

# MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 3, 2024

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Wednesday, January 3, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. at the Wayland Town Building

*Present:*

Erin Gibbons, Chair  
Jeanne Downs, Vice Chair  
Ellen Grieco (arrived at 6:20 p.m.)  
Erin Mueller  
Christina Rodrigo

*Also present:*

David Fleishman  
Acting Superintendent

Betsy Gavron  
Interim Assistant Superintendent

Susan Bottan  
Director of Finance & Operations

Debbie Dixon  
Interim Director of Student Services

*Also:*

Brian Jones, Loker School Principal  
Emily Charton, Claypit Hill School Principal  
Nicolette Foundas, Happy Hollow School Principal

**1. Welcome & Call to Order:**

Chair Erin Gibbons called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and announced that the meeting was being recorded by WayCAM.

Erin Gibbons announced that there was a typo for agenda item 4.1. It should read “FY25” budget.

**2. Public Comment:**

Lisa Bagley, 11 Wallace Road, and Jeanne Chiang, 37 Highgate Road, represented a parent group who want to launch Varsity Gymnastics at Wayland High School. They updated the School Committee on their efforts thus far. They have gathered the interest, a pipeline and budget projections, and recently met with the Athletic Advisory Committee who will provide a response/recommendation toward the end of January. They have also been in touch with the Weston Athletic Director who could be a potential co-op partner and has identified possible practice sites as well at a much lower potential cost and have contacted Heath Rollins, Wayland’s Athletic Director. They asked for district engagement so that they can make appropriate decisions to attain their goal to relaunch the gymnastics team for the winter of 2025.

Jen Rogers expressed her support for the gymnastics team, as her daughter participates in a program outside of Wayland but she will age out of that program soon. She asked the School Committee to support this endeavor.

Sanjin Hodzic, 19 Woodland Road, shared his concerns, the research he discovered on the Internet, and to propose a solution to the ongoing conversations about what is happening in Israel and Gaza. He asked about the status of two Muslim holidays which he proposed at another meeting to be non-school days so the Muslim population can celebrate as do other cultures in Wayland. Mr. Hodzic is concerned that when public comment is given, there is no follow-up action by the School Committee and notes that, in his opinion, when there is silence, it translates into support for what is going on in the world. He asked where the empathy is for the Muslim population.

Idman Hodzic, 19 Woodland Road, continued the public comment with more information taken from the Internet about the October 7, 2023 attack on Israel. He offered solutions to the existing problems as a result, one being to stand on the right side of humanity, justice, and to provide support. There will be positive results, peace and acknowledgment. Idman encouraged the School Committee to have an open conversation with residents to provide support, empathy, and feedback, as well as having a meeting with religious leaders. Finally, he stated that truth and justice will always win.

# MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 3, 2024

## 3. **Acting Superintendent Update:**

### 3.1 *Leadership Search Update:*

David updated the School Committee on the search for the Claypit Hill principal. There have been meetings with families and staff, as well as surveys asking about what is working well now and what qualities are important when considering a new principal. The application process closes Friday, January 5. The search committee will meet to peruse the applications and choose semi-finalists for interviews. Finalists will visit Claypit Hill for an entire day, number of hours to be determined. The plan is to name a new Claypit Hill principal by Friday, February 15. In terms of other administrative searches, the hope is to have all positions filled by mid-March.

*Ellen Grieco arrived at 6:20 p.m.*

Several resumes from experienced candidates have been received for the Claypit Hill principal position. Leadership experience is required for this position. David noted that there aren't many elementary principal searches going on in other districts at this time. In addition, there aren't a lot of vacancies in positions for Director of Student Services.

## 4. **Financial Matters:**

### 4.1 *Discussion regarding FY25 Budget:*

- Elementary Principals

David noted that a level service budget is one that shifts items within the budget so students can still receive a similar level of education. The percentage change over the FY24 budget is 4.94% or \$2,477,568. David updated the School Committee on the Full Day Kindergarten proposal. The tuition that would be brought into the district by families for FDK is \$535,769. Because FDK is already in place in Wayland, it is simply the tuition that is being absorbed by the operating budget and will be covered by Chapter 70 funds after year one and continue from year to year. A discussion ensued about the funding and the timing of the funding, as well as the reimbursement back to the Town if the money is put up front for FY25. The Town recommended that this line item would be added to the budget as opposed to having a warrant article. The School Committee supports the FDK proposal as there are multiple benefits for the children.

The School Committee discussed drafting a warrant article by the deadline, so the deadline is not missed even though the Town does not recommend it. The warrant can be pulled at any time prior to Town Meeting. The School Committee agreed not to submit a warrant article.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Christina Rodrigo, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to accept the Town's suggestion that the funding for the first year of Full Day Kindergarten be included in the school budget for FY25.

A discussion ensued about the need for a 1.0 FTE special education leadership support position at Claypit Hill to oversee the specialized programs. As principal, Emily Charton confirmed that she spends about 30 to 35% of her time overseeing these programs; she described her responsibilities in this regard.

The elementary principals are grateful for the proposed budget and the possibility of Full Day Kindergarten, as they all believe that equal access for all families is so important for the students particularly for social and emotional development. The needs for kindergarten students are greater now than ever, especially since Covid. FDK has been in place since the fall of 2010 but it has been a tuition based program. In terms of what is not in the budget, the principals would have liked to see a math interventionist hired for all elementary schools going forward so that all students can have equitable access. Having a math coach in each elementary school, however, does make a huge difference for all students. They have all worked together, including the principals and Betsy Gavron, to implement Bridges Math. A discussion ensued about the math data in terms of student progress at Claypit Hill when there was a math interventionist. Currently, a .5 health teacher is being shared across the three elementary schools which was funded by the Wayland Public Schools Foundation.

*Erin Mueller left the meeting at 7:17 p.m.; returned at 7:19 p.m.*

*Erin Gibbons left the meeting at 7:19 p.m.; returned at 7:21 p.m.*

### 4.2 *Discussion and Possible Vote of FY24 and FY25 WayCAM Budget Request:*

# MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 3, 2024

Jeanne and Susan presented some clarification about this request since the last meeting. The \$30,000 funding request is to pay for the streaming services used by town and school employees. This expense for FY24 is \$48,000. The WayCAM space at the high school is a weight room of which ownership was transferred to the town from the schools in 2010; Jeanne explained. The Select Board has voted to support the \$15,000 funding for the FY24 streaming services. Susan has set aside a one-time funding expense for this year only in the amount of \$15,000. A discussion ensued about who makes use of the streaming services within the schools and what the actual streaming services are for residents and schools. The School Committee would like a better understanding of how streaming is being used in the classrooms.

The discussion continued after Erin first made the motion.

Upon a motion by Erin Gibbons, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted (4-1) (Christina opposed) to fund the \$15,000 for FY24 as a one-time only cost to help alleviate WayCAM's streaming service invoice and that we ask WayCAM in return to provide a plan for future funding of this streaming service before Town Meeting votes on the budget and to also provide line item detail on the streaming services that are costing \$48,000 and how those are being used by the schools.

### *Dates of January meetings:*

A discussion ensued about dates for January meetings, including the budget discussions that are remaining for the middle school, high school, special revenue funds, athletics, facilities, central office, and special education. Susan offered to answer any questions from the School Committee prior to the next meeting. The School Committee will also vote on the budget. There will be a meeting on January 17 with a possible meeting on January 31. In addition, there will be a community budget presentation very soon.

### 4.3 *Discussion of Full-Day Kindergarten Funding:*

This agenda item was addressed earlier in the meeting during item 4.1.

## 5. **Administrative Matters:**

### 5.1 *FY24 Acting Superintendent Goals Update – Review of and Potential Vote to Approve Goals and Indicators:*

David reviewed his four goals, the strategic actions steps to meet each goal and the outcomes/measurements related to each goal, including feedback from all stakeholders. The goals center around collaboration and relationships, engagement/communication with staff, students and families, inclusivity, belonging and opportunity, creating and refining district protocols, procedures and structures. The indicators will be provided to the School Committee.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Erin Mueller, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Superintendent's FY24 goals.

## 6. **Consent Agenda:**

### 6.1 Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant dated January 3, 2024 in the amount of \$745,255.70.

### 6.2 Approval of Minutes: November 29, 2023, December 13, 2023

Erin Gibbons noted names spelled incorrectly in the public comment section for the November 29 and December 13, 2023 minutes; the changes will be made.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Christina Rodrigo, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda with the changes noted.

## 8. **Matters Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:**

None.

## 9. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Erin Gibbons, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 8:37 p.m. for the purposes of (a) approving executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: December 13, 2023 with the intent to withhold said minutes; and (b) a discussion regarding strategy with respect to the following litigation matters where an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee: Easy v. Wayland Public Schools, et al (MCAD Complaint, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3). A roll call vote was taken as follows:

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 3, 2024

<b><u>Roll Call</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>No</u></b>
Erin Gibbons, Chair	X	
Jeanne Downs, Vice Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco	X	
Erin Mueller	X	
Christina Rodrigo	X	

The School Committee will not be joined by other participants.

The School Committee will adjourn in Executive Session and will not reconvene in open session.

10. Adjournment:

Upon a motion made by Christina Rodrigo, seconded by Erin Mueller, the Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn at 9:12 pm. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<b><u>Roll Call</u></b>	<b><u>Yes</u></b>	<b><u>No</u></b>
Erin Gibbons, Chair	X	
Jeanne Downs, Vice Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco	absent	
Erin Mueller	X	
Christina Rodrigo	X	

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Gibbons, Chair  
Wayland School Committee

**Observers:**

Jeanne Chiang, 37 Highgate Road  
Lisa Bagley, 11 Wallace Road

**Corresponding Documentation:**

1. Agenda
2. Public Comment
3. FY25 Budget Presentation
4. FY25 Recommended Budget Publication
5. FY24 Superintendent Goals
6. Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants
7. School Committee Minutes of November 29, 2023
8. School Committee Minutes of December 13, 2023
9. Executive Session Motion