

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Special Meeting – January 22, 2016

A Special Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Friday, January 22, 2016, 9:15 A.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Ellen Grieco, Chair
Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair
Donna Bouchard (arrived at 9:17 a.m.)
Jeanne Downs
Kathie Steinberg

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent

Brad Crozier
Assistant Superintendent

Susan Bottan,
Business Administrator

Marlene Dodyk
Director of Student Services

Chair Ellen Grieco convened the Special Session at 9:15 A.M. and noted that the meeting is being recorded by WayCAM.

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

Pauline DeCesare has lived in Wayland for almost 56 years and supports education. However, she asked the School Committee to have mercy on the taxpayers during this time of financial uncertainty.

Mark Hayes distributed follow-up answers to a document that he gave to the Committee at a previous meeting. He recommended that the School Committee to get commitments for dates and plans making sure that the security issues that he brought to their attention are being addressed. Mark referred to a special amendment that Google wrote that applies in Sweden and could apply to the United States in addressing all of Wayland's security concerns. He noted that he is coordinating with the ACLU and the Electronic Frontier Foundation to find out if schools in the U.S. can sign this special amendment. Mark commented that these issues have gone national. He requested 30 minutes at a School Committee meeting to have a presentation and discussion about his concerns. A discussion ensued about whether these concerns are addressed in the McGladrey Report. Kathie referred to the work of the hired technology consultant vs. the work done by Mark Hayes.

Aina Lagor commented that she is also concerned about the security issues in Wayland.

Molly Upton asked the School Committee to keep its budget within the 2.5% guideline. She does not support the 0.5 FTE assistant principal position, as she believes that this position will push the need for fewer classroom teachers that may be needed. Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow do not need to reach their former capacity if Loker is the safety school. Molly cited statistics regarding the third and fourth grade classes that are above class size guidelines. Molly noted that the IT expenditures will push the town side over 2.5% largely because the school issues were not addressed. She believes that if the 2.5% guideline is followed and an assistant principal is not hired, this will put the schools in good stead next year. Finally, Molly compared this year's tax rate to what next year's could potentially be.

Alice Boelter's concern and belief is that the Superintendent always advocates for higher guidelines than the FinCom sets forth. She asked the Committee to stay within the guideline and, if savings are found, she asked the Committee not to look for ways to spend the savings.

Annette Lewis commented that the total operating budget will increase much more than 2.5%. She noted the steady increase in FTEs over the last 5 years to be 62.77 despite the steady decrease in student enrollment. Annette asked the Committee to consider the additional cost to taxpayers in terms of overhead and benefits when FTEs are added. In addition, this year the budget represents an increase of 7 FTEs including benefits totaling over \$100,000. She urged the Committee to stay with the 2.5% as recommended by the Finance Committee.

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2. **Financial Matters:**

- (a) Continued Discussion of FY2017 Budget, including Information Received during Budget Work Sessions and Discussion of Possible Cost Savings/Efficiency Opportunities, in the Following Areas among Others: (Elementary, Middle School, High School, Special Education, Facilities, Technology, Central Office, Wayland School Community Programs, The Children's Way, and METCO)

The School Committee continued its work on the budget, particularly working from the spreadsheet that represents each member's budget preferences. Each member noted her changes to the budget since the last meeting, including where money could be allocated and why.

Barb reinstated a 0.4 FTE at the high school, added the Health and Wellness coordinator, and allocated funds for a MUNIS consultant to help the business office in more expeditious data compilation.

Jeanne restored the 0.4 FTE at the high school, kept the assistant principal, removed the 0.6 FTE at the middle school, kept the Health and Wellness coordinator, and Kindergarten supplies. She also added \$15,000 for a business analyst in the business office.

Ellen added \$15,000 for a business analyst to support Susan in the business office, kept the Kindergarten supplies, and noted her strong support for a writing curriculum teacher at the middle school.

Kathie kept the assistant principal position but increased the FTEs from 0.5 to 0.8, added a Kindergarten aide, kept the Kindergarten supplies, kept the Health and Wellness coordinator, restored the 0.6 FTE at the high school, restored the 0.6 FTE at the middle school to fund a teacher or social worker but to be decided by the principal, and adding \$15,000 for the business office.

Despite the misinterpretation of the phrase "thriving in place" by some residents, Donna feels that there are areas in the budget that continues to increase indicating growth in the district thereby supporting excellence in education in Wayland. Donna distributed a document that contained information from the Staff Deployment and Class Size Reports and she reviewed this information with the Committee. Her view is that there isn't enough money to fund new initiatives, because, according to the last WTA contract, FY17 represents a 2% pay increases for staff, thus decreasing the ability to fund more initiatives for FY17. Donna commented that the teachers are very deserving and very dedicated, and the district is at the top in the state in terms of servicing the needs of the Wayland students. Donna asked if the district can afford to do more with the budget given the 2.5% guideline and the financial constraints of some taxpayers. Therefore, she urged the School Committee to consider everything when developing the budget, including the support from those organizations that have supported the schools for years.

Donna distributed her budget recommendations to the School Committee for personnel and non-personnel. She added back the 0.6 FTEs at the middle school and high school teaching staff. Donna noted this is not the year to add a 0.5 FTE assistant principal even though the need could be the result of redistricting. She advocated taking \$10,000 from the METCO grant and \$10,000 from the Circuit Breaker to cover a portion of the Assistant Special Education Director's salary, as this person will be overseeing the METCO funds among other job SPED responsibilities. Because of higher wastewater costs from the original contract of \$44,000 with Whitewater, Donna recommended putting this contract out to bid again as a means to save money.

Ellen left the meeting at 9:58 a.m.; returned at 10:01 a.m.

Donna recommended allocating \$70,000 for a custodial night supervisor, find funds to run a METCO late bus for five days to ensure that the students get the same experience, and use staff exchange funds for writing programs at the high school and middle school. She is in favor of funding languages at the elementary schools, a business analyst, new athletic uniforms, technology security, and the Health and Wellness department chair, depending on where the funds will come from.

In response to Donna's point regarding the WTA contract, Ellen noted that the entire contract should be considered long-term for four years, not year to year. A discussion ensued regarding the town-wide 2.5% guideline related to the School Committee's budget. Jeanne noted that the FY17 recommended budget does not reflect any new big initiatives and she described what "thriving in place" means to her. In Donna's opinion, the big initiative this year is the staff raises.

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The budget discussion continued in terms of the budget items advocated by each member, which could be changed, in order to work toward a recommended budget. Paul addressed his rationale in terms of reinstating a 0.4 FTE at the high school given the priorities at the high school. Kathie commented on the FinCom's discussions in terms of what the 2.5% guideline represents overall and that the FinCom is open to hearing justification from departments should they exceed 2.5%.

Jeanne noted the importance of adding the 0.4 FTE Health and Wellness Department Chair in order to meet the social and emotional needs of the students. Although she agrees with Jeanne's comments, Ellen added that writing does relate to the overall wellness of students; however, she is unsure of how this goal can be achieved. Paul addressed the staffing of this position as well as its importance. He noted that there could be new state regulations surrounding mental health screening and substance abuse. The Committee continued working with the numbers on the spreadsheet taking everything into consideration.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted (4-1) (Donna voted no) to recommend the budget to the Finance Committee as presented under #7 as discussed today.

Donna commented that she cannot vote for the budget because of the addition of the Claypit Hill assistant principal position. Jeanne and Ellen both agreed that the Committee is being shortsighted because the kindergarten supplies have been left out of the budget. Paul confirmed with the Committee that the high school and middle school principals have discretion in terms of how they would use the 0.4 FTE for staffing and where it would make the most difference.

Kathie asked the Committee to consider visiting at a future meeting the costs assigned to the Wayland School Community Programs, particularly benefits and OPEB costs. She added it will affect the town's operating budget in terms of personnel costs going forward, but not this Schools' operating budget. Some school employees also work for WSCP and she feels that the benefits and OPEB costs are not appropriately allocated. Kathy explained further and noted that this discussion would be useful to the Directors as well. Barb suggested that this discussion take place after Town Meeting in preparation for FY18. However, she noted that the costs would determine the timing of the discussion. This topic will be added to the agenda for the February 1st meeting.

(b) Discussion of Budget Process and Schedule, including Timing of Budget Hearing and Content of School Committee Budget Booklet:

Ellen noted that a discussion and possible approval of fees will be voted on at the Budget Hearing which was agreed by the Committee to be held on February 22nd. The Committee also discussed the budget presentation and the budget booklet for which Committee members will provide input at the next meeting. The Fast Facts booklet will be produced again this year.

Following the joint meeting with FinCom, Barb will attend the Finance Committee's warrant hearing at 7:45 p.m. on January 25th.

(c) Potential Vote to Approve Recommended Budget for Presentation to the Finance Committee:
The School Committee was not prepared to take a vote at this time.

3. **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 10:59 a.m. for the purposes of reviewing executive session minutes of March 11, 2013 and discussing the continuing need for redaction of portions of minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22.

The School Committee will be joined by Paul Stein, Superintendent of Schools, Brad Crozier, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will reconvene in open session to conduct regular matters as noted on the meeting notice.

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

(a) Potential Vote to Release to the Public Executive Session Minutes of March 1, 2013 without Redaction:
This agenda item was passed over because the School Committee was not prepared to vote.

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5. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Barb Fletcher, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Molly Upton, Wayland
Mary Ann Borkowski, Wayland
Tom Sciacca, WVN and Wayland BUZZ
Annette Lewis, Wayland
Pauline DeCesare, Wayland
Mark Hayes

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. School Committee Budget Spreadsheet - Draft
3. Executive Session Motion
4. March 11, 2013 Executive Session Minutes
5. March 11, 2013 Revised Executive Session Minutes