

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Session – January 9, 2014

A Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Thursday, January 9, 2014, 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 7:13 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
WHS Student Representative

Also:

Debbie Bearse, Claypit Hill Principal
James Lee, Happy Hollow Principal
Brian Jones, Loker Principal

Barb Fletcher convened the Regular Session at 7:10 p.m.

1. **Educational Matters:**

Hear Superintendent's Report:

- Paul notified the School Committee of a change of dates for a WHS field trip to New York. The School Committee agreed that they did not need to approve the field trip again.
- As some parents have raised a concern about the day of graduation, Paul informed the Committee that within the next few weeks, the high school administration will distribute to parents a survey with different options for days of the week for 2015. This year's graduation date is June 8, 2014 and will not be changed.
- Paul invited the public to attend the MLK dinner celebration on Friday, January 24. This is an annual event hosted by the METCO program and parents. The event will feature performing students from all grade levels.
- Paul informed the Committee that Room B138 at the high school was flooded and is under control. Currently, the Facilities Department is trying to find the source of the water break.
- Paul announced that Youth Officer Shane Bowles and WHS Assistant Principal Scott Parseghian attended a conference on school safety issues – the ALICE Program – which studied what has been learned over the last 20 years in terms of attacks on schools. A different approach is being thought about vs. a lockdown situation. They will consider the ALICE Program moving forward and because this is a public safety issue, the school administration will work with police and fire officials. They will, in turn, make a presentation to the

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Session – January 9, 2014

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), which is composed of the Superintendent, safety officers and other departments. A presentation will be made to the School Committee if an endorsement is received from these groups.

2. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley, seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter into Executive Session per M.G.L. 30A, Sect. 21(a)(1) to discuss charges and/or possible discipline against a public employee. The Committee invited Ms. Mabel Reid-Wallace and her representative to attend. The Committee will reconvene in Open Session to discuss regular matters. 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	

The School Committee reconvened in Open Session at 7:47 p.m. Barb noted that WayCAM is taping the meeting.

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

Tom Sciacca commented on technology issues that were raised at the last meeting about a “bring your own device” program. He stated that compatibility is an issue for all devices that are used and could cause the devices to experience some type of glitch. The support time spent on fixing these glitches on the devices could be thousands of hours, which is something that is not addressed from those districts having a BYOD program.

Louis Jurist commented on the elementary school reconfiguration. He read a statement regarding his involvement as a School Committee member of the reconfiguration back in 2009. He does not support the recommended reconfiguration for several reasons, such as the displacement of a maximum number of students and teachers, creation of buffer zones that parents do not support, the cost is exorbitant, the logistical issue it presents, the use of taxpayer money, and the educational programs that will not be funded as a result. If approved, he hopes there is a viable plan B.

4. **Educational Matters:**

(a) Hear Superintendent’s Report:

Paul repeated his report from earlier in the meeting.

(b) Hear Student’s Report:

Sarah informed the School Committee that she went to a Student Council meeting before break. The students were focusing more on upcoming exams and winter week; thus, student issues were not raised. However, Sarah did comment that the students were wondering why there was a two-day week scheduled after the holidays, which ultimately became a one-day week because of a snowstorm and a school cancellation. Barb and Paul described the calendar process. She will continue to attend Student Council meetings.

Sarah left the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

5. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Budget Work Session

Elementary Schools:

Because RTI is a district goal, Ellen asked the principals about the program in terms of its progress, the pace in which it is progressing, and if additional funding is needed to result in a positive effect for its success.

Debbie described the program in terms of the RTI intervention blocks, classroom participation two to three times a week, and teacher-to-teacher communication. She stated that unlike last year due to scheduling difficulty, every classroom this year is participating in ELA and mathematics. She noted the challenges with the

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Session – January 9, 2014

staff for differentiated instruction and commented that building subs fill in where needed, as the skill building classes might only be four students vs. twenty in other classes, which requires more staff.

Jim Lee described the different groups, such as an enrichment group, that require additional staff because the special education staff can't be away from their other responsibilities. In addition, planning and scheduling PLC's is a very important piece of the process.

Paul added that in Tier 1, or differentiated instruction in the regular classroom, there has to be constant formative assessments going on, while also having the ability to split up classrooms into different stations and, based on assessments, assign students to different groups. All of this involves time and imbedded professional development for which help is received by the math coaches.

Debbie commented that there have been improvements in student assessments, more so in math, and she anticipates that the assessments will continue to improve. She also stated that there are fewer students in the Math Preview Program, whereas RTI reaches all students. Jim added that data is collected in terms of specific measurements in RTI, such as comprehension and fluency issues, which results in more strategic interventions and quicker solutions.

In terms of reaching RTI goals at all levels, the principals commented that they are between 75% and 80% implementation, with Loker's RTI schedule beginning in the second half of the year. Debbie and Jim agreed that Language Arts is about 80% and math is less. Brian also confirmed that Loker is about 80%, even though Loker is somewhat different from a staffing point of view.

Marlene addressed the staffing issue in terms of addressing needs mandated by IEPs. More staff is needed in the RTI classes because there is no flexibility within the special educators' schedules. A discussion ensued regarding the recommended elementary reconfiguration models and the impact, if any, each one would have on staff scheduling and RTI. The elementary principals concurred that no matter which model was voted, RTI discussions would be paramount in scheduling and planning going forward.

Elementary Schools' Budgets:

The School Committee asked the principals questions regarding staff salaries and FTEs, how staff morale is being addressed, if there are adequate resources for all needs, and the possibility of adding world languages in the schools. Ellen asked the principals if technology support could help in building out the RTI model, and the principals agreed that teacher to student communication is most effective. In terms of one aspect of staff to staff communication, PLC (Professional Learning Communities) notes are kept in Google Docs.

Beth thanked the principals for their leadership in the schools and what they do for the children of Wayland on a regular basis.

A discussion followed about adding world languages and what would be involved in implementing such a program. Donna suggested that more research on those districts who do offer languages be done. Paul noted that if the School Committee, at the time of developing goals, supported such an exploratory task, he would welcome it.

Donna made a motion that the School Committee discuss in preparation for the next goal-setting period, the possibility of offering world languages in the elementary schools and to understand what is involved. This topic will be added to the "wish list" and a future agenda.

Special Education & ELL:

Marlene Dodyk, Director of Student Services answered questions from the School Committee. In response to Barb's question of whether RTI reduces the number of referrals, Marlene commented that it is a possibility, especially since the special education teachers are working with the students and staff to develop strategies and helping with the implementation. Sometimes students are serviced during RTI blocks, so it can count as service delivery time. If the special education staff could separate the service delivery time from RTI instruction, they would have a better sense of the number of referrals over time.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Session – January 9, 2014

On the subject of special education transportation, Marlene commented that she works with 4 or 5 different vendors. The goal is to be cost effective, so she looks at the different routes in terms of time traveled and geographic location for the purpose of consolidating routes; sometimes consolidation is not always possible. Marlene further commented that a Special Education consultant is looking into the current transportation model. However, it is important to maintain certain quality standards for transportation, even though it might cost more.

Malcolm advocated that Wayland stay in touch with Suburban Coalition, as they would contact the State to ask for their aid in many types of public school situations, including transportation.

In terms of the Miscellaneous Contracted Services budget, Marlene responded that these services are those that the schools' staff cannot provide or the schools' don't have the staff, which is usually for a lower incidence population, such as for those students who are hearing and/or visually impaired. Contracted also includes nurses who may have to accompany a student on a transportation vehicle. Marlene noted the total cost for preschool Special Education teaching assistants is \$103,000.

Marlene described the Learning Life Skills program at the High School, which is a program for students who move from the Middle School to the High School and would otherwise need an out-of-district placement because the High School may otherwise not be able to meet their educational needs. With the support of the parents, Marlene is working to provide in-town services as a cost effective approach to their education. Marlene has also applied for a one-year grant to help with the costs of this program. She noted that going forward the program could be opened up to other communities for which tuition would be charged.

Marlene thanked Gretchen Lutz, Early Childhood Coordinator, and Ilene Lieberman, Student Services Coordinator, for all their hard work, as well as the work done by the Special Education and ELL staff.

Elementary Schools Reconfiguration:

The School Committee discussed a timeline in which they could discuss the reconfiguration before taking an actual vote on one of the recommendations. Barb suggested that the Committee come to a consensus that there is a need to move forward with the reconfiguration for September 2014 or postpone for a year. The Committee reached consensus that there is a need to move forward with a discussion at this point in time.

Paul summarized two big concerns that will need to be addressed as a result of the research and discussions of the Task Force.

- It is not a good model to have students in a school for one year only because kids lose out on the knowledge that staff gain in working with them, unless they can carry that knowledge forward for at least another year. If not, ownership issues and transition issues start to appear.
- There are some concerns about some of the common spaces and the specialist spaces at Happy Hollow, which cannot be addressed unless space is freed up. However, the nurse's office can be addressed, even without freeing up some space. Over time, the flexibility issues at Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow will become problematic, as Claypit Hill will become even larger; thus, creating the need for an assistant principal.

Although not an emergency situation, Paul commented that if the decision to move forward with the elementary reconfiguration was delayed another year, these issues will remain.

A conversation ensued regarding the additional cost of the elementary reconfiguration and if moving ahead with the reconfiguration would impact future funding of educational initiatives for the students. Paul commented that a decision made regarding the reconfiguration would still be better than what is in place now; however, if given a different task by the School Committee, he would work toward that direction. The Committee also discussed the K-1, 2-5 model vs. the K-5 model and the immediate improvements needed for each on a cost basis, including the funding of RTI, but keeping in mind that either model does not identify a clear educational benefit.

Barb asked the principals for further clarification of RTI in terms of smaller schools and their model choice. Their consensus is that RTI is complicated in terms of scheduling, teacher communication and progress in the classrooms, but there could be a bigger benefit present with a K-1, 2-5 model. However, they all support the

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Session – January 9, 2014

Superintendent's recommendation of a K-5 model.

Based on public input, cost factors, and the many variables present in either model, the School Committee will continue their discussion at the next meeting regarding the K-5 and the K-1, 2-5 models, the "wish list" and the future direction of the schools, and the 3-3-3 model given the large support of this model by community members.

Donna asked what it would entail to ask the MSBA to do a feasibility study for the elementary schools, even though TBArchitects did a feasibility study a year earlier and provided solutions to some of the space issues. The School Committee discussed this further, and, again, Paul and Ellen shared the Task Force's discussions in terms of the number of classrooms in each school and space issues. Regardless of which model the School Committee votes, the long-term solution and the possibility of having to close Loker again because of enrollment was a concern.

Paul confirmed that in order to move ahead with the K-5 model, there must be three schools open, not only from an educational perspective but from a community perspective, as the K-5 model is highly valued in Wayland.

Central Office:

Geoff MacDonald summarized all four budgets (School Committee, Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent and Business Office) and commented they were up by 4.4%. There are no increases in FTEs; however, there is a payroll increase for the School Committee secretary, there was a correction of a stipend that was missed in the budget, there was a reduction in the substitute account of \$4,500 to correct and to place funds in accounts for expenses related to the China Exchange Program, there were increases of \$6,500 related to the WTA mentors' payroll, and \$4,500 related to 18 teachers having to move their classrooms. All other increases are related to COLAs.

Geoff commented further that the bus contract had a projected increase of 3% (about \$28,000) and \$36,000 was moved into an account for WTA medical expense benefits. There was also a \$1,000 increase in electricity in the trailer for the buses that are located at the septage facility. Geoff added that the bus bid will be a concern, given that the buses may have to park outside of Wayland because of the proposed construction for that site. This move could be very costly.

The replacement of copiers is not a budgeted item and year-end funds are relied upon. Geoff reiterated that the Business Office continues to be understaffed, and although the administrators support adding to the Business Office staff, it is not supported by the present budget.

The FY15 budget was discussed regarding legal expenses going forward. The Superintendent's contractual payroll increase was discussed, as well as the decrease in the budgeted amount for textbooks and the offset for transportation.

- (b) Discussion of Financial Matters that Need Immediate Attention, including Policies KCD (School Gifts & Fundraising) and DJ (Purchasing):

The School Committee discussed Donna's proposal for a new school gifts policy. Barb noted that the Policy Subcommittee proposed a new policy, it was put out for public comment, and the policy was approved by the School Committee based on the MASC version and the Westwood policy (also containing a school organization exemption). Barb also commented that 27 out of 31 school districts use the MASC version.

In an attempt to identify matters for immediate discussion by the School Committee, Ellen referred to a previous meeting at which it was decided that a list of urgent matters would be developed by Donna and requested such a list be addressed by all members and presented to the Committee. A discussion followed and Geoff identified the status of the recommendations made in the Abrahams Group (AG) Report and the Powers Report.

Barb suggested that the Committee review the status reports from the AG and Powers Report and categorize each item to be addressed and within a certain time frame in preparation for a February meeting. Paul

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Session – January 9, 2014

addressed the issue of adding a position in the Business Office to address these issues, given the size of tasks regarding financial issues and the time involved. Barb will invite John Senchyshyn to a future meeting to discuss the possibility of sharing resources between the Town Finance Office and the School Business Office.

The School Committee addressed the immediacy of discussing the Purchasing Policy and the School Gifts and Fundraising Policy. In an effort to improve the purchase order process, Donna proposed that the School Committee consider adopting Weston's manual policy, which she distributed to the Committee members. Barb noted that Wayland's policy is identical to Weston's, allowing for certain exceptions in the purchase order process. Barb compared the MASC policy to 27 districts that use a version of their policy.

Beth left the meeting at 10:49 p.m.; returned at 10:51 p.m.

There is a separate policy for Purchasing and Contract Authority. Geoff described the current purchase order process in comparison with the past process before his arrival to Wayland. He commented that the Melanson & Heath finding was based on a sample of 12 purchase orders, which had a 75% compliance rate. Only 3 purchase orders were processed after a purchase was made. Geoff also noted that in the last warrant, there were 441 purchase orders with a compliance rate of 92 percent. Of the other 8%, most were related to conferences, which have their own separate approval process. In his opinion, this matter is not of an urgent nature.

The School Committee agreed not to move forward with a new purchasing policy.

In terms of the School Gifts and Fundraising Policy, Donna noted that many of the MASC policies have a threshold for accepting gifts by the School Committee and Superintendents. She referred to the General Law of the Commonwealth and a discussion ensued regarding the exemption of accepting gifts for educational purposes from the PTO, Boosters, CAPA, WPSF and other school-based organizations. Barb confirmed that a year-end report is presented to the School Committee regarding the gifts/donations from these organizations. The question of an urgency to discuss this matter was again raised, whose responsibility it is to monitor these gifts and ultimately how these gifts are expensed. The School Committee will look at both policies for the purpose of addressing them within the next two months.

Paul asked the School Committee to establish protocol in terms of how they receive an Audit Report.

6. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools accounts payables warrant, dated January 9, 2014, in the amount of \$3,342.79 (Student Activities)

Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley, seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Accounts Payables Student Activities warrant.

7. **Comments from the Public:**

Tom Sciacca commented that he and other people in town are paying for their share of the Wayland Public Schools and there is a limit to what is reasonable and to what is fair to the taxpayers. He thanked Paul for including pages in the budget that refer to inflation adjustments made over a number of years. Tom also commented on the educational process as having two components – teaching content and teaching kids how to think. If there is more emphasis on the thinking process in the very early part of a child's education, it makes the content learning process much easier and less expensive. Tom also referred to an article about children who have knowledge of math early on, do much better in math in high school. This is also true of learning languages; thus, suggesting that the educational process be analyzed.

As a member of the Elementary Building Use Task Force (EBUTF), Alexia Obar addressed the process taken over the last 16 months by the task force members. She believes that a decision is not being rushed, as the issues at hand have been in existence for quite a while. She spoke about the RTI concept and how it has impacted her son. Alexia also addressed the space issues at the schools, especially the narrowness of Happy Hollow's hallways, more

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Session – January 9, 2014

space is needed for RTI, providing a larger lunch room, and providing a sink in the art room. In her opinion, the elementary schools have to be readjusted for the purpose of providing a basic education to the students. Alexia also asked the School Committee to consider inviting the EBUTF to a meeting to be a part of this discussion. She also commented that, although the initial implementation of a model will be costly, she feels money will be saved in the long run.

Ellen supported Alexia's suggestion to invite the EBUTF members to a meeting.

8. **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 11:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Tom Sciacca, WVN
Alexia Obar, Wayland
Louis Jurist, Wayland
Dianne Bladon, Wayland

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Accounts Payables Warrant
2. Purchasing Policy DJ
3. Schools Gifts & Fundraising Policy KCD