

# MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## Regular Session – December 12, 2013

A Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Thursday, December 12, 2013, at 10:00 A.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present:

Barb Fletcher, Chair  
Beth Butler, Vice Chair  
Malcolm Astley  
Ellen Grieco  
Donna Bouchard

Also:

Paul Stein  
Superintendent of Schools

Barb Fletcher convened the Regular Session at 10:07 a.m. and announced that WayCAM is recording the meeting.

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

Molly Upton commented that the school lunch program should not be subsidized by taxpayers; this money should be put toward educating the students. She further commented that the School Committee should consider outsourcing the program.

Nancy Schraeder commented on the CORI process in the schools not having mechanisms in place to insure that volunteers are CORI certified. She also commented that there isn't a notification when a person needs to be recertified as a result of an expired CORI.

Tom Sciacca commented that he forwarded news articles to the School Committee related to head injuries and science and math education. Tom believes that the accounting issues at hand are not as important as the life and death issues that occur from football injuries. Tom shared personal family experiences regarding his grandchildren and math in general. He also noted that only 13% of adults nationwide enter into science and math careers. He said this is a matter of fundamental education beginning in preschool.

### 2. **Educational Matters:**

(a) Hear Superintendent's Report:

- Elementary School Reconfiguration Recommendation:

Paul commented that his goal was to have his decision regarding the reconfiguration by his budget presentation on December 16<sup>th</sup>. He will be meeting with faculty later today and will send his report to the Elementary Building Use Task Force (EBUTF), which will also be online by Friday of this week. A major initiative in the FY15 budget, Paul will discuss the details and rationale of his decision at the December 16<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting.

Paul recommended to the School Committee that Wayland return to a K-5 model (2-3-4 option), with two classrooms of each grade level at Loker School, three classrooms of each grade level at Happy Hollow, and four classrooms of each grade level at Claypit Hill. Fourth graders entering fifth grade will remain at their school and, during the transitional year, buffer zones will be developed, as a family's school would not be determined until the oldest child enters kindergarten. Paul informed the School Committee of the contents of the EBUTF Report and invited the members to read it before he makes his presentation. Paul noted that this initiative is an expensive proposal that will also include some capital costs, for which he will meet with John Moynihan in order to prioritize school projects.

Barb instructed the School Committee to think about this process in terms of a discussion and how it will fit into their budget process, but also how to incorporate this proposal into the budget for Town Meeting. If members have questions, they should send them directly to Paul.

The Committee discussed the format of the public comment portion of the forum.

Paul noted that this is an exciting plan in moving the district forward and will work very well on an educational level. Paul also praised the Task Force as being a dedicated group of volunteers.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Session – December 12, 2013

- Food Services/The Children’s Way Timing Issues related to Town Transfer of Funds Update:  
Barb updated the School Committee regarding the shortfall of funds that were transferred to the Town from the accounts of Food Service and The Children’s Way. Because Barb and Paul were not aware of this shortfall until December 2<sup>nd</sup>, just before the School Committee meeting on December 2<sup>nd</sup> was to begin, they made the decision not to inform the School Committee because the School Committee did not need to take any action that night and there wasn’t a sense of immediacy or urgency. Also, it was not listed on the agenda and all the facts were not available.

Since then Barb has received all the facts, and she updated the Committee, still not requiring any School Committee action. In late February 2013, monies were transferred from the Food Service revolving account to the general fund account to pay for healthcare pension and OPEB expenses related to that program for FY13. At the April Town Meeting incident to two warrants, voters appropriated monies from other funds to fund the OPEB expenses and also appropriated monies from other funds to the total town budget. However, a shortfall occurred for both the healthcare and budget obligations. The Children’s Way revolving account also incurred a small shortfall of their budget obligation. As a result, the Town Assessor and Finance Director have had several conversations with the DOR. They will bring a proposal to the Finance Committee, for which the FinCom will need to take action.

Going forward, the School Committee will review the Food Service model program to make sure that there are sufficient funds for Spring Town Meeting, as general funds cannot be used to supplement this account. Barb will follow up with the town’s Finance Director.

While attending a Board of Selectmen meeting, Donna Bouchard suggested that funds from the school budget be used to cover the shortfall. According to town counsel, this cannot be done; thus, still not requiring School Committee action. Donna also recommended that this obligation be worked into the budget going forward.

A discussion ensued regarding the timing of this notification of the schools’ revolving accounts in terms of notifying the School Committee and how to respond should a similar situation occur. Paul described the meeting between 5:00 and 7:00 that evening, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, with Brian Keveny, John Senchyshyn, Geoff MacDonald, and Paul. Also, verbal distribution of information to all School Committee members at the same time was discussed.

(b) Discuss School Committee Objectives for FY14:

- Review School Committee Protocols related to Meeting Management Objective:  
Barb noted the purpose of the School Committee Protocols. The School Committee reviewed the protocols in terms of content; additions and changes were made in the entire document. Examples of protocols were provided by Rob Evans, Glenn Koocher, and other school districts.

*Who We Represent:* Representing all students in the district, the Committee discussed whether they also represent all citizens of the community. The Committee discussed how the School Committee members act – as members of the Committee and/or as individual citizens of the community and if additional verbiage should be added for clarification. The words, “who we represent” will be researched in terms of origination.

*How We Govern:* The Committee discussed who members should contact if a situation arises – the School Committee chair, the closest school administrator to the situation, or the Superintendent in terms of emerging or emergency topics. They also discussed if the Chair has sole authority to make the decision for what is listed on the agenda or should a majority make the decision.

Before Paul left the meeting at 11:00 a.m., Donna asked about the status of the METCO credit card statements. Barb noted that she would be meeting with Mark Lanza today regarding METCO and it will also be on the agenda for December 16.

The Committee discussed the phrase “uphold and support” as it pertains to the School Committee’s responsibilities and the way it governs. It was noted that some policies contain information related to these

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Session – December 12, 2013

protocols.

*How We Treat Each Other:* In the context of this section, the School Committee wants to appear as role models to others in both expressing opinions and in its actions, collectively and singularly.

*How We Communicate:* The Committee discussed the process when contacting the Superintendent with an issue or request and if other board members should be notified of the request. Recommendations were made to improve the process by asking the Superintendent to keep a log of emails and requests that he could bring to meetings. This would also allow the Committee to have a better sense of how much time the Superintendent and/or administrators spend addressing requests. Barb will have a conversation with Paul and suggest that this procedure be implemented as a pilot for now.

*Beth left the meeting at 12:08 p.m.; returned at 12:10.*

Also discussed was the issue of allowing the Superintendent sufficient time to respond to requests. Trying to avoid the element of surprise at meetings was discussed as well.

*How We Will Improve:* Language changes were made.

*What are Our Limits of Power:* The Committee discussed the limitations of financial responsibilities for the Committee and the Superintendent. Also, if there is a request from a community member, some of the Committee agreed with the recommendation made at the summer retreat that the school committee member should recommend that the resident contact the Superintendent directly.

*What Happens When Things go Wrong:* Language changes were made.

*The Committee took a brief recess at 12:38 p.m.; reconvened at 12:41.*

Ellen asked about the protocol in distributing a document to the School Committee.

- Discuss Proposals related to Fiscal Management Objective:  
Ellen revised the fiscal management objective and recommended that in order to evaluate and address the financial procedures, a Superintendent's Financial Task Force could be appointed. The Task Force would consist of Wayland residents with financial expertise and would work with the Superintendent. They would look at Weston's manual and decide if Wayland should develop a similar procedural manual.

For consideration, Barb suggested that the School Committee research the budget processes of other communities in order to determine best practices. At the end of the FY15 budget cycle, the Committee may decide to move forward with improvements to its own budget process based on the research and could appoint a Budget Subcommittee or a Task Force to make those changes.

A discussion ensued regarding policy vs. procedure, specifically financial policies and whether the policies should be further defined and clarified. Donna recommended that some policies be implemented immediately to insure that proper procurement procedures are in place. Barb read the current Purchasing Policy and recommended specific language for amendment purposes be provided to the Committee for future discussions of the financial policies. To save time in this process, Donna recommended that the Weston manual be adopted and then amended, where necessary.

The School Committee will discuss Policies KCD (School Gifts & Fundraising) and DJ (Purchasing) in terms of the language of the law and the language of Policy DJ at the next School Committee meeting.

Ellen will rewrite the objective and include some of Barb's idea of researching the budget processes of other communities. She will inform Paul of the Committee's conversation to get his input and preference in proceeding with this issue and the timing of the discussion, given that it is budget season.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Session – December 12, 2013

- Receive Goal Setting Objective Report:  
This agenda item was tabled.

(c) Discuss and Vote on Superintendent's Goals and Related Evidence to be Used:

The School Committee reviewed the Superintendent's goals related to his evaluation. Some suggestions were made in terms of clarification of the goals in terms of instruction and other areas, specifically Goal #3. The Committee would also like some examples related to take-aways from key points of the evidence provided, as well as adding some benchmarks. The goals were discussed as to what has been accomplished in terms of short-term results vs. long-term.

A suggestion was made regarding the Student Learning Goal in that more information be provided in the future concerning "middle of the road" students.

Beth will inform Paul of this discussion for his input and will redistribute a new draft to the Committee.

3. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Review Weston Financial Procedures Manual:

This agenda topic was discussed earlier in the meeting under School Committee Objectives.

4. **Procedural/Administrative Matters**

(a) Review of Potential Follow-up Items:

Barb reviewed the top five prioritized choices by Committee members as procedural follow-up items, which were the five district goals:

- elementary building use goal
- fiscal accountability
  - Powers & Sullivan recommendations
  - revolving account balances
  - OPEB
- School Committee objectives
- the budget – operating & capital
- Superintendent's evaluation

Barb reviewed the budget process, topics of discussion, and the schedule for the month of January. The Committee also discussed the process in terms of meeting with the principals. The Committee will send their questions, including over-arching questions about the budget, to Paul prior in preparation for upcoming meetings.

5. **Comments from the Public:**

No public comment.

6. **Executive Session:**

Executive Session was tabled.

7. **Vote to Approve Memorandum of Understanding with WESA:**

This agenda item was tabled.

8. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 1:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk  
Wayland School Committee

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Session – December 12, 2013

Observers:

Tom Sciacca, WVN

Molly Upton

Susan Wagner, Town Crier

Corresponding Documentation:

1. School Committee Protocols
2. Draft Proposal for Financial Management
3. Draft of Superintendent's Goals for Evaluation 2014-2015
4. FY15 Budget Timeline
5. Elementary Building Use Task Force Final Report