

## MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

### Regular Session – August 26, 2013

A Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, August 26, 2013, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Barb Fletcher, Chair  
Beth Butler, Vice Chair  
Malcolm Astley  
Ellen Grieco (by remote at 8:58 p.m.)  
Donna Bouchard

Also:

Paul Stein  
Superintendent of Schools

Brad Crozier  
Assistant Superintendent

Geoffrey MacDonald  
Business Administrator

Also:

Gretchen Lutz  
Early Childhood Coordinator

Chair Barb Fletcher convened the Regular Session at 7:07 P.M.

#### 1. **Introduce Dr. John Ritchie to the School Committee:**

Paul Stein introduced John Ritchie, Interim Wayland High School Principal for the 2013-2014 school year, to the School Committee and Wayland community. John gave a brief self-biography of his life and educational career. He briefly explained his outlook and goals for this school year.

#### 2. **Comments & Written Statements from the Public:**

Louis Jurist expressed his congratulations and admiration to the School Committee for settling the WTA contract, as he felt it was a fair settlement. Louis also asked the School Committee to consider opening school before Labor Day for the FY16 school year and going forward. As this year's Boosters' President, Louis commented that school athletics is underfunded and suggested that if athletic fees were increased, the proper level of coaching, proper equipment and uniforms, and better field maintenance could be provided. He feels that students may be under-supervised or have to be turned away from participation in sports if funding is not increased.

Tom Sciacca commented that he believed the WTA contract was not a good settlement. He asked the School Committee for an explanation in terms of the settlement – why they believe it was a good one and why it was done the way it was done. He also commented on median income and teachers' salaries. Tom commented that because most of the world puts less emphasis on athletics than does the United States, this country's education is mediocre in comparison.

#### 3. **Discussion re: Policy JEB – Entrance Age (for Kindergarten):**

Barb Fletcher noted the School Committee's policy and the kindergarten entrance age to be August 31.

Gretchen Lutz, Early Childhood Coordinator since 2008, explained that the cutoff date was December 31 for years. As a result of many surrounding towns moving to an August 31 date, a committee was formed in Wayland to see if this was a possibility for children in Wayland. A decision was made more than 10 years ago to change the entrance date to August 31 without changing the curriculum in an attempt to encourage more maturity socially and emotionally.

Gretchen stated that when she evaluates each child, she looks at their social and emotional development, as well as their growth. She also commented that in order for a child to be considered for an exemption, their

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birthday must be between September 1 and 15, they must live in Wayland when the request is made, and the request must be made by March 30 prior to the September entrance date. She explained the process by which she evaluates each child. There have been 15 requests for early entrance, but only 1 student was accepted as a result of the waiver.

A suggestion was made to put the guidelines on the website. Barb noted that the Policy Subcommittee will review the current policy. Malcolm asked about the number of students who are being deferred by parents in any given year.

4. **Approval of The Education Cooperative (TEC) Rental Agreement of Loker Classroom:**

The School Committee discussed the Use & Occupancy Agreement that is tied to the facilities rules and regulations. Paul Stein added that as a member of TEC, not only is Wayland supporting TEC and collecting a minimal amount of rent, this arrangement will also result in a savings in terms of the Wayland students who will attend this program, particularly in the area of transportation. Questions were raised concerning the savings in transportation and the ages of the children in the program.

Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley, seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted (3-0-1) (Donna Bouchard abstained) to approve the rental agreement for The Education Cooperative (TEC) to allow TEC to use and occupy classroom #16 at Loker Elementary School for the 2013-2014 school year.

5. **Continued Discussion re: Legal Opinion Related to Term of Settled Contract with WTA:**

Barb commented that the opinion was formatted in two parts – the evaluation of the challenge (possible discussion in Regular Session) and the remedy related to negotiation strategy (possible discussion in Executive Session). Both documents are marked “Attorney-Client Confidential/Privileged”. The School Committee received the opinion regarding the evaluation and briefly discussed portions thereof.

6. **Continued Discussion re: George Harris’s Public Records Request Related to June 3, 2013 Executive Session Minutes:**

Barb noted that there are three components of these Executive Session minutes. Upon review by Mark Lanza and Gini Tate, Barb reviewed the attorneys’ recommendations as to what is releasable and what is not.

Donna noted her opinion regarding the recommendations. The School Committee discussed further.

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted (3-1) (Donna Bouchard opposed) to approve, based on legal counsel’s advice, release of the Executive Session minutes of June 3, 2013, redacting the information related to the personnel matter, and to not release the document associated with negotiations.

7. **Continued Discussion re: Process for Receiving Jim Powers Report of Powers & Sullivan and Review of Related Communication:**

After speaking with Jim Powers, Barb Fletcher confirmed that the School Accounts Report will be available to the Committee members on Tuesday and he will send it to each member directly. He will be attending the September 3 meeting and will answer questions from the public regarding the findings and the process that he followed while preparing the report. It was suggested that if School Committee members had questions for Jim Powers, they send them to Jim prior to and in preparation for the September 3 meeting. By the same token, if administrators are asked to weigh in, it could be done at another meeting. As the liaison to the Audit Committee, Malcolm will ask Chris Riley to ask Jim Powers for his opinion in terms of any information and discussions related to personnel matters that should be in Executive Session. Also discussed was the timeline of receiving the report, getting an answer from Chris Riley, and when and how much of the report can be released online.

The School Committee reviewed their communication regarding this report for content and its title before sending to the Town Crier and via the Superintendent’s List Serve.

*Malcolm left the meeting at 8:17 p.m.; returned at 8:19 p.m.*

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A discussion ensued regarding the communication in terms of the language and what to include or not to include. Donna stated that she may resubmit her article to the Town Crier as a result of this discussion. However, the Committee will continue this discussion when Ellen can join the meeting via remote later in the meeting.

8. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Payroll warrant, dated August 8, 2013, in the amount of \$219,054.10
- Wayland Public Schools Payroll warrant, dated August 22, 2013, in the amount of \$238,834.06
- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables warrant, dated August 26, 2013 in the amount of \$369,603.27
- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables warrant, dated August 26, 2013, in the amount of \$68,326.32 (Student Activities Account)

(b) Approval of Minutes

- Regular Session of July 22, 2013
- Special Session of July 25, 2013

(c) Approval of China Exchange Trip:

Request to approve China Exchange trip from November 8 to December 9, 2013. A trip request form was submitted by Donna Fong.

(d) Acceptance of Gift for China Exchange Scholarship:

A check in the amount of \$250.00 was accepted as a gift to the China Exchange Scholarship from Gena Perry of Brookline as a scholarship for a China Exchange participant.

(e) Approval of Surplus School Furniture:

John Moynihan requested approval to dispose of surplus school furniture from Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow Elementary schools. The furniture will be donated to the Worcester school system.

(f) Release of Executive Session Minutes:

Barb commented that these minutes were reviewed, but additional review is needed by legal counsel. A discussion followed in terms of timely responses to OML complaints. No action was taken.

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the consent agenda, items (a) through (e), with Regular Session minutes of July 22, 2013 and the Special Session minutes of July 25, 2013, as amended.

9. **Superintendent's Report:**

Paul informed the Committee that Wayland has been chosen by the state to field test the common core state assessments and will be working with one of the two national groups. This is designed to be done via computers. Massachusetts is one of twenty states chosen to participate, and only 15% of Massachusetts' students will take the test, but the testing will involve two-thirds of the schools in the state. Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College & Careers (PARCC) will be implementing the first trials of this program. Members commented and asked questions in this area.

Paul praised the custodial staff, administrators and administrative assistants in the buildings who are working hard to get everything in place for the school year. He mentioned the Middle School, in particular, as everyone has worked diligently to prepare for the year, despite the roof repairs and the unexpected interior damage that was incurred.

Brad commented that he was also impressed with Pat Morris and the custodians as they prepare the buildings for the year.

Paul noted that the playground equipment at Loker School has been deemed dangerous by Parks & Recreation. However, they are working to resolve the issue.

10. **Business Office Staff Update:**

Geoff MacDonald informed the School Committee that Carla MacAuliffe has moved into the Accountant/Analyst position and the Accounts Payables Specialist position has been filled by Dale Gudejko. In both cases, Geoff reviewed their past experience and determined that they are best qualified.

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11. **Other Matter re: Upcoming Retreat:**

Donna Bouchard had a question regarding the objectives and topics of the upcoming retreat, as well as what the Dr. Evan's fee would be. The Committee revisited Donna's suggestion of periodic updates and reporting by the Chair.

*Donna left the meeting at 8:58 p.m.; returned at 9:00 p.m.*

12. **Continued Discussion re: Process for Receiving Jim Powers Report of Powers & Sullivan and Review of Related Communication:**

Ellen Grieco joined the meeting via remote due to geographic location at 8:58 p.m. to discuss the communication regarding the school accounts report. She also submitted the Remote Participation Form. Barb updated Ellen on the previous discussion and read the communication to her for the purpose of getting Ellen's view. Ellen did make some suggestions regarding the submission of the article. The discussion continued in terms of how to edit the article.

Donna moved to eliminate paragraph 2 and Malcolm seconded. A roll call vote was taken with a 3-2 vote in opposition to the motion.

<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	

After the vote, Donna further suggested a new title and how it will be signed. However, Donna noted that she will resubmit her own piece with clarification as to why she is submitting her piece and will also update new meeting dates and update a preface. Beth recommended they review paragraph 2 sentence by sentence in terms of opinion vs. fact, with the intent of reaching a compromise. As a result another motion was made.

Donna made another motion; there was no second.

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted (4-1) to submit the communication as written with Donna Bouchard's language about the RFP, new title, take out words "very hard", "but we have worked to respond to these concerns," and leave in "under the leadership and guidance of Paul Stein and Geoff MacDonald and their experience and expertise. We've made it a priority to improve our financial operations and have identified the district's goals these past two years."

Donna made additional comments on compromise and concessions.

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

13. **Comments from the Public:**

Tom Sciacca supported and endorsed the observation made by Gretchen Lutz about the thirteen-year impact of a child entering into kindergarten too soon. He also commented that he has watched School Committee meetings for the past ten years and doesn't remember the Committee having to meet so much during the summer.

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14. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley, seconded by Beth Butler, the Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 9:28 p.m. as permitted under M.G.L. Chapter 30(a), Section 21(a) 3 to discuss strategy with respect to Collective Bargaining with the WTA, as such an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee and an Executive Session is necessary to protect the bargaining position of the School Committee, as well as Section 21(a)(7) to comply with FERPA and state regulations concerning the privacy of students, incident to a discussion of kindergarten eligibility with respect to a particular student, and to approve the Executive Session minutes of July 22, 2013 and July 25, 2013. 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 (via remote)	X	
Donna Bouchard	X	

15. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 10:09 p.m. 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 (via remote)	X	
Donna Bouchard	X	

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk  
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

1. Louis Jurist, Wayland
2. Tom Sciacca, WVN
3. John Flaherty, Wayland

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Policy JEB – Entrance Age
2. Guidelines for Consideration for Early Kindergarten Entrance
3. Use & Occupancy Agreement for TEC at Loker Elementary School
4. Attorney Opinion re: Evaluation of challenge to WTA MOA
5. Draft of School Committee Communication re: Powers & Sullivan Report
6. Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants
7. Regular Session Minutes of July 22, 2013
8. Special Session Minutes of July 25, 2013
9. Field Trip Request Form – China Exchange Trip
10. Surplus Furniture Lists for Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow Schools