

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Special Meeting – March 9, 2017

A Special Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Thursday, March 9, 2017, at 12:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Ellen Grieco, Chair  
Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair  
Jeanne Downs  
Kim Reichelt  
Kathie Steinberg

Also:

Marlene Dodyk  
Student Services Director

Susan Bottan  
Business Administrator

Also:

Art Bettencourt, Director  
NESDEC

Chair Ellen Grieco convened the special session at 12:05 p.m.; the meeting is being recorded by WayCAM.

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

As a member of the Superintendent Search Screening Committee, Cliff Lewis commented that he believes that during the screening process, the fundamental issue was how to reconcile three groups of people – parents, teachers, and taxpayers, all having different comments and different perspectives. Mr. Lewis suggested that the new superintendent could play a key role in this matter and possibly garnish national recognition. He described a way in which to approach this matter that would define the meaning of and measure a quality education. Mr. Lewis offered his time to discuss this further with the School Committee.

Gordon Cliff made a public comment as a resident of Wayland noting his concern that Town Meeting will become very contentious over the next five years because the recommended school budget has increased despite flat enrollment and a very high tax rate. Recognizing that it is the responsibility of the School Committee to maintain the high quality education in Wayland, he urged the Committee to consider during the selection process of a new superintendent, one who possesses financial management experience and has a strong commitment to financial management discipline. Mr. Cliff added that Wayland needs to be smart when spending taxpayer money.

**2. Special Matters – Superintendent Search Process:**

**(a) Receive and Possible Vote to Approve Superintendent Candidate Finalists from the Superintendent Search Screening Committee:**

Chair of the Superintendent Search Screening Committee Nish Achyara read a statement to the School Committee about the candidates chosen out of 32 applicants and the Screening Committee's process over the last three weeks. After interviewing 8 possible candidates, he noted that the four recommended finalists are all assistant superintendents:

- Dr. Sara Ahearn – Holliston
- Dr. Joyce Edwards – Franklin
- Ms. Patricia Kinsella – Lincoln
- Dr. Arthur Unobskey - Gloucester

Mr. Achyara thanked the Screening Committee for its tireless work during the search process and thanked the School Committee for the opportunity for all to be a part of this process. He recommended to the School Committee that, if ever faced with another search, the search process could be done differently for which he elaborated. Cliff Lewis added that he was pleased with the process, and the four finalists were unanimously approved.

The School Committee thanked the Screening Committee for its time and commitment.

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(b) Continued Discussion with NESDEC of Superintendent Candidate Finalist Visits and Interviews:

Jeanne updated the School Committee on the following schedule for the finalists' all day visits and interviews:

- March 20 – Dr. Joyce Edwards
- March 21 – Dr. Sara Ahern
- March 22 – Ms. Patricia Kinsella
- March 24 – Dr. Arthur Unobskey

Art commented that this search process met his expectations. Ultimately, this diverse screening committee worked well together and showed mutual respect for one another and the process at hand. Art praised the collaboration and guidance given by Jeanne, as well as the commitment given by the screening committee members, particularly Nish Achyra and Sara Orlov as chair and vice-chair respectively.

Art commented on other district searches and the timing in terms of the candidates chosen. He advised the School Committee to move with deliberate speed, including making the reference checks. Art described the NESDEC's reference check vetting early on in the process, as well as the process to be taken by the School Committee from this point on. Art made other recommendations in terms of the candidates' visits to the district, as well as inviting the community to participate in the process, formally or informally. He advised the School Committee regarding the negotiation of a new superintendent contract, including the motion taken by the School Committee to enter negotiations.

Art gave the School Committee an envelope of information for each finalist, some of which is confidential.

(c) Discussion of Communication Surrounding the Superintendent Candidate Finalists and Visits:

The School Committee reviewed the interview questions as discussed at its March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. A writing sample will be requested from each candidate. Changes were made to the questions, and the public was invited to include their input regarding the questions. Some suggestions from the public included asking about the SPED budget and RTI. The same questions will be asked of each candidate during a 90-minute interview session.

The School Committee discussed the logistics of the all-day visits, and Jeanne described the school visits. A feedback form will be provided for those groups of people – parents, administrators, central office and school staff – who meet with the candidates during these visits. The Committee reviewed the format for each of its interview sessions/meetings. A communication will be sent out regarding the schedule for the four finalists.

3. **Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:**

None.

4. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 1:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Grieco, Chair  
Wayland School Committee

**Observers:**

Cliff Lewis, Wayland  
Gordon Cliff, Wayland

**Corresponding Documentation:**

1. Agenda
2. Public Statement from Gordon Cliff
3. Statement from the Chair of the Screening Committee
4. Interview Questions
5. Draft Public Statement regarding the Finalist Candidates
6. Resumes for Each Finalist