

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 14, 2019

A Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, January 14, 2019, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Jeanne Downs, Chair
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair
Nate Buffum
Kim Reichelt
Kathie Steinberg (by remote)

Also:

Arthur Unobskey
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan
Director of Finance & Operations

Also:

Christie Harvey, Principal of Claypit Hill School
James Lee, Principal of Happy Hollow School
Brian Jones, Principal of Loker School
Leisha Simon, Director of Technology & Accountability

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the regular session at 7:06 p.m.; the meeting was recorded by WayCAM. Kathie Steinberg participated remotely due to her distance from the meeting.

1. Comments & Written Statements from the Public:

Mary Ann Borkowski, 29 Pemberton Road, read a statement on behalf of the Wayland and METCO community as a result of Mabel Reid-Wallace's announcement that she would be leaving the Wayland Public Schools at the end of June. Ms. Borkowski expressed her concerns regarding this announcement, given that Ms. Reid-Wallace has been a strong voice and has worked tirelessly over the past 19 years for the Wayland METCO Program. It is one of the best METCO programs in the State. As the current stewards of the METCO Program, she asked the School Committee for their oversight, given the concerns she mentioned.

2. Special Matters:

(a) Budget Work Session – Review of Budgets for Elementary Schools and Technology:

Elementary Schools:

The three elementary principals provided a brief overview of the elementary schools' budget. The majority of the needs are being met by the budget, such as with RTI and the reading specialists' and math coaches' support for RTI for all three schools. At times, however, there aren't enough math educators for the math intervention groups.

Although EL needs are addressed in the FY2020 school budget, there is a need for more EL teachers given the numbers of EL students has grown by 300% in the last three years. Currently, some teachers have caseloads of over 30 students, whereas Wayland's peer districts average about 20 students per EL teacher. In addition, the .3 EL Coordinator's time is stretched very thin within the work day. The principals praised Heidi Paisner's efforts and noted that the EL needs are moving in the right direction.

Curriculum initiatives, such as FOSS and Foundations are making a tremendous difference at the elementary level and are supported by the teachers and will continue given the proposed budget. In addition, the stipends in this year's budget for the school gardens, Model UN at Loker, and the Happy Hollow Tech Team continue to be positive initiatives for the students. The principals are grateful to have funding for all aspects of technology used at the elementary level. One concern, however, is that non-personnel budgets are being affected by software costs. They

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recommended that these costs be monitored, given that software licensing costs far exceed the costs of supplies and textbooks.

In terms of unmet needs for the elementary schools, first grade teacher assistants are very much needed to support those children who struggle emotionally with the transition from Kindergarten to first grade. It is challenging for the classroom teacher without a teacher assistant to address all the needs of the first graders. The cost for 1 teacher assistant for two classrooms would cost \$110,000. The principals spoke highly of the Spanish Immersion Program.

The School Committee posed questions to the elementary principals on the following:

- the need for a 1.0 FTE assistant principal at Claypit Hill and possibly shared by Happy Hollow
- the need for a writing coach
- the need for first grade teacher assistants
- Full Day Kindergarten

Principal Lee was asked if there was something he would like to see funded before he retires from the district. His response was to stay the course with RTI, possibly hire first grade TA's and writing coaches, as well as continuing to support technology and SEL. The principals spoke at length about the need for a writing coach.

Technology:

Leisha reported that the written grants have made it possible for virtual reality and online reality work to be experienced in the schools going forward. Leisha stated that the CIP network upgrade has been approved for the network upgrade for the Middle School and is in process of going out to bid through E-rate. Once the core switches are complete at the Middle School, the network upgrades will occur in about two years in the elementary schools.

In terms of the operating budget, audio visual upgrades are needed, with particular attention to the hardware which typically has a life cycle of 5 to 6 years but is now 8 to 9 years old. Software licensing needs will continue to grow to support the student data privacy initiatives. Related to unmet needs, Leisha updated the School Committee on the anticipation of putting all of the elementary hardware, such as Chromebooks and iPads, on a sustainable lease. The teachers have requested the increase of iPads in K-2 classrooms. In addition, there is a need for more devices due to the growth of EL and online testing for SPED. Leisha estimated a yearly cost of \$40,000 for Chromebooks and \$30,000 for iPads.

The School Committee asked if there are limitations on how quickly program costs can go up, what the length of contracts are with other vendors, and if there any negotiations with other school districts and vendors to achieve some sort of group pricing. A discussion ensued in this regard.

Jeanne Downs left the meeting at 8:01 p.m. to attend the PMBC meeting.

Leisha is satisfied with the current capital budget's support of technology needs, but stressed the need for upgrades at the elementary and middle schools.

- (b) Continued Discussion of Budget Drivers, Assumptions, Fees and Funding Sources and Requests for Information:
Nothing was added in the budget discussion.

3. **Educational Matters:**

- (a) Hear Superintendent's Report:
- School Visits

Arthur praised the elementary principals for their efforts on behalf of the students and staff. Happy Hollow is engaged in a "Deep Student Study," for which Arthur described. Loker has a weekly newspaper comprised of non-fiction writing by third grade students, and Claypit Hill veteran and new teachers meet monthly to review best practices.

- (b) School Start Times Update:

Arthur updated the School Committee about his search to secure low cost space for childcare next year. He added that he is also looking for space to house the WSCP/BASE staff.

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4. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Longevity Adjustment for BASE Staff:

This agenda item was passed over.

(b) Discussion of Capital Budget and Finance Committee Vote:

The School Committee reviewed the list of FY2020 draft capital budget requests as a result of the Finance Committee recent vote. The Finance Subcommittee will discuss this topic at its meeting on January 24. It was noted that the capital items for HVAC, tile replacement, and bus parking was not approved nor was the land overlay on the old landfill site on Route 20. This topic will be added to the January 17th School Committee agenda.

(c) OPEB Status Update:

This agenda item was passed over.

(d) High School Master Athletic Plan:

- Project Status
- Budget Update
- Warrant Article

This agenda item was passed over.

Kathie Steinberg left the meeting remotely at 8:26 p.m.

5. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

(a) Discussion of Superintendent's Review Process, including Elements for Review and Feedback:

This agenda item was passed over.

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

None.

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

None.

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

Kim is working on an article for Thursday.

6. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payable Warrant, dated January 14, 2019, in the amount of \$446,655.91

(b) Approval of WHS Journalism Class and WSPN Club Trip

(c) Approval of Minutes:

- Regular Session of January 2, 2019

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to approve the Consent Agenda.

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

None.

8. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted (3-0) to enter Executive Session at 8:30 p.m. to approve the January 2, 2019 Executive Session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22. 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	absent	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	X	
Nate Buffum	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Kathie Steinberg	absent	

9. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Mary Ann Borkowski, 29 Pemberton Road

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. Capital Project Funds – Status of Special Revenue Accounts
3. Voted FY20 Draft Capital Budget Requests
4. Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant
5. WHS Journalism Class and WSPN Club Trip Request
6. Regular Session Minutes of January 2, 2019