

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Session – December 2, 2013

A Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, December 2, 2013, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present:

Barb Fletcher, Chair
Beth Butler, Vice Chair
Malcolm Astley
Ellen Grieco (arrived at 7:20 p.m.)
Donna Bouchard

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent of Schools

Brad Crozier
Assistant Superintendent

Marlene Dodyk
Director of Student Services

Geoff MacDonald
Business Administrator

Sarah Maietta
Student Representative

Also:

Jim Powers, Powers & Sullivan
John Ritchie, WHS Principal
Allyson Mizoguchi, WHS Asst. Principal
Scott Parseghian, WHS Asst. Principal
Brian Keaney, WHS English Department Head
Marybeth Sacramone, WHS Guidance Department Head
Brian Jones, Loker Principal & WSCP Director
Chris Riley, Audit Committee
Paul Brennan, Audit Committee

Barb Fletcher convened the Regular Session at 7:03 p.m. and announced that WayCAM is broadcasting the meeting. Barb welcomed Sarah Maietta, a WHS sophomore, who will be the student representative at the School Committee meetings.

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

Tom Sciacca referred to a New York Times article entitled Hazards of Football. According to the article, a dozen fatalities occur annually as a result of high school football, and he feels that the sport should not be offered at Wayland Schools.

Louis Jurist commented on the Powers Report noting the difficulty in making decisions for a variety of reasons regarding the METCO accounts. He asked the School Committee to keep in mind what is best for the Wayland students and schools as they move forward in this process.

George Harris agreed with Mr. Jurist's comments, but added that the School Committee has a fiduciary obligation to the taxpayers. He commended the Committee for having the accounts reviewed. He noted that the Committee does not have the authority to process this situation as an evidentiary matter and recommended that the Committee refer the matter to an entity that does have that authority.

2. **Special Matters:**

(a) Receive Addendum Report from Jim Powers of Powers & Sullivan re: METCO Account:
Barb provided the background and reasons for the addendum report, as additional information was provided

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regarding the METCO Account.

Jim Powers commented that the findings in the original report remain as reported regarding METCO, and the addendum report addresses the METCO account only. Jim also noted that as of this date, he has not received the outstanding credit card statements. However, he suggested that the School Committee can obtain the statements through an agency that has subpoena powers.

Jim reviewed again many of the findings in the original report stating that the lack of financial accountability and the manner in which the expenses were paid were the biggest issues. He also stated that, although the accounting was done poorly, some expenses were rational and explainable and, in some cases, a pattern did exist that indicated that the expenses were for valid METCO purposes. However, without the credit card statements, his findings cannot be conclusive.

Barb stated that Mabel's attorney sent a letter describing his efforts in obtaining the credit card statements, and he expects to have them by the end of the year.

Jim answered questions from the School Committee. After giving their preference of how to move forward, the School Committee agreed to wait until the end of December in terms of securing the credit card statements. If they are not provided, the Committee, at a future meeting, will discuss how to proceed.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to allow the METCO Director another month to get the credit card statements. If they are not provided, the Chair will consult with Town Counsel in terms of how to move forward.

- (b) Discussion with Wayland High School Staff Members re: NEASC Accreditation Process:
John Ritchie, Brian Keaney, and Barb Coughlin addressed the School Committee with their and other districts' concerns regarding the process that NEASC uses for accreditation. John referred to a letter to the NEASC from superintendents and principals in the EDCO collaborative stating that NEASC's protocols are outmoded and very expensive, and the process is not in line with what the State requires the schools to do. John gave specific examples in this regard and described the process which the NEASC follows, beginning with a school visit and resulting with a final report within six months.

John said that NEASC is changing its procedures and working on a new model as a result of the superintendents' concerns. Some districts have suspended their participation, while still paying dues. After some research, the administrators found that the member districts provide the authority/power for the regional agency (NEASC) to provide the accreditation to the member school districts – a peer review of sorts.

Paul mentioned the districts that have collaborated in this effort. They are Acton-Boxboro, Arlington, Bedford, Brookline, Lexington, Lincoln-Sudbury, Newton, Weston, and Winchester. John suggested that Wayland opt out of the NEASC accreditation process for this year.

Paul commented that he supports the postponement of the NEASC review process, as there is little time to prepare for the accreditation while trying to implement the District Determined Measures, the evaluation system, the common core, and the PARCC tests. Paul also noted that not long ago, the Futures Committee did something similar to this, and finally, it would be best to wait until a permanent principal is in place at the High School. Paul said that NEASC could decide not to move forward with accreditation for these districts, which could have an impact on the admissions process on students applying to colleges. There is time to reconsider; however, Paul asked if the district is going to make a statement to the faculty about what's important regarding their time and energy.

Brian commented that the Town of Reading has pulled out of their membership with NEASC, and as part of their decision they did a survey of fifty colleges in terms of the impact of their decision. He said that only four colleges were concerned because it was a matter of Reading terminating its affiliation with NEASC vs. a poor accreditation.

Malcolm expressed his appreciation to those who examined this process, and recognized that the staff has a great deal of work ahead. However, Malcolm is concerned that this accreditation tool could still be valuable in

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working through some issues going forward. Further discussion followed and Committee members expressed their appreciation for the school's efforts in this regard.

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve sending the letter to NEASC as proposed.

3. **Educational Matters:**

(a) Hear Superintendent's Report:

Paul commented on an impressive Veterans' Day ceremony that honored veterans from World War II and presently. Veterans shared their experiences. The high school football team and cheerleaders were part of the ceremony.

Paul noted the Thanksgiving traditions that take place in the schools, such as the Turkey Tango and the annual Thanksgiving staff breakfast at Happy Hollow.

Paul also updated the Committee on the high school principal search process. Interviews of qualifying candidates will begin in January.

(b) Hear Student's Report:

Sarah Maietta thanked the School Committee for inviting her to serve as the high school student representative on the Committee. She commented that this process will allow the students to be fairly represented and to have a voice.

(c) Receive School Improvement Plans from Loker, Claypit Hill, Happy Hollow, and Middle School:

Paul commented that the format of the School Improvement Plans (SIP's) reflect uniformity and the school system's goals. He asked the Committee to send any questions to him, so he can determine if the questions can be answered ahead of time and before asking the principals to attend a meeting for the purposes of having a broader discussion.

Paul also noted that a letter from John Ritchie accompanied the High School SIP describing the intent of the plan, while the school is experiencing a transitional year.

Paul commented that a possible 1:1 initiative at the middle school requires further discussion, as the computer lease will be running out. It has not been decided on how to move forward – enter into a new lease or purchase new computers.

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to receive the School Improvement Plans from the five schools.

The School Committee discussed the School Improvement Plans in terms of being a good tool to determine the measures by which the schools can be improved. However, Malcolm suggested that meaningful goals be developed to work towards these improvements from which all groups concerned can follow and work together - School Committee, administrators, staff, and students. Barb commented that this year-long process could tie into one of the School Committee's objectives – the goal setting process – and the SIP's are just one step within this process. Malcolm gave some examples of his concerns.

(d) Vote on Superintendent's Goals and Related Evidence to be Used:
Agenda item tabled until December 12.

Sarah left the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

4. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Discuss Melanson & Heath FY13 Management Letter with Audit Committee Liaison for the Schools:

Chris Riley, Chair of the Audit Committee, and School Committee representative to the Audit Committee Paul Brennan came to the meeting to discuss the first draft of the Melanson & Heath FY13 management letter. Paul Brennan explained the process thus far and what the Audit Committee's expectations are going forward. He reviewed the seven items in the management letter, four of which are directly or partially related to the schools:

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#1) Develop a More Formal Risk Assessment Process; #3) Segregate and Monitor School Billing, Collection and Turnover Procedures; #4) Examine the Use of Unauthorized Bank Accounts, and #6) Improve Controls over School Disbursements (numbered according to the letter).

Paul Brennan commented that the FY12 and FY13 management letters were similar in terms of the written comments; however, no one wants these same comments to appear in the FY14 letter. The management letter made reference to the Powers Report; however, there were several areas in which they did not make specific recommendations. Paul suggested that a schematic plan be developed by asking what kind of accounts and spending patterns are outside of Central Office. From that information, internal controls can be put into place in order to develop an overview of what Melanson & Heath and Powers & Sullivan have said in their reports.

A discussion ensued regarding the purchase order process in terms of the multi-level process already in place, and the finding that purchases are being made prior to creating a purchase order. Chris Riley reviewed the charge of the Audit Committee, which states that the Audit Committee reports back to the Board of Selectmen. He stated that it is the responsibility of the policy-making committee to make any necessary changes. Once Melanson & Heath meets with the Board of Selectmen and the final FY13 letter is received, the School Committee will decide on how to move forward, given the timeline of the budget process. Also, after the Audit Committee and the Board of Selectmen review the FY13 financial statements, the School Committee will be notified if there are specific concerns related to the schools.

Meanwhile, Donna will submit her recommendations for immediate improvements regarding the purchase order process.

Paul and Geoff acknowledged that much has already been done up to this point, but once the report is received, more time will be needed to respond to the report, as each item will be addressed.

(b) Discuss and Vote on Increase in WSCP Administrative Staffing:

Brian Jones, WSCP Director, requested School Committee approval for an Accounts Specialist responsible for purchasing and bookkeeping, as a result of one of the findings in the Melanson & Heath management letter. This is a twenty hour position per week, and he/she would work directly with him and his office staff to ensure that there is an appropriate segregation of duties. Current fees will cover the salary of this position for the remainder of this year and FY14. This person would also be in direct communication with the Business Office regularly. Brian commented that this new hire is necessary because WSCP has grown so much in the past five years.

A discussion ensued in terms of whether an employee within the town's offices could combine his/her job with WSCP for this twenty hour position, as recommended by the Audit Committee and according to the Abrahams Group Report. A job description will be developed if and when the School Committee approves of this position.

Paul addressed the Committee with his concerns regarding the processes going forward and how the Committee communicates with him and the administrators for the purposes of clarity. Paul said it was important that we all understand about process, including the manner in which matters are communicated to him and the steps to be taken, if needed (who will do what when). He said he would like to have a way to build in clarity going forward.

A motion was made by Malcolm Astley to support the administration in addressing the finding and to put a job description in place. There was no second.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted (5-0) to have the administrators develop a proposal, get Brian Keveny's input, and then bring it back to the School Committee.

Donna moved to withdraw the first motion.

(c) Discuss FY13 Student Parking Fee and Related Charges:

Barb noted that this topic was discussed at the last meeting, but Donna requested that this item appear again on this agenda. The Committee did not discuss further.

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Donna made a motion to return the \$40,000 that was allocated to the custodians back to the senior class who paid the parking fee for FY13. There was no second.

Donna stated that she will pursue this issue, as she feels that the accounting situation was improper, and a refund should be forthcoming.

5. **Procedural/Administrative Matters**

- (a) Discuss and Vote to Enter into Negotiations for Successor Agreement with Superintendent:
Barb read Paul Stein's current contract regarding written notice from the School Committee to renew or not renew another contract.

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to provide written notice of the School Committee's intent to renew this agreement and to enter into discussions regarding the terms of the agreement no later than May 1, 2014 provided that Dr. Stein's salary and benefits as set forth in paragraph 3, and this agreement shall not be reduced without his consent.

- (b) Review of Potential Follow-up Items:
This agenda item was tabled to December 12.

Malcolm asked when the concussion issue will be discussed again. Barb will send him the training video related to concussions.

6. **Consent Agenda:**

- (a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:
- Wayland Public Schools Payroll warrant, dated 11/27/2013, in the amount of \$1,201,069.73
 - Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables warrant, dated 12/2/2013, in the amount of \$485,143.80
 - Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables warrant (Student Activities), dated 12/2/2013, in the amount of \$16,987.99
- (b) Approval of Minutes:
- Regular Session of October 28, 2013
 - Regular Session of November 4, 2013
- (c) Acceptance of Gifts
- A donation (grant) from TJX Foundation, 770 Cochituate Road, Framingham in the amount of \$20,000 to the METCO Program (tabled)
 - A donation from Birch Rea Partners of Wellesley in the amount of \$500 to the Water Warriors Club
 - A donation from Russell's Garden Center of Wayland in the amount of \$300 to the WHS Band/Jazz Program
- (d) Declassification of Executive Session Minutes:
- January 8, 2007
 - January 11, 2007
 - February 26, 2007
 - March 5, 2007
 - March 20, 2007
 - April 9, 2007
 - April 23, 2007
 - May 14, 2007
 - May 21, 2007
 - June 4, 2007
 - June 18, 2007
 - July 30, 2007
 - August 20, 2007
 - August 27, 2007
 - September 10, 2007
 - September 24, 2007

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- October 9, 2007
- October 22, 2007
- November 5, 2007
- November 19, 2007
- December 17, 2007

Donna asked for expense reports for the trips already taken. Paul responded that he did provide the reports for last year's trips – China, Washington, D.C., India, and Cape Cod. She also asked if there was verification that the purchase orders went through the proper approval process, as noted in the Powers Report.

Beth left the meeting at 10:00 p.m.; returned at 10:02 p.m.

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted (4-1) (Donna opposed) to approve the Accounts Payables and Payroll warrants as presented.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Regular Session Minutes of October 28, 2013 minutes as amended and the Regular Session Minutes of November 4, 2013 as written, the Acceptance of Gifts, with the exception of the METCO gift, and the declassification of Executive Session minutes with certain redactions as listed on the agenda.

7. **Comments from the Public:**

Tom Sciacca referred to a management story of Black & Decker in terms of a marketing exercise they conducted, and he related this story to a comment made by Paul Stein at the previous meeting regarding management time in providing educational leadership. Tom compared the different types of leadership – organizational, technical, and operational – to educational leadership and stated that Paul's job is to produce educated children and how he does his job comes from varied management levels.

8. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 10:10 p.m., as permitted under M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to Collective Bargaining for all school unions (WTA, WESA, Custodial and Food Service), as such a discussion in open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee and Executive Session is necessary to protect the bargaining position of the School Committee. They will reconvene in Regular Session to conduct one more regular matter, possibly two, to declassify certain minutes related to the OML complaint and to vote to approve the WTA Memorandum of Understanding from July 1, 2014 through August 31, 2017, and to enter into Executive Session under M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(1) to discuss the Open Meeting Law complaints filed by George Harris on August 28 and October 29, 2013 regarding Executive Session minutes and to review Executive Session minutes of October 28, 2013 and November 4, 2013 and to discuss declassification of Executive Session minutes as listed on agenda, pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30(a) Section 22. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Barb Fletcher, Chair	X	
Beth Butler, Vice Chair	X	
Malcolm Astley	X	
Ellen Grieco	X	
Donna Bouchard	X	

Regular Session was reconvened at 11:05 p.m.

9. **Vote to Approve Memorandum of Understanding with WTA for July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2017:**

Upon a motion duly made Ellen Grieco, seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted (5-0-1) (Donna abstained) (John Senchyshyn voted yes) to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Wayland Teachers' Association and the Wayland School Committee covering the period July 1, 2014 through August 31, 2017 with the amendments indicated in the draft that was discussed this evening and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Wayland School Committee and the Wayland Teachers' Association relating to the teacher evaluation system covering the time period July 1, 2013 through August 31, 2017.

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Upon a motion duly made by Donna Bouchard, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the amended Executive Session minutes and to release these amended Executive Session minutes, except for the places that were redacted and without the corresponding documents, except for one with redactions.

Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to authorize Barb Fletcher to send the response to the Attorney General's office regarding George Harris's complaint of October 29, 2013.

Revote of first motion - Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Executive Session minutes referenced in the OML complaint filed by George Harris of October 29, 2013, as amended and to release the minutes with redactions and to only release one document with redactions.

10. **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 11:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Maryann Borkowski, Wayland
Louis Jurist, Wayland
Heather Pineault, Wayland
Giselle Kouka, Boston
Tom Sciacca, WVN
George Harris, Wayland

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Attorney's Letter re: METCO Director's Credit Card Statements
2. Letter to NEASC from EDCO Superintendents
3. NEASC's Letter to EDCO Superintendents
4. Letter from WHS Administration to Dr. Stein
5. Elementary and Middle School Improvement Plans
6. WHS School Improvement Plan, including letter from John Ritchie
7. FY13 Draft Financial Statements
8. FY13 Draft Melanson & Heath Management Letter
9. WSCP Staffing Proposal
10. Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants
11. Regular Minutes of October 28, 2013
12. Regular Minutes of November 4, 2013
13. Letters re: Gifts listed in Consent Agenda
14. Executive Session Minutes for Declassification listed in Consent Agenda
15. Letter to Attorney General from George Harris
16. October 29, 2013 OML Complaint filed by George Harris
17. Executive Session Minutes of October 28, 2013
18. Executive Session Minutes of November 4, 2013
19. Executive Session Minutes from 1995 to 2006 as listed on agenda