

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Special Meeting – December 29, 2020 #2

Revised 4-7-2021 - Final

A Special Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Friday, December 29, 2020, at 6:00 pm broadcast by WayCAM in the Wayland Town Building.

Present and participating remotely were:

- Jeanne Downs, Chair
- Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair
- Kim Reichelt
- Chris Ryan
- Kathie Steinberg

Also participating remotely:

- Arcelius Brickhouse
- Jennifer Parson

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session at 6:05 pm. WayCAM recorded the meeting and it was livestreamed via ZOOM. The meeting was conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 health pandemic and according to the revised open meeting law that allows remote participation. A roll call was taken:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

1. Interview of Superintendent Finalist Candidates

a. Interview with Arcelius Brickhouse

Mr. Brickhouse made a brief statement about himself including his varied teaching and administrative background in urban, suburban and rural schools and how those experiences have brought him to a point to lead a school district such as Wayland. The Committee asked him a series of questions (attached) and a discussion ensued.

Mr. Brickhouse sees Wayland as a school system that is doing well. He would like to enhance what already exists and suggested an early college program. He is passionate about early childhood education and would like to see full day kindergarten as part of the operating budget. From a social and emotional perspective, Mr. Brickhouse believes it is important to ensure opportunities for all students to talk to someone. As for working with the various stakeholder groups, he emphasized the importance of getting to know the people you work with and always advocating for what is in the best interest of the students,

Regarding enhancing racial justice in the schools, Mr. Brickhouse noted the importance of allowing the students an opportunity to discuss and become knowledgeable about issues. He advocated for a minority achievement task force and a group focused on how to have courageous conversations noting that talking about race is not easy but needs to be done.

Mr. Brickhouse shared his belief that a strategic plan leads the budget and the importance of developing a five year strategic plan that includes facilities, what needs to be put in place to make Wayland schools number one, and a budget that is fiscally responsible. Mr. Brickhouse discussed the importance of a team including good communication and frequent meetings with key players.

Mr. Brickhouse told the Committee Wayland appealed to him because there are great things happening and he wants to enhance the district and make it even better. He talked about improving staff morale, building culture, and the skill set he would bring to Wayland including collaboration, strong instructional leadership, knowledge of the central office, and K-12 experience. He also spoke about his previous experience in Colorado and his many transitions in the last eight years.

The interview ended with Jeanne laying out the next steps in the process which include a visit day to Wayland (both in person and virtual) and the timeline of the decision process. The entire interview can be seen at www.waycam.com.

b. Interview with Jennifer Parson

Ms. Parson made a brief statement about herself including describing herself as a life-long educator, her background in education, her current role in the Hopkinton Public Schools as Assistant Superintendent and her desire to move to the next step of being a superintendent. The Committee asked her a series of questions (attached) and a discussion ensued.

Ms. Parson noted that Wayland is an outstanding school district and that there are both silver linings and gaps that have come to light with the pandemic. She noted that students are complex and the importance of getting to know who the students are and meeting them where they are. She noted that being superintendent is being in the people business and the most important thing for any leader in a new district is to be visible and develop relationships.

Ms. Parson addressed racial justice noting that it is a clear priority in Wayland. She acknowledged that the answers aren't always easy but it is important to help K-12 students to become more aware, educated and to speak up when things are not right. She discussed her experience with the DESE Cultural Responsibility Leadership Academy. She addressed LGBTQ issues and sexual harassment noting the importance of students having a voice.

Ms. Parson noted that preparing a budget is a long process and one that should focus on needs and priorities which will come from strategic and long range planning. Tapping into grants in addition to town funds is important.

Ms. Parson defined a team as a group who has a common goal but sometimes needs to compromise getting there. Active listening, good follow up, and clear communication are all important elements of a team. She noted communication with all stakeholders in the school community is important and it needs to be concise and deliberate.

Ms. Parson told the Committee she would bring the ability to look at things from a variety of perspectives as well as experience working with town boards as part of the School Committee in her home town. She then asked the Committee what is the right person that Wayland needs and a discussion ensued.

The interview ended with Jeanne laying out the next steps in the process which include a visit day to Wayland (both in person and virtual) and the timeline of the decision process. The entire interview can be seen at www.waycam.com.

2. Adjournment:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 8:48 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Downs, Chair
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Interview Questions