

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular/Special Session – April 3, 2014

A Regular/Special Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Thursday, April 3, 2014, at 6:00 P.M. in the Band Room (A149) and the Field House of the Wayland High School prior to Town Meeting.

Present:

Barb Fletcher, Chair
Beth Butler, Vice Chair
Malcolm Astley (arrived 6:15 P.M.)
Donna Bouchard (arrived (6:10 P.M.)
Ellen Grieco

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent of Schools

Brad Crozier
Assistant Superintendent

Barb Fletcher convened the Regular/Special Session at 6:03 p.m.

1. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler and seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to convene in Executive Session at 6:03 P.M. to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel, specifically the Superintendent's contract, as permitted by M.G.L. Chapter 30A, section 21(a)(2), as such a discussion in open meeting 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. The Chair announced that the School Committee will reconvene in Open Session following Executive Session to conduct other matters noted on the agenda. 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	
Ellen Grieco	X	

The School Committee reconvened in Open Session at 6:25 PM.

2. **Business Administrator Search Process:**

Barb introduced the topic by noting that Geoff MacDonald has submitted his resignation effective July 1, 2014 and given the timing, felt it appropriate for the School Committee to begin discussions about the process for filling this position.

Ellen noted that it may be difficult to attract quality candidates given the discussions that have taken place about consolidation. The uncertainty raised about this position may impact the pool of potential candidates.

Paul described a typical search process, which would start in December and include 4-6 weeks of advertising and outreach and 3-4 weeks of vetting or screening the candidates. The total process normally would take approximately 3 months. He noted that this position can be a very difficult job to fill given the licensing requirements and that there is not a natural career path for this position. He also noted the importance of being able to move quickly if a good person is found.

Beth asked about the possibility of appointing an interim Business Administrator. Donna mentioned one of the benefits of having an interim would be that it would give us more time to consider consolidation options. Paul commented on his concerns with appointing an interim, including the long learning curve associated with this position and that it would put us in a holding pattern on many important financial matters when much progress has been made recently.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular/Special Session – April 3, 2014

Paul also expressed his concerns about not hiring a Business Administrator and not putting full resources and time behind finding the best person possible. He noted the requirement by law that the person overseeing school finances must be licensed. He did not see a reason for not conducting a search. Paul clarified that we can consider consolidation without eliminating the Business Administrator position and he is supportive of looking at consolidation opportunities in the finance area outside of the Business Administrator position.

Malcolm commented that he is not interested in pursuing consolidation at this time and would like to hire the best person possible.

Ellen agreed with Paul's statement about seeing no reason for not conducting a search. If we don't, we may never know if the right person is out there. She expressed her support for conducting a full search for a Business Administrator.

The Committee discussed the possibility of hiring an interim. Paul mentioned that retired Business Administrators are a possible source for interim candidates. However, a District must prove to the State that they couldn't find a candidate in order to be granted a waiver to access this pool of candidates. They must have conducted a serious search and proven that they didn't find any qualified candidates.

Donna expressed her interest in looking into consolidation further. At the Committee's request, she agreed to research other possible configurations of Town and School Finance areas and to bring her findings to the Committee at a future meeting.

Ellen views this situation as an opportunity to resolve certain trust issues with the community and asked about the possibility of Geoff working on a consulting basis for a transition period. Paul indicated that he might be willing to serve in such a role through the summer.

Donna expressed her interest in having the search process be open rather than conducted through a committee that meets in private. Paul indicated that the process could involve the public but that it needs to be confidential in the beginning in order to attract candidates.

Ellen noted her strong belief that a Business Administrator should report directly and only to Paul. Barb agreed with conducting a full search for a Business Administrator who reports directly to Paul but the School Committee should also have access to this person in order to satisfy the Committee's fiduciary responsibility.

Beth highlighted the other requirements that may not necessarily be financial that are part of being licensed.

Paul indicated that he wanted authorization to advertise for the position with a closing date in approximately a month while researching consolidation options.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco and seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted (4-1 Donna opposed) to authorize Paul to advertise for the position immediately. Donna noted that she would like more discussion and would prefer to appoint an interim Business Administrator.

The Committee asked Paul to provide to the Committee at its next meeting on Monday, April 7th, a draft of a search process for this position.

Malcolm commented that he felt good about the process the Committee has followed to date to resolve the various financial matters.

3. **Possible Town Meeting Topics:**

If a motion is made on Town Meeting floor to reduce the operating budget by the amount of the elementary school reconfiguration, Ellen proposed a response that she read to the Committee.

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted (5-0) for Ellen to speak on behalf of the School Committee against the motion to reduce the budget by the amount of the elementary school reconfiguration along the lines of what she read to the Committee.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular/Special Session – April 3, 2014

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted (5-0) to remove the 2 capital requests associated with the elementary school reconfiguration (\$20,000 for planning the Happy Hollow space renovations and \$211,400 for redesigning the Loker kitchen) should the operating budget be reduced at Town Meeting by the amount of the elementary school reconfiguration.

The Committee also confirmed that, if asked, Barb would make a statement that the School Committee has not had an opportunity to fully discuss, other than at one meeting, the articles related to Minuteman and, therefore, has not taken a position on these articles. It was also agreed that Barb would state the vote taken related to the WaylandCares article, if asked at Town Meeting.

4. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables and Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables warrant, dated April 3, 2014, in the amount of \$261,400.21
- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables (Student Activities) warrant, dated April 3, 2014, in the amount of \$847.75
- Wayland Public Schools Payroll warrant, dated April 3, 2014, in the amount of \$1,195,980.84

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Consent Agenda.

5. **Comments from the Public:**

Barb read an email from Kent George recommending that the School Committee not hire a Business Administrator but rather promote from within the Town and School Finance Departments.

Ellen commented on Donna's article to the Crier, expressing her frustration and anger about the misstatements, inaccuracies, and misrepresentations made about the work conducted by the School Committee on the day of Town Meeting. She specifically commented on the statement made about the decision to add an Assistant Principal at Claypit Hill, which she viewed as not true.

Donna then commented that she would withdraw her statement about the Claypit Hill Assistant Principal if the School Committee voted not to support this position.

Paul clarified that the most likely need for an Assistant Principal at Claypit would be under the current configuration.

6. **Recess to Town Meeting:**

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to recess to Town Meeting.

7. **Adjournment**

The School Committee adjourned the Regular/Special Session at the conclusion of Town Meeting at 10:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Motion to Enter Executive Session dated April 3, 2014
3. Accounts Payable Warrant, dated April 3, 2014
4. Accounts Payable Warrant for Student Activity Accounts, dated April 3, 2014
5. Payroll Warrant and Summary, dated April 3, 2014
6. Draft response from Ellen Grieco in opposition to a motion to reduce the budget by the amount of the elementary school reconfiguration
7. Email from Kent George dated April 3, 2014