

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – June 23, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Wednesday, June 23, 2021, at 5:30 P.M. broadcast by WayCAM in the Wayland Town Building.

Present and participating remotely were:

Jeanne Downs, Chair
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair
Jessica Polizzotti
Kim Reichelt
Chris Ryan

Also participating remotely:

Dr. Omar Easy
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan
Director of Finance & Operations

Also:

Jason Verhoosky, Director of Youth & Family Services
Malcolm Astley, Youth Advisory Committee
Pam Cerne, Youth Advisory Committee

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the regular session at 5:33 p.m.; the meeting was recorded by WayCAM.

1. Discussion and Exercise with New Superintendent:

Dr. Easy performed an exercise called “Power Score” during which School Committee members rated the following: P (priorities), W (who), and R (relationships) within the schools and/or in the community. The purpose of this exercise was to look at the overall ratings in an effort to plan as a team moving forward. The ratings were as follows and the three ratings were multiplied; for instance, $8 \times 8 = 64 \times 7 = 448$.

Jeanne: 448 (8, 8, 7)
Ellen: 343 (7, 7, 7)
Jess: 144 (4, 6, 6)
Kim: 336 (7, 8, 6)
Chris: 280 (5, 7, 8)

Each member shared their rationale around their scores. Based on the scores, the district is not functioning at its highest potential. A discussion followed. Dr. Easy will perform this exercise periodically throughout the year.

Parry, Susan and Richard arrived at 6:00 p.m.

2. Special Matters:

(a) Recognition of School Support Organizations:

The School Committee recognized and thanked seven support organizations, and nine foundations/funds, and the community volunteers for their support and generosity: Wayland PTO, Boosters, CAPA, Boston Parent Council, Team Wayland, Wayland Public Schools Foundation, and The Children’s Way Parent Organization. The Foundations are Cliff Family Music, the Gossels Fund for Academic Excellence, the Greaves Foundation, the Henley Foundation, the Johnson Travelship Trust, the Cantor Foundation, the Lauren Dunne Astley Memorial Fund, SEPAC, and Wayland Hockey Association.

Representatives of the support organizations talked about their fundraising efforts during the past year, particularly how the efforts differed from past years. Ellen recognized that the Wayland schools receive more than support than

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Wayland's peer towns.

3. Public Comment:

Jeff Sklar, 18 Brooks Road, commented about a recent issue at WHS that was also covered by Wayland Student Press regarding the end-of-year college pre-calculus final exam given to WHS juniors. Prior to the final exam, the students were given a practice exam and the highest score was 25 out of 100. Mr. Sklar also commented that WHS has not followed DESE's ruling in response to complaints that math tests were not being returned to students. DESE ruled that all other documents are student records and that WHS should notify students of their student record rights by September 2020. He also asked that students are given textbooks to use as a resource. Mr. Sklar described some of the issues for students leading up to the final exam.

Mike Wegerbauer confirmed that Mr. Sklar's comments about this ongoing issue were what his daughter experienced and thanked Mr. Sklar for speaking up.

Mina Dietzius also confirmed that her son was also one of those students who experiences what Mr. Sklar described.

Jeanne apologized for a remark she made about the school busses being parked in Sudbury behind an elementary school. In addition, Jeanne told the other committee members that while she was delivering food platters to all of the school buildings the last week of school and several staff thanked the entire School Committee for their work especially during the past year. Jeanne also thanked the entire WPS staff for their tireless efforts over the past 15 months and thanked administrators, particularly Susan Bottan, Parry Graham, and Richard Whitehead. She noted that this is Susan's last School Committee meeting and she will be missed for all of her hard work during the last 7 years.

4. Financial Matters (out of order):

(a) Update on Bus Contract:

Assistant Town Administrator John Bugbee updated the School Committee on the pending school bus contract. The bid documents were issued on June 21, and the bid opening is scheduled for Friday, July 2, at noon. The current provider, First Student, was the only bidder who attended a meeting with the Town at which the Town asked many questions about the current contract. Mr. Bugbee noted that another company is also interested in submitting a bid. In addition, there are issues with the current scope of work within the bid documents around industry standards which can be addressed with an addendum that will provide an accurate count of what bus service should be. The research to produce an addendum resulted in the delay of issuing the bid documents.

Once the bids are opened on July 2, it will take about two weeks to call references, a contract review by town counsel, get the contract signed by the vendor and then signed off by the Board of Selectmen. Questions were asked by the Committee members about the process moving forward and the possibility of an increased cost. Mr. Bugbee noted that given procurement laws, there could be price negotiations if only one bidder. A discussion followed. The School Committee asked for reassurance that a contract will be in place for the fall given the delay. Susan and John will work together to provide answers to the questions submitted by the vendor. Dr. Easy expressed his concerns around the bus contract. An emergency procurement is possible, if the bidding process has to be started over given a high bid. However, this could result in a further delay.

The summer bus contract is complete and service will be provided when needed.

5. Consent Agenda (out of order):

(a) Approval of Minutes: May 26, 2021 and June 9, 2021

(b) Approval of Accounts Payables Warrant, dated June 23, 2021, in the amount of \$391,739.42

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda.

6. COVID-19 Response (out of order):

(a) Remote and Hybrid Learning Progress Committee (RHLPC) and COVID Learning and Safety Team Update:

RHLPC:

Parry reported will present a more comprehensive report regarding this school year to the School Committee some time during the summer.

COVID Learning and Safety Team:

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Jeanne reported that the team's final meeting for this year was last week and the members were in agreement that the COVID Learning and Safety Team should continue into next year in some form. The group will discuss how to move forward.

7. Special Matters (cont'd.)

(a) Discussion with Youth Advisory Committee Representatives:

Jason Verhoosky, Malcolm Astley, and Pam Cerne updated the School Committee about the work of the Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) pre-COVID, during COVID, and how they are moving forward. The YAC meets monthly with the staff of Wayland Youth & Family Services in which YAC members are brought up to date about its work and the assistance provided to the families of Wayland.

Youth & Family Services' major functions are to provide free clinical services for Wayland families and expanded these services during COVID to the community-at-large, as there was a noticeable increase in services. There has been a high demand for therapy and clinical services, but there has been a reduction in available clinicians making it difficult for families to get the help. Youth & Family Services was able to expand its staff to two full-time clinicians who service about 18 individuals each. They also offer increased group sessions at the middle and high school levels mostly in virtual meetings. Mr. Verhoosky described this continued effort.

As a result of COVID, the increase in mental health issues includes anxiety, depression, isolation, and a struggle to return to a new normal. The Youth & Family Services staff is organizing community education evenings as a way to provide mechanisms to cope with these issues, as well as ways to reach out for help. Mr. Astley noted that it will be necessary to monitor the long-term effects of mental health issues. Another focus with the collaboration of the police and high school administrators is around substance abuse. Mr. Verhoosky described this effort that includes providing educational resources and rehabilitative services. Other approaches to reach out to families and youth is to attend youth group meetings, virtual parent group meetings, and WHS PIE meetings. Mr. Astley described the three-tiered approach that includes what to consider for the youth population, looking for signs in youth, and what to provide for those in problematic situations. Pre-COVID, Youth & Family Services attended wellness classes at the high school and held discussions around substance abuse.

They are also involved with the MetroWest Health Survey in addition to being involved with the MetroWest Coalition Substance Abuse Prevention Alliance. About ten communities meet monthly and strive to have cohesive and consistent messaging around substance abuse. Mr. Verhoosky described the work of the coalition that includes policy work. Youth & Family Services is now participating with the Balance and Prevention Task Force at the secondary school level which allows for reach out to families and students in terms of their personal experiences, as well as providing an avenue to report a matter they have witnessed or experienced. Pam Cerne noted that a WaylandCares coordinator will be hired since funding is now available.

Malcolm reported on the work being done in terms of violence prevention relative to youth and healthy relationships with Jackie Campbell and Nancy Glass of Johns Hopkins. Currently, an app is being developed that will identify at-risk situations and could possibly reduce the mortality rate in relationships by evaluating relationships and generating warning signs of violence. The app is now being validated for 15-17 year olds.

The SBIRT (Screening and Brief Intervention for Referral to Treatment) screening tool is another way to monitor and receive immediate information about students' health and wellbeing and is typically done by the clinical staff, school social workers and counselors in the schools. Richard commented on the typical screening surveys, such as the MetroWest Health Survey and the Youth Risk Health Survey. The latter survey is a DESE survey for which school districts are chosen at random to participate. Mr. Verhoosky responded to a question about the use of vaping in Wayland, particularly over the past year, as well as what is being done around social media pressure for some students.

(b) Possible Vote to Recommend Youth Advisory Committee Appointments for 2021-2023:

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to recommend Malcolm Astley and Pam Cerne to the Board of Selectmen as the School Committee appointees/representatives on the Youth Advisory Council from 2021-2023.

8. COVID-19 Response:

(a) Update of Class Size Implications:

There has been no change to date. Class sizes are being monitored carefully. However, teacher assistants may

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be needed for one or two SPED students.

(b) Summer Programming Plans:

- Health and Safety Protocols:
- Transportation
- Fall Health and Safety Protocols:

The health and safety protocols that were in place during the school year are still in place for the summer programming, such as distancing requirements, masks on indoors but can be off if more than six feet of distancing during lunch and snack time, as well as the continuation of the electronic health attestation form for families and staff who are working with children. Parry is in discussions with CIC regarding summer pooled testing that will continue to be funded by the state.

Parry responded to a question about the protocols for a vaccinated student who has a cold. The same protocols will be in place for the summer, however, the fall is unpredictable currently. A discussion ensued about mandating the COVID vaccine and/or the flu vaccine and staff and the desire to work with the Board of Health. Jeanne will consult with the chair of the Board of Health.

8. **Possible Vote to Approve 2021-2022 Super Wednesday Professional Development Dates:**

As implemented pre-COVID, Parry proposed four earlier release days than a typical Wednesday for professional development in all schools. They are September 29, November 17, January 5, and February 9. Parry described the PD work for all levels and noted that these four days allow all elementary staff to be together across all three schools.

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Super Wednesday schedule (September 29, November 17, January 5, and February 9) as suggested by Parry.

9. **Policy Matters:**

(a) Review and Possible Vote to Approve:

- JJF – Student Activity Accounts
- KDD – News Media Relations/News Releases
- KI – Visitors to the Schools
- LDA – Student Teaching and Internships
- EBCFA – Face Coverings

Policies KDD, KI, and LDA were out for public comment for the required thirty days and no comments were received.

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve policies KDD, KI, and LDA as uploaded in the packet.

Policy JJF will require a further look in more detail later. Susan noted that some staff will need to be added to the policy in terms of authorization around student activity accounts. A discussion ensued in terms of the language for the policy.

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously to add language, plus the language change to #4 to read “authorize authorized signatories and bookkeepers to provide the Treasurer with a bond that shall be provided to the Town Administrator.”

There were no changes to Policy EBCFA.

10. **Financial Matters:**

(a) FY21 COVID Expense Update:

Susan noted that the FY21 COVID-driven expenses totaled \$1.98M and are based on updated information that was given to her in June. Susan reviewed the categories and sources of funding and described the savings in staffing, utilities, transportation, and athletics. Costs were available through the savings noted by Susan as well through grants.

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A discussion ensued about the savings in utilities this year and the budget for next year in terms of MERV filters and HVAC work.

(b) Possible Vote to Approve SPED Prepayment:

Susan noted that savings were incurred in substitute teaching of about \$45,000 and custodial overtime of about \$55,000; Susan explained. There will be a final projected end-year balance of \$300,000; Susan explained further. Susan recommended a \$248,128 for SPED prepayment for next year which will cover unanticipated expenses for special education. In response to a question regarding the possibility for needed funds to pay outstanding facilities invoices, Susan described the process that she followed to pay these invoices prior to closing the fiscal year and added that any late additional outstanding facilities invoices received after the fiscal year is closed will have to wait until Town Meeting.

A discussion ensued about capital projects in terms of funding and timing of the projects, as well as the special revenue fund expenses that were covered by the Town's general fund this past year because the schools did not have receipts. An update on the capital projects is expected by the Town within the next few days. Dr. Easy addressed the funding concerns going forward, such as the funding shortfall for the Loker floor tiling project. It was noted that the district typically makes a SPED prepayment each year but had been unable to include it in its FY22 budget. Richard addressed the SPED budget of about \$1.2M in general for next year for both anticipated and unanticipated expenses. The School Committee discussed the Circuit Breaker funding. The FY22 Circuit Breaker budgeted was lower than typical years. Dr. Easy agreed with Susan's recommendations and proposed the following.

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to make a SPED prepayment for an amount of up to \$248,128.

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to fund up to an additional \$50,000 towards the Circuit Breaker.

(c) Possible Vote to Approve Technology Leases:

The School Committee reviewed the two technology leases prepared by Leisha Simon and presented by Susan Bottan. The first is a five-year HP lease in which the district is in its third year and is for equipment replacement of 64 new flat screen panels in 64 classrooms K-12 that includes installation costs and materials and supplies needed for replacement.

The second lease is for three years with HP to purchase 150 elementary Chromebooks. The funds for the two leases are part of the approved FY22 budget.

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the leases as presented.

(d) Possible Vote to Approve SPED Transportation Contract:

The School Committee reviewed the three-year contract with Van Pool for SPED transportation. Van Pool has provided transportation for Wayland for many years and based on the relationship with Van Pool, the preference is to continue with Van Pool. Susan noted that Chapter 30B indicates that the town does not have to go focus on the lowest bid but should be ensured that the best quality of transportation will be provided for the money spent. The cost for the first year is \$235/per van/per day, \$240 for the second year, and \$245 for the third year. The contract is currently being reviewed by school counsel. A COVID-19 closure rate was included in the contract due to non-payment when schools shut down last year.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the SPED transportation contract and to authorize the Superintendent to sign the contract pending school counsel's approval of the language.

(e) Review of TEC (The Education Cooperative) Amended FY22 Budget:

Jeanne reviewed the TEC amended FY22 budget with the School Committee.

(f) Update on Capital Project Scheduling:

Dr. Easy presented an update regarding summer capital projects. Materials for the Loker roof project are back ordered and may not be available until September, although there might be an alternative option for materials. If

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the project is delayed, the materials will be stored by the general contractor, but it is not clear who will absorb the costs. The Loker School flooring may cost more than anticipated, given that the bid has not gone out yet. The Claypit Hill roof units will be worked on over the summer, as well as the elementary playgrounds. Dr. Easy will have more updates at tomorrow's meeting with the Town Administrator and the Director of Public Buildings.

A discussion ensued about the delay of the Loker roof project, warranties for materials, the storage of materials, the cost to temporarily patch the leaky roof, and the status of MSBA funding.

11. Administrative Matters:

(a) Discussion of Committee Communications:

Jess informed the School Committee that communication and public relations with the school community should be improved. The preference is to utilize social media to convey short snippets of factual information with a positive message, as well as the possible implementation of in-person office hours for the public. She will draft a proposal in this regard.

(b) Review of OML Determinations:

Kim noted that there were 11 OML determinations over the past week, but 10 were not in violation of the Open Meeting Law. She described the determinations in the towns of Acton (Select Board), Stoughton (Planning Board & Redevelopment Authority), and the Provincetown Public Peer Corporation.

(c) Discussion of Upcoming Meeting Format and Schedule:

Jeanne noted that School Committee could continue to meet on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. as discussed and agreed upon by the Committee members. In terms of meeting in a hybrid mode, only the Council on Aging and Large Hearing Rooms are set up for this type of meeting. Jeanne described the format in a hybrid mode and noted that the Town's ZOOM account would be used. Kim expressed her preference for the public to participate remotely. A discussion ensued about having public comment both at the beginning and end of the meeting.

Dr. Easy suggested holding the meetings at the WHS Library and also recommended a U-shaped seating at the table so faces, rather than backs, are seen by the public.

After a discussion regarding members' summer schedules, the School Committee will meet during the summer on July 28 and August 25. The School Committee will discuss the last day of school in terms of an earlier release time and the Juneteenth holiday at the July 28th meeting.

(d) Discussion, Assignment and Possible Vote of Committee Roles and Liaison Positions:

The School Committee expressed their interests in the Chair and Vice-Chair positions on the Committee. A discussion followed.

Upon a nomination/motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to appoint Chris Ryan as the Chair of the School Committee as of July 1.

Upon a nomination/motion duly made by Jess Polizzotti, seconded by Chris Ryan, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to appoint Ellen Grieco as Vice Chair.

The School Committee discussed the appointments for the Finance Subcommittee, Policy Subcommittee and Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee, the school liaisons, communications, negotiations, wellness, recreation, busses, athletic advisory, IT, PTO, TEC, WPSF, SEPAC, and PMBC.

12. Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:

None.

13. Executive Session:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter executive session at 9:51 p.m. for purposes of (a) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wayland Teachers Association (WTA), as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3) as discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; and (b) approval of the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: May 26, 2021 and June 9, 2021. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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| <u>Roll Call</u> | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Jeanne Downs, Chair | X | |
| Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair | X | |
| Jessica Polizzotti | X | |
| Kim Reichelt | X | |
| Chris Ryan | X | |

The School Committee will be joined by Dr. Omar Easy, Superintendent of Schools, Parry Graham, Assistant Superintendent, and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will adjourn in executive session and will not reconvene in open session.

14. Adjournment:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 10:16 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

| <u>Roll Call</u> | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Jeanne Downs, Chair | X | |
| Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair | X | |
| Jessica Polizzotti | X | |
| Kim Reichelt | absent | |
| Chris Ryan | X | |

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Omar Easy, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Jeff Sklar, 18 Brooks Road
Robin Sklar, 18 Brooks Road

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. 2021-2022 School Calendar
3. Policies, KDD, KI, LDA, JJF
4. COVID-Driven Estimated Expenses
5. FY22 Audio Video Lease Documents
6. FY22 Chromebook Lease Documents
7. Memo re: Van Pool Contract and Lease
8. 7D Certified Drivers Training Program
9. Van Pool Contract 2021-2024
10. MGL Ch.71, s.71D re: Prepayment of Tuition to Private Schools or Program Sources
11. Memo re: Request for School Committee Vote for SPED FY22 Prepayment
12. The Education Cooperative Budget Summary
13. School Committee Member Roster and Liaisons
14. Accounts Payables Warrant
15. Minutes of May 26, 2021
16. Minutes of June 9, 2021
17. Executive Session Motion