

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session – January 8, 2015

A Regular Meeting and Budget Work Session of the Wayland School Committee were held on Thursday, January 8, 2015, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Ellen Grieco, Chair
Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair
Malcolm Astley
Jeanne Downs

Absent:

Donna Bouchard

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent

Susan Bottan

Business Administrator

Also:

Allyson Mizoguchi, WHS Principal
Betsy Gavron, WMS Principal
Stephen Cass, Athletic Director

Chair Ellen Grieco convened the Regular Session at 7:04 p.m.

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

There were no comments or written statements from the public.

2. **Budget Work Session/Financial Matters:**

(a) Budget Work Session – Review of Budget for High School, Middle School, and Athletics:

Middle School: Betsy Gavron, the Middle School principal, was present to discuss the middle school budget and answer questions from the School Committee.

In an effort to help the Committee understand the increase and decrease in the clusters of the 6th and 7th grades because of changing enrollment, Betsy explained why there was an increase in the 6th grade from 2 clusters to 3 clusters in FY15. In the 2 cluster model, it was very difficult to accommodate the needs of the students and to get to know the student. For 7th grade, the intent is to move from a 2 cluster, 10-section model to a 3 cluster, 12-section model to accommodate 240 students. As a result, a total of a 0.4 FTE increase in staffing is being recommended for one year only.

Betsy addressed the shifting of the homework stipends. Betsy noted that the Wayland Public Schools Foundation is funding two new clubs. One is the “Maker Mobile Club.” Funds are being shifted to the “Outing Club” and the morning Wellness Program. The “Larker Club” was started this year, but is unfunded, to support students’ usage of Chrome books. The “Homework Club” is being combined for both 7th and 8th graders. Existing funds are being reallocated between these clubs.

In addition, there has also been a reallocation of funds for additional programs for the Martin Luther King celebration and a new life skills curriculum. Due to increased enrollment this year and a projected increase next year for the 7th and 8th graders’ chorus, additional funds are needed for the choral staffing. Betsy described the ramp up courses for those students entering 6th grade who might be ready for accelerated math. The requested \$10,000 line item would provide pre-teaching to these students to help them achieve the next level.

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If given the opportunity to build a middle school from the bottom up with no mandates and no restrictions, Betsy was asked what she would do and what the educational structure of the school would look like. Betsy would not make fundamental changes to the current structure, as she feels the Wayland Middle School is special, given that there are two leadership structures – house leaders and the cluster system. This structure makes the school feel smaller and allows the staff to get to know all of the students. Betsy noted that the middle school also has a strong curricular leadership. A discussion ensued and Betsy described the renewed commitment to the house mentors. Paul elaborated on the areas in which Betsy has asked for and looked for ways in which to secure the middle school structure.

Betsy was asked to comment on the unmet needs budget in terms of hiring a 0.4 FTE Health and Wellness Department Chair and a writing specialist. Betsy explained why she felt both of these positions would be important to the ongoing programs in the middle school. She noted that the Physical Education program has ascended into a wellness program, and the staff would welcome someone with a focus on wellness, including offering them some direction. Betsy elaborated on RTI in terms of the addition and benefit of a writing specialist.

Betsy was asked to comment on the changes that the middle school health program is experiencing currently. She also expressed her wish list, short term, which included more specialized technology assistance, and a full-time counselor to work with about 8 students in the Alternative Resource Center (ARC). Paul commented that due to some reallocations in the budget, a 0.4 FTE hire is possible in this area and noted that the increased complexities and the social and emotional issues of these students also resonate at the high school. Betsy and Allyson commented on the students' complex issues and challenges, including the preparation for transition to the high school.

High School: Allyson Mizoguchi, the High School principal, was present to discuss the high school budget and answer questions from the School Committee.

In response to the request for a 0.2 FTE Mandarin teacher, Allyson commented that the high school offers two sections of Mandarin and this request is to help support the growth of this program to include incoming 8th grade students. Thirty-one students participate in Mandarin 2 and would possibly move to Mandarin 3. There is a possibility that the purchase of e-books would replace textbooks.

Given that the high school is considered a classical structure and if allowed the opportunity to start over and make changes, Allyson was asked to elaborate on the areas in which she would focus. She would focus on the ability to pay attention to each student, using a cluster model, but also taking into consideration the different levels of students. In the same vein, another approach would be to develop a freshmen academy, which clusters teachers together for the freshmen class only. She would also like to pursue a curricular that is not state mandated, but one that can be explored freely and at a different pace. Allyson would like to create a different program for seniors during their second semester. Also, the ability of developing small seminar groups in which students could develop ideas and have their voices heard is appealing.

Allyson commented on her request for a 0.4 FTE health and wellness teacher for the junior class, as the curriculum is evolving and would like to build on the wellness program. She noted some of the wellness programs in which the juniors participate, but more time and sections are needed to support these programs. The sophomore experience has increased from a half year to a full year of programs, and implementing the same for the juniors would be ideal. Allyson commented that there is no formal plan in place to survey the students in terms of gaining their perspective of the courses being taught. Paul noted that some students attend Wayland Cares meetings and are strongly advocating for more topics, such as RAD and mental health, integrated into the program, as well as the possible expansion of the SOS program. A discussion ensued.

Allyson also commented on the progression and the intent and format of the advisory groups, the 1:1 technology initiative and the level of technology support, professional development for teachers, and the

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ramp up courses for incoming 9th graders. In terms of her wish list, Allyson expressed a desire for additional staffing in the computer science program, additional staffing in the science department due to increased interest by the students, and additional staffing in fine arts, also to accommodate the students' requests and graduation requirements.

Athletics: Stephen Cass, the Athletic Director, was present to answer questions from the School Committee.

In response to a question regarding the athletic budget, Susan explained the reporting on the spreadsheet of the 0.4 FTE trainer and the salary from the high school was moved to the athletics budget in 2014.

Stephen commented on the shortage in terms of the staffing of the 0.4 trainer, due to the size of Wayland's athletic programs similar to some peer districts who have a 1.0 FTE trainer.

In terms of the athletic budget and what the fees cover, Stephen noted that fees cover certain salaries, operating expenses, MIIA and Dual County League fees, and offsetting a portion of taxpayer liability. Areas not covered by fees include non-recurring capital items, such as a trainer's cart, and coaches' education and apparel. In addition, if the teams are successful, unexpected transportation costs increase, resulting in a tight budget. In terms of participation, it is fairly steady. However, a decrease in sports participation would create an even tighter budget.

Barb suggested that Boosters could fundraise privately to help with capital items, and the Recreation Department could help with equipment purchases by presenting a capital request at Town Meeting. Barb explained the process. Stephen confirmed that he does work with the Recreation Department in terms of equipment purchases, and he agreed that better fundraising efforts are necessary; however, policies and procedures also need to be in place to help direct those efforts in the allocation of the money raised. Although a lot of money is raised through fundraising, a good portion of it covers non-essentials for the teams. He noted that the process in terms of the operating budget to run the athletic program has changed in the last two years.

Paul commented that moving forward this is a conversation that should continue. He noted that Boosters is having a fundraiser to purchase a mini-bus to help offset some of the transportation costs. The program was also impacted by about \$5,000 last year because, even though the athletic fee was raised, the cap was not increased. A discussion ensued about raising the cap this year.

Malcolm asked that the School Committee continue to reflect on the importance of the K-12 health and wellness position.

- (b) Continued Discussion of Budget Drivers, Assumptions, Fees and Funding Sources, and Requests for Information:
The Committee discussed the issue of requests in terms of accessing budget information from the administrators in a timely manner prior to the budget discussions.
- (c) Review Agendas for Budget Discussions:
The members reviewed their schedules in terms of availability for meetings.

With the support of the Finance Committee, the School Committee discussed presenting a maximum budget number to the Finance Committee at this juncture, which would not be exceeded, no matter the configuration of the budget. The Committee discussed the format of the joint meeting with the Finance Committee and considered meeting once before the School Committee's budget presentation to the Finance Committee.

Malcolm commented that going forward the members of the Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee will need to agree on indicators.

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- (d) Discussion regarding The Children’s Way (Matter not Anticipated by the Chair):
Ellen informed the Committee that based on prior discussions and comments made at the School Committee meetings, The Children’s Way staff is concerned about the future of the program and their

jobs. Paul noted that the staff is concerned about the impact these discussions may have on the TCW Director search.

The Committee assured the staff that the discussions were about the fee-based programs in general and their self-sustainability going forward. The Committee never questioned the quality of the program and the staff. The School Committee will communicate with the staff directly.

3. **Comments from the Public:**

There were no comments from the public.

4. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 9:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. FY16 Superintendent’s Recommended Budget by Locations
3. NESDEC 2014-2015 Enrollment Projections
4. FY15 Schedule of Appropriations by Object
5. Responses to SC Questions regarding the FY16 Budget
6. Q2 FY15 Transportation Services
7. Handout regarding Football and Concussions