

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Session – November 3, 2014

A Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, November 3, 2014, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Ellen Grieco, Chair  
Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair (arrived at 9:22 p.m.)  
Malcolm Astley  
Donna Bouchard  
Jeanne Downs

Also:

Paul Stein  
Superintendent of Schools

Brad Crozier  
Assistant Superintendent

Marlene Dodyk  
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan  
Business Administrator

Sarah Maietta  
WHS Student Representative

Ellen Grieco convened the Regular Session at 7:02 p.m.

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

Molly Upton asked the School Committee to re-assess its mandate and scope in an attempt to focus on education and to review and develop ways in which the fee-based programs in Wayland can succeed. She suggested that the programs exist under a 501C3 umbrella, which would lessen the burden on taxpayers.

Ken Isaacson is concerned that, similar to last year, more money will be allocated at Town Meeting for the fee-based programs. He commented that these programs must be self-sufficient and not subsidized by taxpayers. Ken also commented on the School Committee's OML violation and the fine that has been imposed on the Committee. He noted that it is not the taxpayers' responsibility to pay the fine.

Deirdre Maxted expressed her concern that the fee-based programs should find a way to pay for OPEB and health benefits, as the taxpayers should not be asked to transfer funds to cover these expenses. She further commented that these programs should find a way to bring in enough revenues to be completely sustainable.

Margo Melnicove commented on the food service program and its obligation to reimburse the town covering the transfer of free cash to cover its employees' fringe benefits. She also feels that it is not the taxpayers' responsibility to subsidize the food service program and The Children's Way and asked if the time has come to privatize the school lunch program or if there is a plan in place to ensure that efficiencies are maximized so that all operational expenses are covered completely.

John Flaherty shared the concerns of the previous speakers. He is also concerned about, in his opinion, the ongoing lack of transparency regarding the Open Meeting Law and other matters.

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2. **Special Matters:**

- (a) Receive Status Update regarding Information Gathered during Breakout Sessions at September 21, 2014 Long Range Planning Summit, including Discussion of Next Steps:

Paul updated the Committee on the status of information gathered at the summit, noting that 20 or 30 ideas were generated from each group. He suggested that each breakout topic be discussed by 4 or 5 people in each subgroup and separate out 2 to 4 ideas, which may be easy or more difficult to implement. Paul noted that the information from the breakout sessions at the Boston parent meeting will be included.

The Committee discussed a schedule for when each group will report to the entire School Committee.

The School Committee reviewed the revised slide that Jeanne will take to the FinCom showing the status of the School Committee's progress in its long-range plan. To avoid any confusion, Paul explained the difference between the long-term summit goals and the FY15 district goals. Changes were made to the slide. A discussion ensued regarding the process moving forward and how the goals and the School Improvement Plans can coincide with this long range effort.

3. **Educational Matters:**

- (a) Hear Superintendent's Report:

Paul commented on and described the search process for a Claypit Hill principal for the fall of 2015. The second phase of the process will allow the finalists to spend a day at Claypit and to meet with parents and staff. On November 24<sup>th</sup>, he will meet with staff and parents for a preliminary meeting.

Paul updated the Committee on the ALICE Program. Scott Parseghian and Shane Bowles organized a full day of training for over 70 faculty members, police, and fire members. The training encompassed making difficult choices at very difficult moments. Future planning includes training for all staff and students.

A discussion ensued, which included the overwhelming responsibility of faculty and staff to make decisions, the constant dissemination of information to allow people to become comfortable with the process, and the request to implement the most useful phone system in the buildings during such an event. Malcolm also suggested that it might be helpful to understand why the perpetrators are always male.

- (b) Hear Student's Report:

Sarah Maietta reported that, for students, everything comes due beginning October 1. They are looking forward to Spirit Day, and concerts are beginning, which included the Masquerade Concert. Sarah announced that the WHS fall play is November 13, 14, and 15. She has joined the Student Climate Committee and will report to the Committee at a future meeting.

After discussing with Sarah, Ellen suggested that if the Committee would like Sarah to report on specific topics or areas, they should advise Ellen.

- (c) Review of Enrollment Report and FY16 Enrollment Projections:

Susan reviewed the Enrollment Report with the School Committee. Susan noted that in order for the state to calculate the Chapter 70 funding for school districts, this report is submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education every October 1. Total enrollment as of October 1, 2014, was 2665, which is 19 fewer students than reported last year at this time and has remained somewhat level over the past three years. Susan reported on the largest cohort of students in Grades 6 and 11 and the smallest cohort in Kindergarten and first grade. In addition to Wayland resident students, there are 137 METCO students and 53 children of staff enrolled in the schools.

Susan reported on the projection levels and how those projections are computed going forward, as well as for Kindergarten enrollment. Susan also spoke briefly about the elementary reconfiguration and its full implementation in terms of class size and the addition of fifth grade at Loker in FY16.

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Susan and Paul answered questions from the Committee, which included why there was a decline in enrollment from Grade 4 to Grade 5, the past status of the full-day kindergarten wait list, and an update on the number of preschool students who receive services.

- (d) Superintendent's Evaluation: Review of Strategies and Benchmarks/Evidence Provided by Dr. Stein related to his FY15 Goals as Part of Superintendent's Evaluation Process and Discussion of Scope of Review:

Prior to the discussion, Malcolm requested that this topic be a regular agenda item going forward. As a preface, Paul noted that he is operating at two levels – a leadership level and a level whereby he can directly intervene or help out in many areas with the principals and staff. Paul also commented that some goals are in collaboration with Brad Crozier and Marlene Dodyk.

Ellen referred to a prior Committee discussion at the end of FY14 in terms of evidence and how the information provided by Paul is pressure-tested resulting in a more balanced view. As a result, the Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee had a lengthy discussion, which Ellen described, in hopes of getting School Committee input. The discussion included the idea of a 360 degree view, smaller in scale, and how it would fit in with the state's complex evaluation process without creating more layers and/or complications. Malcolm elaborated on the Subcommittee's discussion stressing that this process should continue to nurture excellence and offer valuable feedback. A discussion followed regarding possible ways to approach this process in terms of gathering feedback from staff. Paul weighed in on some suggestions regarding the process, such as providing an interim update regarding evidence and which groups of people to approach for feedback. As a less taxing process, Paul also suggested that a survey or focus group might be a way to collect feedback. Also proposed was to postpone this type of model for another year because of the current demands on staff.

Since Barb was not present, the discussion will resume at the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. The School Committee will review Paul's strategies and benchmarks/evidence related to his FY15 goals before attending the next meeting.

*Sarah left the meeting at 8:13 p.m.*

- (e) Discuss Potential Presentations of the Use of Technology for Instruction at all Levels of the Schools:  
In response to a discussion at the public forum regarding the use of technology in the schools, Ellen asked the Committee if they would like to hear regular informational presentations of how technology is being used in the classrooms. The Committee discussed the forum and topics for these presentations, as well as formulating some questions beforehand.

Paul will give brief presentations to the Committee, with the help of Leisha Simon and Brad, in terms of best practices, beginning on November 17<sup>th</sup>. Paul also noted that a presentation is planned for February 2, 2015 regarding the subject of writing within the schools.

- (f) Superintendent's Report Continued:  
Paul introduced Ben Keefe as the new Public Buildings Director. Paul gave some background of Ben's skills and experience in this field. Ben elaborated on his ties to Massachusetts and his career to date.

- (g) Continued Discussion of Review of Special Education:  
Marlene noted that she contacted several colleagues in terms of their recommendations for program evaluations and, in turn, collected some names as possible sources, such as ACCEPT Collaborative, Dorsey Yearly, Executive Director of the EDCO Collaborative, Ellen Hunneman, former Special Education Director in some districts, an associate from Tom Hehr & Associates, and Jim Early from Walker.

Marlene commented that when speaking to her sources, she inquires if they can perform either a program evaluation or a consultation or both. Marlene also explained why she is looking for someone who has experience in both regular and special education, as a way to gain a more global perspective rather than just presenting data.

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Paul explained the difference between general education accommodations and special education accommodations and how a district determines the placement of students.

The Committee discussed the timeline and what a full program review would involve, depending on the Committee's definition and how the Committee wants to proceed, as well as determining a cost factor. Ellen suggested that the Committee define its expectations and goals in terms of this review/consult. One defined goal is to understand how to better offer services with cost efficiencies. The cost of this service could range from \$30,000 to \$125,000, depending on the scope. As requested, Paul and Marlene will ascertain some final reports from the recommended sources.

A discussion followed in which some options were examined that could possibly save the district money, but keeping in mind that Wayland is doing a great job in terms of services, in or out of district. It is a question of maintaining the same level of services, but at a lower and/or controlled cost. Malcolm commented from a different perspective, as he believes Marlene and her staff strive for cost efficiencies, and district self-evaluations are often done. He questioned whether cost efficiencies could be found in other areas.

Before moving ahead with the program review, Ellen proposed a compartmentalization of increases in expenses and identifying the areas (transportation, ELL, and out-of-district placements) over a 5-year period. Donna compared the SPED expenses noted in FY14 Q1 report and the FY15 Q1 report. Paul cautioned that it is important to pay attention to when payments are disbursed. The Committee discussed the approach and the information required for such a 5-year analysis. Susan will work on this analysis.

4. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Hear Business Administrator's Report:

Susan informed the Committee that she met with the Director of the Planning Department and the Chair of the Planning Committee to discuss a new parking area for the school busses. She will research the many options available and will report back to the School Committee at a future meeting. Susan added that there could be an additional expense in terms of school bus parking, depending on the research.

Susan has drafted operational procedures, which she will share with Brian Keveny for his review related to the internal process. She will bring a final document to the Finance Subcommittee before presenting to the School Committee. Susan also plans to meet with the DPW, First Student, and Technology to discuss inclement weather procedures.

(b) Review of FY15 Q1 Financial Report:

Susan reviewed the FY15 Q1 Financial Report with the Committee. The FY15 budget appropriation is \$35,433,047, and from July 1, 2014 to September 30, 2014, 25% of the appropriation has been expended. Susan noted that expenses for utilities have been encumbered and projected according to the district's needs going forward. Susan added that although electricity has exceedingly increased, there will be some efficiencies gained because of the work being done by Ameresco, such as replacement of pumps and lighting. Susan referred the Committee to the line items that are over budget for out-of-district expenditures of programs; however, the circuit breaker reimbursement has not been applied and will appear in Q2 reporting.

Susan commented that the Finance Subcommittee has recommended improvements to Schedule 5 in the quarterly report. She elaborated further.

Donna asked Susan about the higher variances in Q1 this year from Q1 last year in human resources and benefits, administrative technology, school leadership, specialists, therapeutic services, and paraprofessionals. Susan and Paul answered other questions regarding the Q1 Report, as well as providing an explanation for the variances from year to year. A discussion ensued about budget to actuals and actuals to actuals comparisons within the quarterly reports.

*Barb arrived at 9:22 p.m.*

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(c) Hear Finance Subcommittee's Report:

Barb updated the School Committee on the status of work done to date by the Finance Subcommittee. At future meetings, the members will discuss OPEB issues, a capital assessment of the elementary buildings, and a discussion with Ben Keefe about the cost benefit analysis associated with outsourcing custodial services. The Subcommittee has reviewed some reports and will review the Staff Deployment Report prior to the School Committee receiving it. The Subcommittee is also reviewing the balances of the revolving accounts in terms of drafting a policy for the fee-based funds going forward, as well as discussing a solution for prior year balances. Barb noted that the FinCom liaison has attended the last few meetings of the Finance Subcommittee. Barb and Donna praised Susan for her excellent work.

(d) Discuss the Food Services FY14 Fringe Benefits Costs:

Recently Susan met with Brian Keveny and Cheryl Judd regarding the food service fringe benefits commitment in the amount of \$210,935, which was budgeted and anticipated to be transferred to the general fund from the food services account at the end of FY14; however, it was not transferred. They also discussed the potential impact on the program when the FY14 and FY15 commitment is paid. Susan will work with the Finance Subcommittee to discuss ways to resolve this matter and pay this obligation.

Donna questioned how this oversight came about and referred to the current year transfer made at the last Town Meeting. A discussion followed, and Paul commented that he is confident this matter will be resolved. Discussion continued regarding the cost structure of the food service program. At the request of Ellen, Donna described how this situation came to light. Susan will work with the Director of Food Services to develop a payment plan going forward.

Paul assured the taxpayers that the fringe benefits that have been paid in prior years will continue to be paid in full by the school lunch program. The Finance Subcommittee will research this issue and report back to the School Committee at a future meeting.

(e) Vote the Revised FY16 CIP for the Phone Upgrade to the Elementary and Middle Schools:

The School Committee reviewed the revised FY16 CIP for the phone upgrade at the elementary and middle schools. Barb noted that the CIP should only include Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow in the amount of \$120,000 for FY16, as these buildings have been rewired and the network upgraded to support the equipment. The Middle School and Loker School rewiring will take place in FY17. However, Barb further commented that the vote taken will be as a placeholder in anticipation of an additional assessment of the elementary schools to determine whether to move forward with the capital request. The dollar amount remains the same, but the project description was revised.

Donna asked if the CIP would change because of the anticipated implementation of the ALICE Program. Barb noted that the Technology Task Force is discussing this issue in terms of the appropriate phone system to install. Leisha Simon and Paul are working to determine the best way to approach this issue in terms of safety and security in the buildings.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the revised FY16 Capital Improvement Plan as a placeholder for the phone upgrades in Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow schools.

5. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

(a) Review of Draft Fee-Based Funds Policy as Recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:

The School Committee reviewed the Fee-Based Funds Policy draft relating to the revolving accounts going forward in terms of the accumulated balances, as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee. Barb commented that a threshold is in place of 10% of the fee-based funds' annual operating expenses, which was recommended by Melanson & Heath. However, if the balance exceeds the 10% threshold, options for the use of the money were provided, as Barb noted.

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A discussion ensued in terms of a review process if balances exceed the 10% threshold during the course of the year, and the approval process of how balances are disbursed. Also discussed was the guarantee that all obligations are paid before expending the balances in these accounts. However, this could be a timing issue relative to collecting fees for the following school year, such as the high school parking fees. The Finance Subcommittee will take these matters into consideration before finalizing the policy.

(b) Follow-up Discussion on Concussion Information:

Malcolm noted that he will be communicating with the Board of Health (BOH), as well as attending a BOH meeting with regard to the continued discussion about concussions. Malcolm reported on a talk given by Paul Butler in which Mr. Butler related his concerns about football in general and aside from the concussion issue. Malcolm noted some researchers in this field and cited some facts from the articles to which he referred.

(c) Review of Malcolm Astley's Draft Communication in Response to Certain Recent Public Comments:

Based on Malcolm's first draft and the School Committee's comments at a prior meeting, the School Committee reviewed a second draft of the communication. A discussion ensued about whether to send the communication and the pros and cons of doing so, including if the communication will achieve its intended purpose. The Committee decided not to send this communication.

(d) Discuss Schedule of School Committee Meetings with Reference to Challenge of Continued Late Meetings:

The School Committee discussed ways in which it could address and resolve the issue of continued late meetings. Some of the suggestions included day meetings, delegation of tasks, and community involvement in terms of gathering information. At this point, the Committee decided not to schedule more meetings.

(e) Receive Update on Suburban Coalition Matters:

Malcolm updated the School Committee on the Suburban Coalition Forum at which the Coalition identifies common problems in towns and also among School Committees. Experts are also invited to share information in order to gain perspective on the budget and how it works. Malcolm noted that the state budget will start the year off in a deficit. Malcolm further described the Coalition's efforts and how they address many issues at the state and local levels. The Committee agreed that Malcolm would draft a letter soliciting community members to participate in the Coalition's ongoing work.

(f) Discuss Ideas for Future Agenda Topics:

Some of the ideas discussed by the Committee included the following:

- A brief technology report in terms of best practices by Paul
- Reports by School Committee liaisons on a rotating basis
- Continued concussion discussion at each meeting

6. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables warrant, dated November 3, 2014, in the amount of \$23,109.06
- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables warrant (Student Activities), dated November 3, 2014, in the amount of \$29,386.86
- Wayland Public Schools Payroll warrant, dated October 30, 2014, in the amount of \$1,220,779.62

(b) Approval of Minutes:

- Regular Session of September 22, 2014
- Regular Session of September 27, 2014

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Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Consent Agenda with the Regular Session Minutes of September 22, 2014 and September 27, 2014, as written.

7. **Comments from the Public:**

John Flaherty asked the School Committee to admit to making mistakes, and, in his opinion, not to downplay them. He alleged that the Committee has insulated themselves from many in town, and, again in his opinion, steps taken in terms of the fine related to the Open Meeting Law violation lacked integrity, since the Committee expects the taxpayers to pay the fine.

In response to Malcolm's report on concussions, Tom clarified that Paul Butler is a medical doctor. He mentioned this because it is important in terms of acceptable input on the concussion issue. As a member of the Technology Task Force, Tom noted that many on the task force are skeptical of the notion of using a sophisticated computerized system as a safety system, and feel that since safety is a specialized skill, the School Committee should hire a consultant. As a member of the Energy Advisory Committee, Tom commented on the uncomfortable temperatures in the Town Building relative to the work Esco is considering for this building. The Energy Advisory Committee discussed this at its last meeting; however, the final decision lies with the Board of Selectmen. Tom encouraged building staff to verbalize their concerns to the appropriate parties, as he supports the work to be done.

Donna asked if the Fire or Police Chief could recommend a consultant that the schools could hire regarding the phones in the schools. Paul will look into this. A discussion ensued.

8. **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 10:41 p.m. for the purposes of continuing to discuss strategy related to George Harris's Open Meeting Law Complaint filed on September 15, 2014 related to the January 21, 2014 and January 27, 2014 Executive Session Minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(1), to discuss strategy regarding the Investigation of Charges of Criminal Misconduct, as permitted by M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a)(5), to review revised Executive Session Minutes and additional response related to George Harris's Open Meeting Law Complaint filed on August 27, 2014 for approval and potential declassification, as permitted by M.G.L. c. 30A, §22, to review minutes and corresponding documents from the prior executive sessions for declassification, as permitted by M.G.L. c. 30A, §22, for the Executive Session meetings as noted on the meeting notice. The School Committee will approve minutes from prior executive sessions, as permitted by M.G.L. c. 30A, §22 for the meeting of October 20, 2014. 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, Superintendent of Schools, Brad Crozier, Assistant Superintendent, and Diane Marobella.

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

The School Committee reconvened in Open Session at 12:10 a.m.

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

(a) Approve and Possible Vote to Declassify Revised Executive Session Minutes and Send Response to Attorney General related to Open Meeting Law Complaint Filed by George Harris on August 27, 2014 as Discussed in Executive Session:

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Barb noted that the minutes related to this OML complaint will be included with the other minutes listed; thus, a vote was not taken.

Jeanne read the additional draft response to the Committee to be sent to the Attorney General's office regarding this OML complaint of August 27, 2014.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to send the response to the Attorney General as part of the School Committee's response related to George Harris's Open Meeting Law Complaint submitted on August 27, 2014.

(b) Possible Vote to Declassify Executive Session Minutes and Corresponding Documents as Discussed in Executive Session and Listed on the Meeting Notice:

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to release the Executive Session minutes as discussed in Executive Session with certain redactions, with the exception of January 24, 2014, and subject to Mark Lanza's approval.

11. **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 12:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk  
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Tom Sciacca, WVN  
Deirdre Maxted  
Molly Upton  
Ken Isaacson  
Margo Melnicove

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. FinCom Long-Range Planning Slide
3. Notes re: the Summit taken at the Boston Parent Meeting
4. 2014-2015 Enrollment Report
5. Superintendent's Goals re: his Evaluation 2014-2015
6. First Quarter Financial Report (Q1)
7. FY16 CIP Phone Upgrade in 4 Buildings
8. Draft Policy for Fee-Based Funds
9. Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants
10. Regular Minutes of September 22, 2014
11. Regular Minutes of September 27, 2014