

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – October 20, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at 5:30 P.M. broadcast by WayCAM in the South Building Lecture Hall at Wayland High School.

Present:

Chris Ryan, Chair
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair (arrived at 5:40 p.m.)
Jeanne Downs
Jessica Polizzotti
Kim Reichelt

Also present:

Dr. Omar Easy
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Ellen Whittemore
Director of Finance & Operations

Also:

Tricia O'Reilly, Principal of Happy Hollow School
Rachel Scott, Asst. Principal of Happy Hollow School
Betsy Gavron, Principal of Wayland Middle School
Meghan Maines, Asst. Principal of Wayland Middle School

Chair Chris Ryan convened the regular session at 5:37 p.m. The meeting was recorded by WayCAM.

1. Public Comment:

Jeff Sklar, Brooks Road, thanked the School Committee and Committee Chair for ending meetings on schedule. Mr. Sklar made a few suggestions for the School Committee going forward. They include publishing a list of weekly meetings, establishing email lists so minutes can be sent, and scheduling public comment at the beginning and at the end of the meetings. He the School Committee for the policy changes to Policy BDFFA, adding that the WHS School Council has numerous candidates. Finally, Mr. Sklar also suggested that the School Committee conduct an annual review and annual self-review and ask for input from the public.

Ellen arrived at 5:40 p.m.

Jeanne Downs expressed her concern about the overall tone that is being presented at meetings in terms of how members and the public speak to each other and about each other. This concern extends to the global Wayland community. She added that all volunteers and paid employees work hard and together to do what is in the best interest of the residents and recommended that everyone check their tone at all times on behalf of achieving a better community for everyone.

2. Superintendent Update:

(a) Middle School and Happy Hollow School Administration Presentations:

Happy Hollow School:

Principal Tricia O'Reilly and Assistant Principal Rachel Scott presented to the School Committee. Dr. O'Reilly thanked the School Committee for their support, particularly in the area of personnel. It has been very significant and beneficial to all students and teachers having an assistant principal and an additional .2 FTE guidance counselor in the building. The guidance counselors address the social and emotional needs of students that continue to be in the forefront.

There has been more time and opportunity for reflection and collaborative decisions and specific tasks are divided between Dr. O'Reilly and Ms. Scott but share disciplinary issues. Dr. O'Reilly described the benefits for staff and students, adding that relationship building and working efficiently has been very important.

Dr. O'Reilly shared the importance of maintaining tradition at Happy Hollow School, as they provide comfort, help

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – October 20, 2021

the school community to feel connected, and reinforce the school's values. Some of the traditions include a weekly school-wide assembly/meeting at which there is a school song, a rap about kindness, and the recognition of birthdays. The School Committee posed questions and a discussion followed about the social and emotional needs of the students.

Wayland Middle School:

Betsy Gavron introduced the new assistant principal Meghan Maines. Also new to the Middle School is music and chorus teacher Bernadette Vanaria and Margaret Burke, 7th and 8th grade science teacher.

Betsy described an organic project-based that combines the science, social studies and English teams. It involves mapping of this region to collect data on populations of specials and involves geo-tagging data collection points using UTM coordinates to plot in a polygon in Google Maps. Data will be compared from year to year.

Field trips have resumed that include biking to Walden Pond to hike and explore, Treetop Adventures, and experiencing Sense of Wonder days. Ms. Gavron described these field trips, including the connection to Rachel Carson's work and the workshops experienced. Ms. Gavron added that the eighth grade students will not be traveling to Washington, D.C. next spring. Rather, there will be a week-long experience that includes local day trips.

Ms. Gavron spoke about the issue that most of the middle school students have not had a full experience due to the COVID shutdown, protocols, and the reopening of school all-in. She noted that the emotional impacts will be addressed for a long time. Ms. Maines described her experiences at the Middle School, adding that the culture and mission is very strong.

(b) COVID-19 Response:

- Vaccination Data for Staff and Students:

Dr. Easy reported that families were asked to share vaccination cards/status for the students. Parry met with Ruth Mori, and she cross-checked the Massachusetts Immunization Registry with the information sent in by parents. The numbers presented to the School Committee were for students who did not have vaccination status. About 93% of WHS students are vaccinated and between 88% and 92% of middle school students are vaccinated.

In terms of positive COVID cases since the start of school, a total 24 students were positive, 5 in grades 7 to 12 and 19 students were younger. Parry added that there have been some breakthrough cases for students who were vaccinated. Staff were asked to fill out a form regarding their vaccination status, but it was voluntary. There was a 75% response rate for the WTA and a 54% response rate for WESA. Parry added that the test and stay program has been very successful, particularly in the elementary schools. A discussion followed about in-school transmission vs. out-of-school transmission, pooled testing, and the vaccination protocol for parent volunteers. Dr. Easy commented that vaccinated parents can volunteer in the school building and unvaccinated parents outside of the building. Kim commented on the waning status of vaccinations, particularly the J & J, and the anticipation of the booster shots.

Dr. Easy will present his reopening plan again in November with some amendments. He commented with the holidays approaching, lifting some protocols could be a bit complicated.

(c) Financial Matters:

- Continued Discussion regarding Drinking Water for Schools:

Chris updated the School Committee on the schools' drinking water discussion at the recent Board of Selectmen meeting which he, Jeanne, Dr. Easy, and Ellen Whittemore attended. Since the PFAS levels are at an acceptable range for the high school, middle school, and Claypit Hill but at higher levels when tested in August for Loker and Happy Hollow, the conclusion remains that the Town will continue to provide drinking water for Loker and Happy Hollow schools only, adding that if the School Committee wants to continue providing water to the other three schools, then the school budget should pay for the bottled water through December.

Chris added that the Town operated under certain Massachusetts rules from last spring, but they have since changed in terms of town rebates. Also discussed at the BOS meeting was the suggestion for a collaborative communication to families.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – October 20, 2021

A discussion ensued about the safety of the water town-wide and in the schools, including whether or not to reopen the water bubblers and the PFAS levels from last August. It was suggested that the PFAS levels should be tested again. A communication was discussed and the message within the communication suggesting that families are encouraged to provide a full day supply of water for their children with an emergency supply available if needed. Chris and Kim will draft a letter from the School Committee and Superintendent.

- **Bus Contract:**

Chris reported that the bus contract was finalized and he sent a copy to school counsel for review. Counsel's questions were sent to the Town. Chris cited the reasons why the name and address of the bus company, including the amount of the contract, cannot be mentioned in this discussion.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to delegate Chris Ryan to sign the bus contract on behalf of the School Committee when it is ready to sign.

Kim asked about COVID protocols, such as vaccine mandates and mask wearing, within the bus contract. Ellen Grieco requested a copy of the 2019 executed bus contract to review who signed the contract. The MOU was extended again from the October 8 date.

3. **Administrative Matters:**

(a) **Discussion and Possible Vote to Recommend Samantha Shullo as the Audit Committee Appointee to the Board of Selectmen:**

Angela Young was interviewed by the School Committee at the last meeting.

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to recommend Angela Young as the PMBC appointee to the Board of Selectmen.

(b) **Revote Recommendation of Angela Young as PMBC Appointee to Board of Selectmen:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to recommend Angela Young as the PMBC appointee to the Board of Selectmen through the Loker roof project.

(c) **Review of OML Determinations:**

This agenda item was passed over.

(d) **Update on Facilities Discussion:**

Chris reported on the recent facilities discussion at which the Town Administrator had questions about the school facilities flow chart. He will respond to Ms. Miller and include the next steps. A discussion ensued about the long-term personnel reporting structure change, including the finances.

(e) **Continued Discussion regarding the Boston Parent Meeting Scheduled for November 3:**

Jeanne and Jess prepared a slide presentation that will focus on the anti-racism resolution that was adopted in January 2021. The School Committee reviewed the presentation for the meeting, including the parent meeting agenda prepared by Dr. Laing. Also included are the School Committee's goals in terms of ongoing and future work that would include periodic updates and annual report by Dr. Laing. Further discussion followed about what to highlight, including the hiring of Caroline Han, Director of Diversity, Equity and Belonging.

The logistics, timing, setup, and parking for the Boston meeting were discussed.

(f) **Discussion regarding School Committee Communications:**

The School Committee reviewed the draft communication prepared by Jess inviting families to join the School Committee Facebook page. Suggestions were made.

(g) **Update on Bus Parking:**

Jeanne reported on the recent bus parking discussion at the Planning Board/ZBA meeting that she attended. The permit to park the busses in the back of the building was extended for 60 days. The parking lot was redesigned

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – October 20, 2021

that includes crosswalks, but the parking spaces were reduced, thus, the Town secured 20 spaces at the Trinitarian Church if needed. The bus parking working group will address the issue of moving the busses to a different location after August 31, 2022. A bus parking forum may be held to inform the public and provide the history of bus parking.

4. **Finance Subcommittee Update:**

(a) Update on FY22 Capital Projects:

Ellen Whittemore provided a capital project update about the school intercom and PA systems, the storage systems at the elementary schools and the playgrounds.

(b) Update on FY23 Operating Budget Guideline:

The guideline is similar to last year’s guideline. The Finance Committee is requesting a level services budget with justification for additions to the budget.

5. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Accounts Payables Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated October 20, 2021, in the amount of \$302,617.60

(b) Approval of Minutes: September 8, 2021 (revote) and September 22, 2021

Ellen made a motion to approve the consent agenda and Jeanne seconded, but a discussion followed to change the description of what was proposed in Policy BDFA (2 sentences) in the September 8 minutes. Kim read the change that she recommended.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda with the edits discussed for the September 8, 2021 minutes.

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

None.

7. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Jess Polizzoti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter executive session at 8:29 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; (b) This will not be discussed: Discussion regarding Strategy related to Collective Bargaining of the School Bus Contract; and (c) approval of the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: September 22, 2021. 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	X	
Chris Ryan	X	

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

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

8. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 8:50 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Chris Ryan, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Jeanne Downs	X	

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – October 20, 2021

Jess Polizzotti	X
Kim Reichelt	X

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Omar Easy, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. School Committee METCO Presentation
3. Communications Proposal
4. Accounts Payables Warrant
5. Minutes of September 8, 2021
6. Minutes of September 22, 2021
7. Executive Session Motion