

MINUTES – FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE OF Wayland School Committee
January 4, 2017

A meeting of the Finance Subcommittee of the Wayland School Committee was held on Wednesday, January 4, 2017, at 2:30 P.M. in the Selectmen's Conference Room at the Wayland Town Building.

Present:

Jeanne Downs
Barb Fletcher

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent of Schools

Susan Bottan
School Business Administrator
Brian Keveny

Town Finance Director

Members of the School Committee:

Kathie Steinberg

Members of the Finance Committee:

Gordon Cliff
Nancy Funkhouser
Jen Gorke
Carol Martin
Klaus Shigley
Dave Watkins

Anette Lewis
Tom Sciacca

The meeting was convened at 2:35 p.m. and Barb announced that the meeting was being recorded on WayCam.

1. Comments & Written Statements from the Public:

Anette Lewis asked about the reason for hiring an outside consultant for the school bus parking project rather than conducting the work internally. Barb responded, speaking as an individual, that an outside consultant was hired to provide an independent perspective with relevant expertise. Anette also suggested that one of the criteria for selecting a possible site for the buses should have been a site not near homes.

2. Consent Agenda:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne, seconded by Barb Fletcher, the Finance Subcommittee voted unanimously (2-0) to approve the December 1, 2016 minutes, as written, and December 14, 2016 minutes, as amended.

3. Financial Matters:

(a) *Discuss School Bus Parking Report, dated December 19, 2016, from The Engineering Corporation and Discuss the Lot of HDR Holdings, LLC Located at 526 Boston Post Road, Wayland, MA as Possible Sites for School Bus Parking:*

Susan provided a review of the work completed to date with regard to possible sites for school bus parking. Based on the work conducted by The Engineering Corporation, 4 sites were identified as advantageous. The School Committee then agreed to add 3 additional properties to consider, including the Middle School Campus, 91 Oxbow and Loker Recreation.

Susan spoke with the Conservation Director about 0 River Road. A significant portion of this property is considered a wetland area. Therefore, Susan asked TEC not to pursue this site. Susan then spoke with the Recreation Director about 91 Oxbow Road. Per its deed, the land can only be used for recreation purposes. Therefore, Susan

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asked TEC not to pursue this site. For the School Committee's January 9th meeting, TEC will provide additional conceptual layout plans for the Middle School campus and Loker Recreation. It will also provide preliminary cost estimates for all the properties chosen. Anette noted that the Loker Recreation property is also restricted to recreation use, per its deed.

Susan also spoke with First Student. They indicated that they would be willing to provide temporary parking space in Marlborough for no additional cost during the summer months only. The Regional Director also offered to walk the properties to provide his perspective.

Susan reported that both St. Anne's and Camp Chikami sites are not available for temporary parking. HDR Holdings will provide a proposal for the School Committee's meeting Monday night. And Susan plans to meet with the Town Administrator and the new DPW Director within the next week to continue its discussions related to this topic.

(b) Review and Discuss FY18 Operating Budget and Answer Questions from Finance Committee:

The Subcommittee met with members of the Finance Committee and answered their questions. These questions included stepping stones that wouldn't be recommended if no further work was done, the ongoing costs of the World Language Immersion program and its impact on a limited number of students, the justification for the recommended FTEs, the definition of TAs, the percentage of special needs students over time, CPI as the appropriate metric against which to measure budget increases, the School Committee's process for reaching its recommended budget, and enrollment projections.

Paul commented that a successful World Language Immersion program requires an investment in the first year for planning purposes. Beyond the cost of the coordinator, the ongoing costs may include a nominal amount for supplies and possibly an additional bus. The program may grow beyond just one classroom and impact more students over time, depending on the community's level of interest.

Barb noted that the increase in FTEs since FY10 was about 1.5 FTEs per year, after taking into account increases for the elementary reconfiguration and increases needed to provide support for special needs students. Paul explained that to understand changes in enrollment and FTEs over time, such changes need to be evaluated at the school and grade levels and in the cases of special needs at the student level.

Brian Keveny explained an analysis he conducted that added certain committed increases (e.g. steps, lanes, transportation) to the FY17 Budget. With no additional FTEs from any departments, the increase is slightly less than 2.5%. It was noted that this analysis may not include all committed increases. Susan will work with Brian to better understand his analysis. Paul explained that should the schools not fund the FTEs included in the Superintendent's recommended budget, the District would be out of compliance for its special needs students and would not follow the School Committee's class size guidelines.

Barb expressed her opinion about the approach the School Committee takes in developing its budget, building the budget from the bottom up, providing the staff and support services to meet the needs of the students expected to attend the schools the following year, and finding efficiencies, cost savings measures, and creative ways to move the educational program forward. In the end, the recommended budget must be one she supports when asking Town Meeting for its approval. She questioned whether CPI is the appropriate metric to use when measuring the level of annual budget increases and asked the Finance Committee to help determine the appropriate metric. A wage index was suggested as a possible option. She then explained that the School Committee plans to meet with building principals and department heads and deliberate the Superintendent's recommended budget over multiple meetings during the next two weeks. The School Committee will then present its recommended budget to the Finance Committee on January 17th.

It was requested that the School Committee consider the impact on the Finance Committee's work when evaluating the reductions the Superintendent included in his budget book to meet the Finance Committee guideline and the unmet needs.

Kathie questioned the rationale for the 2.5 % Finance Committee guideline and whether it was based on what services the Town wants. Dave Watkins commented that the 2.5% guideline is part of a balancing act between what services the Town wants and what the Town can afford.

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The School Committee adjourned its meeting at 4:05PM.

(c) *Discuss Possible Frequently Asked Questions related to Operating and Capital Budgets:*

This topic was taken out of order. Susan provided a compilation of frequently asked questions gathered from other communities. The Finance Subcommittee agreed to review the list and discuss any possible changes at its next meeting. Susan will provide the sample FAQs to the Subcommittee.

(d) *Review Status of FY18 Capital Requests:*

Susan reported that the Loker Tile project may not be completed until the end of the school year. Carol Martin noted that there were no new changes to the FY18 capital requests. The School Committee will discuss the possible reprioritization of the FY18 capital requests, given the Finance Committee's draft capital budget, at its January 9th meeting. Susan will ask for Paul, Ben Keefe, and Leisha Simon's input into the prioritization of these requests.

4. **Administrative Matters:**

(a) *Receive Updated Status on Various Outstanding Projects by the Business Administrator*

There was nothing to report.

5. **Future Agenda Topics and Date of Next Meeting:**

The Subcommittee agreed to meet on January 12th at 2:30PM to discuss the FAQs, the Budget Book, the FY18 operating and capital budgets and bus parking options.

6. **Comment from the Public:**

Anette Lewis asked about the capital funds report, specifically the beginning balance for certain projects. Tom informed the Subcommittee that he will ask the Energy Efficiency Committee to evaluate the HVAC system at the Middle School and to consider using the School owned bus to pilot hybrid technology. He also recommended that Town members be included in the bus parking evaluation.

7. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the Finance Subcommittee voted unanimously (2-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 4:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Fletcher
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. School Bus Parking Site Evaluation – 0 River Road
3. Wetland Area – 0 River Road
4. Deed related to 91 Oxbow Road
5. TEC Agreement - Amendment No. 1
6. Answers to Questions asked by School Committee related to WHS, WMS and Athletics
7. Status Capital Projects, January 2017
8. Possible FAQ's - Draft
9. December 1, 2016 and December 14, 2016 Draft Finance Subcommittee Minutes