

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – October 15, 2018

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, October 15, 2018, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Jeanne Downs, Chair
Nate Buffum
Kim Reichelt
Kathie Steinberg

Absent:

Ellen Grieco

Also:

Arthur Unobskey
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Susan Bottan
Director of Finance & Operations

Richard Whitehead
Director of Student Services

Also:

Louis Jurist, Board of Selectmen
Pat Keefe, Wayland School Community Programs

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the regular session at 7:02 p.m.; the meeting is being recorded by WayCAM.

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

There were no public comments at 7:00, but there was a public comment after agenda item 2(a) as follows:

Sophomore Remmi Shaw made a presentation in response to and not in support of the School Start Times proposal. Remmi is also the leader of the WHS Climate Committee and a member of the Class Executive Board.

In her opinion, there are some unintended consequences in students' schedules that were not fully explored, such as after school jobs, athletic practice schedules, potential for reduced ability to get after school help, reduced daylight hours, younger siblings arriving home before older siblings, and traffic problems for the METCO late bus. Remmi displayed two current daily schedules – the first for a high school athlete and the second for a high school student who does not play sports. The day begins with a 6:00 a.m. wake up and ends with an 11:00 bedtime. With the proposed start times, she believes the schedule will shift one hour, beginning at 7:00 a.m. and ending at midnight.

A student survey was administered and 65% of students currently have 2 to 3.5 hours of extracurricular activities and 52% of students have 2 to 3 hours of homework each day. Remmi commented that because students' schedules are jammed packed, there is no room for flexibility. Remmi recommended that the School Committee get more input from students, obtain a greater understanding of students' activities and schedules, get all of the facts, and possibly a delayed vote.

A discussion followed regarding the possibility of being more flexible within students' tight schedules for the purpose of getting more sleep and relaxation. Jeanne noted that in towns that have moved to later start times for high school and middle school students, the students become more efficient and do go to bed at approximately the same time.

2. **Special Matters:**

(a) Report from Board of Selectmen regarding Town Governance Structure:

Louis Jurist presented the proposed change in the Town of Wayland's governance structure, particularly surrounding the financial and budget process, as well as the reporting structure. The current structure has been in place for decades and is described as archaic. This new structure will not affect the School Department operations.

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The Collins Center studied the town government, the government of peer towns, and made some recommendations in terms of how Wayland could be more up to date and efficient in its government practices. A Town Manager Special Act will be drafted for spring Town Meeting, after which, if passed, changes will be implemented. One of the changes proposed is that the Town Manager will oversee all town departments, but not the School Department. The Board of Selectmen's name will be changed to Select Board. The Select Board will adopt financial policies and focus on goal setting, long-term planning, and strategy. The Town Administrator's title will change to Town Manager. The Finance Committee's appointment authority will be determined, as it is currently appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Finance Committee will receive the budget from the Town Manager and the Select Board.

In terms of what will remain the same, current elected boards and committees will remain elected, all appointed commissions/committees/boards will remain status quo, and all statutory and regulatory responsibilities will remain with the boards.

Louis reviewed the town's history and efforts over the years to change the governing structure, including the past, present and future reporting structure. The next steps include:

- July/August – meet with individual boards and committees and begin community discussions
- Fall 2019 – continue community discussions and revise Special Act as necessary
- Winter 2019-2020 – submit article for Annual Town Meeting

(b) BASE Staff Compensation Discussion with Possible Vote to Change Compensation Levels of BASE Employees:

In her fifth year as WSCP Director, Pat Keefe has found that it is becoming more difficult to staff the BASE program because BASE schedules do not coincide with people's schedules, some staff has found full-time positions in other places, and the wages are lower than the WESA scale. For example, she has lost about half of the teaching assistants who did work for BASE, which has created waitlists due to the need for more staff.

Pat is asking the School Committee for their vote to approve a different pay rate for teacher assistants that are closer to their TA salary and raise rates for those benefits eligible employees who currently work for BASE on a consistent yearly basis and for specialized subs. This pay raise would not require a raise in BASE fees, as she will be within her budget. BASE netted a \$60,000 balance in FY19 and is anticipated to net \$55,000 in FY20.

Kathie thanked Pat for continuing to operate a highly desirable program and for her commitment to the quality of the program and staff.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the proposals as outlined for the BASE staff compensation for FY19 this year.

3. **Educational Matters:**

(a) Hear Superintendent's Report:

Concussion Update:

Arthur reported on the follow-up work being done with regard to head injuries and concussions. Nine school districts, varying from smaller to larger communities, participate in the Sports Concussion Learning Cooperative and work in tandem with DESE and state experts. One of the larger communities, Somerville, has a concussion head injury coordinator who focuses on this issue. Wayland's team consists of Arthur, Heath Rollins, Scott Parseghian and Amy Schoeff. During the recent two live virtual meetings, the Wayland team shared its approaches and best practices, posed research questions, and asked for research on sub-concussive impact which is currently inconclusive. Arthur shared the procedures being followed in athletics, particularly football. The Wayland data for concussions has been steady over the past five years, possibly due to more frequent examinations. Arthur noted that during middle school health class, baseline testing is performed.

Arthur visited a Kindergarten class at Happy Hollow in which the students created games and then executed them. Arthur described one game and the thought process in terms of the outcome of the game created by one student.

Arthur reviewed the presentations for the October 29th School Committee meeting. Arthur will present an overview of how the administrators are working within the UNITED framework in the areas of Elevating Achievement and Deepening Social and Emotional Learning. Richard and Parry will also make presentations around these two goals; Arthur explained.

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MCAS Presentation:

Arthur provided an introduction to this presentation. MCAS results forms the basis for the State's evaluation of the work being done in Wayland. A district can be truly innovative when the MCAS results are very strong, and they can also provide a sense of expectations state-wide and nationally.

Parry presented a summary of the MCAS scores and the big trends in the data, the new accountability format, and next steps going forward. In the past, districts received level classifications, such as Level 1, 2 or 3, and districts were scored based on the lowest level school; Parry explained. The newest format includes two categories: 1) requiring assistance or intervention; 2) not requiring assistance or intervention. According to the MCAS results, Wayland's schools and the district as a whole are classified as not requiring assistance or intervention. Parry described the new indicators for grades K-12 in terms of achievement and growth. As an example, he reviewed some of the highlights in the Middle School Accountability Report in all areas, as well as where Wayland stands in comparison to other school districts.

Parry noted the trends/takeaways that appeared as a result of the analysis of the MCAS data. Wayland students performed very well last year, demonstrated high levels of growth, and when compared to state averages, their performance was quite impressive. Parry reviewed 2017 data compared to 2018 data for elementary and middle school students in English and Math for two categories – exceeds or met. The English and Math data for 10th graders fell in the categories of advanced, proficient, needs improvement, and failing. In addition, advanced Science data for 5th, 8th and 10th graders was reviewed and showed a dip in scores from 2017 to 2018. Parry noted that without drawing any conclusions, Science standards changed in the last two years, which may explain the drop in scores.

Parry also compared cohort growth (apples to apples) for Grades 4 to 8 in ELA and Math, as well as a two-year comparison to the state's scores in which Wayland scored higher. Parry praised the quality of the staff and the richness of the curriculum, all adding to the valuable education in Wayland. Included in moving forward with next steps are celebrating Wayland's successes, explore questions raised, continue to look at student sub-groups, explore more fine-grained patterns at the school level, and strive to create more value in all students' education through professional development and innovative practices while noticing "every student, every day".

(b) Continued Review of School Start Time Proposals:

- Staff Meetings
- Public Forums
- Teacher Survey
- Next Steps

The School Committee reviewed the surveys taken and two out of three public forums with parents and teachers and staff, noting that more elementary parents and elementary teachers attended. The third forum with parents will occur on the evening of October 17th.

A discussion ensued regarding the following areas in which the School Committee and administrators will research further:

- Alternatives for Professional Development (PD)
- Visit elementary schools during the school day to get a sense of the routine
- The over-burdened daily schedules of high school students – athletes and non-athletes
- Teachers' workloads and tight schedules
- How other districts have approached the challenges and benefits of making this change
- Efficiencies in transportation in developing start times for K-12

The obvious benefits of the change in school start times are students' safety and their overall health and wellness. The Committee discussed professional development scenarios based on early release days, such as four earlier release times on Wednesdays, keep the current early release Wednesdays, and/or one full day of PD for teachers during a non-school day which is very expensive.

To reach a decision, the School Committee asked for guidance on professional development, which after school clubs will be affected as a result of the PD schedule and, if so, how many, which programs meet before school starts and on early release Wednesdays for K-12, and, based on transportation efficiencies, can the elementary

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start time be moved to 8:00 a.m. and the middle and high schools end time moved to 2:55 p.m. Susan reported that Transfinder will review the data Susan provided and review it for efficiencies, particularly for the start time for elementary students.

Arthur shared the agenda for the Boston meeting on November 5th with the School Committee.

4. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Continued Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Capital Improvement Plans:

Susan reported that she and Arthur met with Town Administrator Louise Miller and Brian Keveny and reviewed the Capital Improvement Plans that were approved by the School Committee. It was suggested in the meeting that when a project is projected out, the budgeted amount for the full cost of the project should be revised. For instance, the planning and design dollars for appropriate projects should be noted. The revised CIPs include the dollars added, based on a formula determined by Ben Keefe. The increase in costs is shy of \$2M.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the revised 5-year capital improvement plan as presented tonight.

(b) Discussion of Budget Guideline:

Jeanne noted that the FY20 budget guideline is set at \$2.6M or no greater than 3.68%. The School Committee discussed the January budget presentations in all the schools as well as the Council on Aging.

(c) Review and Discussion of School Owned Land:

After a previous discussion regarding the school-owned land on Orchard Lane and Sherman Bridge Road, the School Committee raised some questions, all of which Jeanne sought answers from Mary Antes of the Housing Trust. The Housing Trust has asked the School Committee, sooner rather than later, to declare 1.76 acres at Alpine Field as surplus so that affordable housing can be constructed. Jeanne reviewed the accessibility issue for this parcel of land.

A discussion ensued regarding future potential space needed for more students. Currently, Loker School has space, but Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow cannot accommodate more students. However, Claypit Hill's land space could allow for modular classrooms, if needed; Happy Hollow cannot. The Middle School classroom space is becoming tighter and tighter.

Before deciding, the School Committee discussed the possibility of doing a capacity analysis to determine space needs going forward. Susan will research this further, but noted that an estimated cost could be \$3,000 to \$4,000. She will confirm. In the meantime, Jeanne will inform Mary Antes of this discussion.

(d) High School Master Athletic Plan:

Jeanne and Nate updated the School Committee on the following items.

- Project Update
- Neighbor Meeting
- Possible Vote to Approve Updated Warrant Article

The Conservation Commission voted 3-1-1 to move forward with the master athletic project, and will have the Order of Conditions by its next meeting. Jeanne appeared on The Buzz to answer questions about the High School Master Athletic Plan.

Jeanne reported on the status of the bathrooms for which 7 more girls' stalls will need to be constructed according to the State Board of Plumbing. This will add an additional cost to the project and there is a question of whether the entire project cost can absorb the additional cost of the bathrooms. Although the town voted to fund this project with excluded debt at last year's April Town Meeting, the scope of the project and the project estimate has changed, and it was suggested by Town Counsel to contact the Department of Revenue for its opinion in terms of the scope of the project and the use of excluded debt. As a result, the DOR will only exclude another \$285,000 of the project bringing the total exclusion to \$5.6M. However, another vote must be taken for the additional \$1M to be paid for by excluded debt. This may put the project about two months behind schedule. A decision will be made by the Board of Selectmen at this evening's meeting regarding whether the warrant article will be included in the Special Town Meeting.

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5. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

(a) Review and Discussion of any Outstanding Document and/or Minutes Request:

None.

(b) Review and Discussion of any Outstanding Open Meeting Law Matters:

None.

(c) Discussion of School Committee Communications and Information for The Buzz:

Kim wrote a second article and she and The Buzz are communicating in terms of possible edits.

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

None.

7. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated October 15, 2018, in the amount of \$549,898.79
- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Student Activities Warrant, dated October 15, 2018, in the amount of \$35,429.19
- Wayland Public Schools Payroll Warrant, dated October 10, 2018, in the amount of \$1,439,460.61

(b) Approval of Minutes:

- September 17, 2018
- September 24, 2018
- October 1, 2018

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted (4-0) to approve the Consent Agenda.

8. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to enter Executive Session at 9:51 p.m. to approve Executive Session minutes of September 24, 2018, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22. 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	absent	
Nate Buffum	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

The School Committee will be joined by Arthur Unobskey, Superintendent of Schools, and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will reconvene in open session for adjournment purposes only.

9. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn at 9:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

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Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda and Backup Information
2. Town Organization Structure Review Presentation
3. Draft Act Establishing the Position of Town Manager
4. Draft Financial Management Structure Review/Report
5. BASE Staff Compensation Proposal for FY19
6. Revised Summary of 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan FY20 to FY24
7. Diagrams of Orchard Lane and Alpine Field (school owned property)
8. Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants
9. Special Session Minutes of September 17, 2018
10. Regular Session Minutes of September 24, 2018
11. Regular Session Minutes of October 1, 2018
12. Executive Session Motion