All Committee members committed to looking for ways to mitigate the budget increase.

The Committee then brainstormed ways to mitigate the budget increase, which included the following ideas:

- One-time money (e.g. savings from SPED review)
- Transportation fees
- Extra-curricular fee
- Athletic fee cap
- Additional indirect costs
- Revolving account funds
- Alumni Innovation Fund
- Lauren Dunne Astley Memorial Fund
- Combining the Health & Wellness teacher and coordinator positions
- Share Health & Wellness Coordinator position with Sudbury
- ESCO project

It was noted that since certain of the members would be financially impacted by certain fees. Therefore, those Committee members will need to file the appropriate State Ethics form with the Town Clerk.

The Committee also compiled a list of additional analyses needed as part of its budget process. They included:

- Benefits analysis
- Custodial review
- Grant writer
- SPED review
- Circuit Breaker

The Committee expressed an interest in learning what the annual percentage increase in its peer communities' budgets have been, as well as what the superintendents' recommended percentage increases have been for its peer communities' budgets.

3. Comments and Written Statements from the Public:

Margo Melnicove thanked the Committee and appreciated its efforts for trying to balance the plight of the taxpayers with the School's primary mission. She also offered several ideas for further mitigation for the budget increase, including consolidating the METCO Director's position with the High School METCO Coordinator's position, privatizing the food service program, understanding the long-term implications of certain requests and evaluating staffing over time.

4. Adjournment:

Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley and seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 11:05 a.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Ellen Grieco, Chair	X	
Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair	X	
Malcolm Astley	X	
Donna Bouchard	X	
Jeanne Downs	X	

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Fletcher
Wayland School Committee

Observers:
Margo Melnicove

Corresponding Documentation:
Agenda
Superintendent's FY16 Recommended Budget