

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Session – January 5, 2015

A Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, January 5, 2015, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

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

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent

Brad Crozier
Assistant Superintendent

Susan Bottan
Business Administrator

Marlene Dodyk
Director of Student Services

Also:

Debbie Bearse, Claypit Hill Principal
Jim Lee, Happy Hollow Principal
Brian Jones, Loker Principal

Chair Ellen Grieco convened the Regular Session at 7:05 p.m.

1. **Public Budget Forum:**

Paul presented his recommended FY16 budget that is available on the school district's website. He highlighted the district-wide HEART goals and commented that this budget was developed to continue the ongoing momentum on the district-wide initiatives that are associated with the HEART goals, such as the elementary reconfiguration, supporting and challenging all students (RTI), the new DESE model evaluation system, realizing the potential of instructional technology, fostering the life-long health and wellness of all students, and the introduction of Chinese language and culture into program offerings.

Paul noted the three different proposed budgets: 1) Level Services Budget, 2) Recommended Budget, and 3) Unmet Needs Budget. He added that the Level Services Budget includes contractual obligations, utilities and transportation, and enrollment for regular education, special education, and ELL. Paul explained the reductions and reallocations and the level service needs in order to reach a Level Services Budget. This budget represents \$36,813,167 or a 3.9% increase over the current budget of \$35,433,047.

Paul pointed out the additional needs built into his Recommended Budget: 1) a high school 0.4 FTE health and wellness teacher, 2) a 0.5 FTE Claypit Hill assistant principal, 3) the replacement of 190 staff computers, 4) ramp up courses for students "in the middle," and 5) a 0.6 FTE elementary reading specialist. Over the Level Services Budget, these additional needs total \$197,812 or an additional 0.6% over last year, and represent a 4.5% increase over the current budget. Paul also noted the other unmet needs that have been discussed among the administrators, but were not included in the Recommended Budget. The cost of the Unmet Needs Budget would be an additional \$185,644 or 0.5% over the Recommended Budget, with a total of a 5.0% increase over last year's budget.

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2. **Questions from the Public regarding the Budget:**

Q: Margo Melnicove asked if numbers are available regarding benefits and to what extent will they increase. She requested a breakdown of total benefits under unclassified for school employees and town employees who are associated with the schools, and the amount of the operating budget that supports the schools.

A: Paul commented that there is one additional benefit package anticipated. A discussion ensued in terms of what benefits to include and the total amount per year for each employee who receives benefits. The administrators will provide her the information she requested.

Q: Annette Lewis asked about the town funded employee benefit expenses projected for FY16 for OPEB, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, and health insurance on a per employee basis. In terms of facilities costs, Annette asked for the total cost to operate the schools. Annette commented on the cost to educate the Boston students and students of staff. She suggested that one way to help defray some of this cost is to charge the town in which the staff member lives.

A: Paul commented that METCO students are only placed in classes where there is room and does not require the hiring of new staff. He noted that even if Boston students did not attend the Wayland schools, there would be no savings in classroom teachers. He elaborated on this statement and commented that some reimbursement is achieved through Chapter 70 and the METCO grant. A discussion ensued regarding the issue of class size and the benefit and positive impact of diversity within the district.

Q: David Moran asked if there was a way to push back on the contractual obligations because taxpayers cannot afford such high teacher salaries going forward.

A: School Committee members and administrators commented on teachers' salaries in terms of the newly negotiated salary schedule, structural changes in healthcare, current hiring practices, and COLA increases in Wayland compared to other comparable districts.

Tom Sciacca referred to a section in the budget book that is a record from 1980 of nominal and real inflation adjusted increases, which results in a cumulative effect. In his opinion, this is a matter of basic management strategy.

A resident commented on the cumulative effect in terms of the changes and greater expectations in the schools since the 1980's. She related it to an apples to oranges comparison.

The Committee was confident that they could work together to reduce the budget without it having an impact on level services.

Annette Lewis commented that she reviewed a variety of reports and information from FY1999 to the present for the purpose of honing in on the number of students, teachers, non-teachers or unlicensed personnel, support staff, and total staff over time. In comparing 1999 to the present time, Annette stated that student enrollment is down by 2%, but staffing is considerably up. She asked the School Committee and administrators to look at this information in an attempt to provide a better understanding of this trend, with the possibility of reducing the budget. Annette also referred to the current Staff Deployment Report in terms of staffing. She advocated for the senior citizens and asked the School Committee to condense and cut back, so that the seniors can stay in Wayland.

Stephanie Leong questioned whether a half-time assistant principal at Claypit Hill School is enough to be effective. She commented on the importance of diversity in the schools and encouraged more dialogue about race within the schools and the community.

Q: Peggy Patton asked why there is more staff in the schools, given the decrease in enrollment.

A: Paul commented that no one is hired outside of what is budgeted. A discussion ensued and Annette Lewis reiterated how she arrived at her staffing numbers. Barb will look into providing a staff to pupil ratio for the past ten years.

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Malcolm referred to the percent of real or average change in the budget without including inflation, which, according to the budget book, is a 0.7% change per year over the past five years, and, for the past ten years, it is 1.2% per year.

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

Margo Melnicove read her public comment in which she suggested ways to reduce costs in the budget without reducing services.

Tom Sciacca referred to the budget problem at hand as being systemic and also recommended ways in which to approach it, such as offering more technology based instruction or restructuring the schools by combining the elementary grades.

Malcolm commented that the Suburban Coalition is changing the formula for Chapter 70 funding and stated that the state's tax problems are a part of Wayland's problem. He urged people to work with the Suburban Coalition to find ways to work through the tax structure. Malcolm also noted that he has communicated with the Headmaster of Brookline regarding their Foundation funds and suggested that Wayland, together with the help of alumni, implement an Innovation fund as a funding source.

Ellen read some written statements regarding the budget from Constance and Orvil Bean and Alice Bolter that she received via email. She read another communication from Linda Segal that contained a public request for personnel records.

Donna left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.; returned at 8:32 p.m.

Based on discussions at the December 29th meeting, Ellen distributed the list of areas in which further information was requested by the School Committee. Paul commented that, collectively, the administrators are still pulling information together for future meetings.

4. **Special Matters:**

(a) Budget Work Session – Review of Budget for Elementary Schools:

Susan explained the questions that she received prior to this meeting related to the elementary schools.

Regarding enrollment projections for the next five years, Susan reported that NESDEC is in the process of calculating projections for the entire district, but the cost for projections per each elementary school would be an additional cost of \$750 per school. Also reported in November was the slight decrease in elementary enrollment due to lower birth rates and a slower real estate market, similar to the reporting of Concord, Carlisle, Weston, Wellesley, Lincoln and Sudbury.

Regarding Loker School variances in staffing of 1.5% when there are no changes in FTE's, Susan provided a document in the Budget Book, together with the school budgets, that defines the reasons for the increases and decreases. A similar question was asked of the other schools.

In response to what the shortage might be this year for the over budgeted items, Susan noted that she is working on the Q2 Financial Report and she will identify those line items that are either over or under budget.

In response to how many students need reading teachers support, Brad reported that from early childhood to upper grades, there is a range of 20 to 30 students per teacher. In addition, the reading teachers consult with the classroom teachers regarding the assessment process for all the students, which requires a great deal of travel from school to school.

The School Committee asked the administrators, including elementary principals, further questions about the elementary schools regarding the variances of staffing and salaries at Loker School, new Loker staff stipends, the possibility of teacher playground supervisors vs. hiring playground supervisors, the need for an assistant principal at Claypit Hill School and how this person would assist the principal and the staff.

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Each principal spoke passionately and at length why, in their opinions, an assistant principal is needed at Claypit Hill School. Malcolm commented on the ideal ratio of staff to supervisors.

Barb asked the principals what they would create in terms of an elementary school if they could start over today without state mandates. One response was to put all elementary schools on one campus, which would include a common auditorium and gymnasium, would eliminate a sense of competition within the town, and would create a sense of community. Other desires included a longer school day to allow for physical education, music and art classes to meet twice weekly, and the expansion of Open Circle daily. Paul confirmed that a longer school day would be beneficial to the teachers in terms of planning and collaboration and, if in a different financial climate, he would push for full day kindergarten.

Malcolm asked the principals to comment on the need to address the funding of a 0.4 FTE health and wellness administrative position. The principals agreed that this position was necessary at all grade levels and noted their reasons.

Ellen asked the principals to comment on the need for a 0.6 FTE elementary reading specialist. In terms of Language Arts and RTI, the principals feel that these programs are a definite strength. However, given the varied needs of students, it has become a challenge to group them according to their skill sets. A reading specialist would help at the earliest levels and give extra support. A discussion ensued about the difference between a reading specialist vs. a special needs teacher in terms of helping students. In addition, reading specialists are invaluable at PLC meetings, as Jim Lee commented on the specialist's role during these meetings. Finally, reading is very important in the math curriculum, not to mention that the overall curriculum has changed over the years resulting in different levels of expectations.

5. **Financial Matters:**

- (a) Review of Possible Options for Outside Firm to Conduct an Assessment of the Food Service Program:
Barb commented that Susan acquired contracts from four peer communities who have reviewed their food service programs, and Cheryl Judd has information, also from peer communities, of the expenses that are incurred by these programs compared to Wayland. The Finance Subcommittee will review information regarding an assessment of Sudbury's food service program and then bring this topic back to the School Committee at its next meeting. Susan and Cheryl will also provide the School Committee with a reconciliation of food service equipment for the Wayland program.

6. **Budget Work Session (continued):**

- (a) Review of Budget for Central Office:
The School Committee discussed the possibility of automated signups and payments for extra-curricular activities and fee-based programs. Susan commented that, as a pilot program this year, high school parents can make online payments through UniBank for theater arts. Once a full year of data is gathered, a proposal will be made to the Finance Subcommittee in an attempt to review the costs and benefits. There is a transfer fee that is associated with this process.

Marlene informed the School Committee that she is meeting with Dorsey Yearley, former Director of the EDCO Collaborative, regarding the scope of a program review, to discuss which areas to target, and to also receive her recommendations in terms of how to conduct a program review. Marlene has reached out to Weston in terms of information regarding ELL, but her call has not been returned. Marlene also explained the state's reimbursement process regarding the Circuit Breaker and how it affects Wayland. She noted that transportation is not eligible for reimbursement and 31 students at a cost of \$40,000 each, which is the foundation amount, are also not eligible for reimbursement.

Malcolm left the meeting at 9:51 p.m.; returned at 9:52 p.m.

Paul noted Special Education out-of-district and in-district costs per pupil for Weston and Wayland.

Marlene addressed a question regarding teacher assistants and certified teachers relative to a secured grant. She explained the cost structure in terms of salaries, as well as the historical structure. A

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discussion ensued regarding town comparisons, including The Children's Way (TCW) program and its current classification. Historically, Marlene noted that in 1985, The Children's Way was modeled by other districts as an integrated program.

Gretchen Lutz added that there are certified teachers in each classroom at TCW, but they are not part of WTA.

Other questions included the line item regarding FY14 employee benefits relative to a temporary Benefit Card for some staff, adequate staffing in the Business Office, and staff exchange.

Brad conducted a peer district survey in terms of which districts have a grant writer. Of the districts that have reported back, six do not have a grant writer. Brad distributed a document regarding negotiating changes in the WTA contract during the last round of negotiations. He reviewed these changes with the School Committee, which included projected salary savings, lane changes, and longevity and severance pay.

Ellen left the meeting at 10:13 p.m.

Brad noted that the in FY14 the Wayland COLA was 0.5%, in FY15 1.5%, and in FY16 1.5%. The average peer districts were 2.35% in FY14, 2.8% in FY15, and 1.95% in FY16.

Barb asked the School Committee to think about a sufficient increase for the Committee's administrative secretary's salary in terms of the budget, given the amount of time spent and the amount of work being done. The Q2 Report will have more information in this regard.

Ellen returned to the meeting at 10:16 p.m.

The Committee reviewed line item detail in terms of School Committee expenses.

- (b) Continued Discussion of Budget Drivers, Assumptions, Fees and Funding Sources and Requests for Information, including Matters Identified during the December 29, 2014 Meeting:
Based on a discussion at the December 29th meeting, Donna agreed to bring to a future meeting specific analysis and information to be gathered for the Wayland School Community Programs and The Children's Way.

7. **Educational Matters:**

- (a) Hear Superintendent's Report:
Paul updated the School Committee on the two administrative searches currently in process – Claypit Hill Principal and The Children's Way Director.
- (b) Hear Student's Report:
There was no report.
- (c) Technology Spotlight #4:
Paul's technology spotlight focused on the "One Minute Reader" – a digital version of ReadNaturally and a research-based fluency program that has been used in Wayland for the past 5 years.

Its educational goals are as follows: 1) enhances foundational skills in reading fluency and comprehension at the elementary level; 2) requires students to acquire essential skills in the areas of decoding, reading fluency, and comprehension of reading material; and 3) focuses on fluency, which is the gateway to comprehension.

Student motivation and volume of reading are indicators of the level of progress. Via the "one minute reader," students read along with a fluent reader, while being engaged in other areas. Student

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assessments are key to this program, and the program provides instant feedback for the students. Paul presented a short video and read some student testimonials.

(d) Continued Discussion of Review of Special Education & ELL Program:

Much of this topic was covered earlier in the meeting. In addition, the Committee discussed ways in which to approach or conduct a review of special education and the ELL programs by identifying areas in which changes would likely be made. One approach was compared to the “mini” audit that Powers & Sullivan conducted regarding the revolving accounts.

Malcolm suggested defining and tracking the process for different reviews, given the complexities and different components that make up the school system. Reintroducing curriculum presentations was discussed.

Marlene noted that a review of the ELL program was done last year; thus, she asked the Committee what should be included in this year’s review. Suggestions included reviewing the program to determine where a review would have the most impact, benchmarking with other communities for a comparison of costs and services, and looking into forming a collaborative with another district.

8. **Financial Matters (continued):**

(a) Hear Business Administrator’s Report:

Susan reported that beginning January 12th, Melanson & Heath will be auditing the schools’ student activity accounts. Carla McAuliffe will accompany the auditors at each school to meet with the administrative assistants. Melanson & Heath will also conduct a single audit on the Special Education cluster grants beginning January 15th, and the end-of-the-year audit will begin on January 20th. The business office has uploaded several documents to the Melanson & Heath website to assist them in some preliminary work.

(b) Hear Finance Subcommittee’s Report:

Barb updated the School Committee on the subcommittee’s meeting topics going forward. The Finance Subcommittee will discuss the process for charging future fringe benefits for revolving accounts, will review the draft fee-based fund policy, will discuss the use of surplus funds, will discuss topics from this meeting relative to the FY16 budget, will review the FY14 end-of-the-year report filed with the DESE, and will review the Q2 financial report.

Barb noted that the Audit Committee reported to Susan that it was pleased with the work done by Geoff MacDonald over the past few years regarding policies and procedures.

(c) Continue to Discuss Phone Upgrade Options as a FY16 Capital Request:

To reiterate from the last meeting, Barb commented that, based on John Moynihan’s recommendations, this relates to the \$120,000 capital request reserved as a place holder for new phone equipment at Loker School, which the FinCom voted to not include in the FY16 capital budget. Paul noted that additional research has been started by Leisha and Pat Morris. In conjunction with the ALICE program, Shane Bowles and Scott Parseghian have begun discussions with a company regarding state-of-the-art options. Paul will report back to the Committee at a later date.

9. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

(a) Vote to Approve School Committee Operating Protocols:

The School Committee discussed the need of having protocols in place. Most of the members felt that they were necessary in light of some intense past meetings and the lack of equal “air time” for individual members. The intent is to follow them during each meeting.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted (4-1) to approve the School Committee protocols as proposed tonight. Donna did not agree that the operating protocols were necessary and, therefore, voted against the motion.

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(b) Discussion of Electronic Availability of Public School Documents, including Files from High School Building Committee Project:

Barb updated the School Committee on the High School Building Committee files. She commented that Leisha is working with a consultant regarding data management in terms of the best options available and their related costs. Also, a decision will be made in terms of where paper files can be kept and for how long.

Jeanne commented that she will be meeting with Mary Ann DiNapoli to discuss the Board of Selectmen's process in providing meeting documents to the public.

(c) Discussion of Possible Future Agenda Topics & Schedule:

The School Committee continued their discussion regarding its future schedule in conjunction with the Finance Committee's. They also compared members' schedules and the topics for budget discussions at each meeting, as well as the topics of the summit reports and high stakes testing. Ellen will draft future agendas for the Committee's review at the next meeting, including the dates that members cannot attend.

(d) Continued Discussion of Concussions and Youth Athletics in Connection with the Wayland Public Schools:

Malcolm referred to a book that the Board of Health has asked the School Committee to read related to concussions in athletics. The Committee discussed its role in collaboration with the Board of Health and how to proceed in this regard. Malcolm listed the areas of concern and cited statistics in regard to concussions and the long term effects. Malcolm also noted areas in which the School Committee and the schools could further address, such as providing additional information to what is being provided now, providing more trainers at sporting events, and providing specific equipment for specific sports.

The Committee agreed that the Board of Health should form a task force, put a charge in place for this task force, and make recommendations to the School Committee in terms of who should serve on the task force. The task force could also assess what is being done to address this issue currently. Paul agreed that, as a community issue, it is important to charge the task force to develop specific recommendations that could possibly be implemented by the School Committee within the schools that would produce significant results.

10. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables warrant, dated January 5, 2015, in the amount of \$366,383.00
- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Student Activities warrant, dated January 5, 2015, in the amount of \$32,807.89 (removed from the warrant as noted in the vote)
- Wayland Public Schools Payroll warrant, dated December 24, 2014, in the amount of \$1,240,817.26

(b) Acceptance of Gifts:

- A donation in the amount of \$3,898.00 from the Harold Adler Family Foundation to the METCO Program

(c) Approval of Minutes:

- Regular Session of November 17, 2014

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Consent Agenda, with the removal of the Student Activities warrant, and the November 17, 2014 Regular Session minutes as written.

11. **Comments from the Public:**

As some school districts have done, Tom Sciacca suggested that all or most of the schools in Wayland be housed on one campus, which could result in cost savings in the long term. Tom commented that he was not

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surprised to hear from Marlene Dodyk that The Children’s Way was a state model in the 1980’s and would like again to see Wayland looked at as a model for the future. Tom also referred to technology as a possible replacement for a human tutor and looks at technology in the schools as being a positive tool. Finally, he commented that the High School Building Committee documents should be kept forever for various reasons. He cited past town projects for which there are no existing documents.

12. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Barb Fletcher, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 11:30 p.m. for the purposes of approving minutes from prior executive sessions, as permitted by M.G.L. c. 30A, §22 for the meetings of December 15, 2014, December 29, 2014, and September 27, 2010. The School Committee will also review executive session minutes from September 27, 2010 executive session for possible declassification, as permitted by M.G.L. c. 30A, §22. 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	

The School Committee will be joined by Paul Stein, Superintendent and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will reconvene in Open Session to conduct regular matters as listed on the meeting notice.

13. **Regular Matters (continued):**

(a) Possible Vote to Approve Executive Session Minutes of September 27, 2010 for Possible Declassification:
Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to declassify the September 27, 2010 Executive Session minutes with no redactions.

14. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 11:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Tom Sciacca, WVN
Amy Simmons

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. Comparative WTA Contract Changes
3. Draft List of Areas in which Additional Information is Needed for Budget Review
4. Updated School Committee Protocols
5. Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants
6. Proposed Budget Work Schedule
7. Article regarding Concussions
8. Regular Session Minutes of November 17, 2014
9. METCO Gift from Harold Adler Family Foundation
10. Executive Session Motion