

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Regular Meeting – November 18, 2019

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, November 18, 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

*Also:*

Arthur Unobskey  
Superintendent

Parry Graham  
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead  
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan  
Director of Finance & Operations

*Also:*

Patricia Keefe, WSCP Director  
Katy Merrell, The Children's Way Director  
Leisha Simon, Director of Technology & Accountability

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

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

Alexia Obar commented that the students who live in Damon Farms are getting home at 3:45 p.m. because they were put in the second bus group. She also noted that athletic teams, particularly soccer, are often arriving to games late shortening the opportunity to warm up. She requested adjustments to the athletic schedules. Ms. Obar asked the School Committee if teachers, specifically those at the high school, are being monitored in terms of when they leave for the day and if their contractual hours are being met.

Jeanne read a public comment from Jeff Sklar in which he requested that an extra column be added to the agenda/minutes page of the website which would provide a link to the WayCAM video for School Committee meetings.

Jeanne thanked Kathie and Arthur for their attendance at a MASC meeting at which they were part of a panel. Kathie commented that many of those present asked them about Wayland's change to school start times because other districts are considering a change.

**2. Special Matter:**

(a) BASE Presentation:

Pat Keefe updated the BASE program after adjusting and making changes to the program as a result of the change in school start times. The program remains a high-quality program that is staffed by twenty TA's and eleven YMCA staff due to a partnership between Wayland BASE and the YMCA. Pat continues to search for competent staff to fill in the gaps during the day in the schools, which is now being covered by other staff by working extra hours/shifts. In addition, there are eighteen leaders in training juniors and seniors from the high school who work at BASE, and the METCO partnership has five staff at three of the after school sites.

The YMCA is offering December break childcare opportunities for families at the same BASE pricing. If successful, February and April breaks will be offered as well.

In terms of the waitlists, there is no waitlist for the before school program; however, there are 74 on the waitlist for after school – 41 remaining from the spring and 33 that have been added since May. Happy Hollow has the most

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families on the waitlist, followed by Loker, then Claypit Hill and the Middle School. A discussion ensued about the current waitlist.

Pat estimated the number of students in the program, but the number varies from day to day at each school, particularly the elementary schools. The middle school enrollment is about the same. Before school enrollment is down across the board, and some families pay as they go because childcare is not needed on a regular basis. Moving forward, Pat will evaluate this year's program, as she anticipates some challenges for next year which could result in some changes to the program. Pat praised her exceptional and valuable BASE staff.

3. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Review, Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve a Quote for a Tech Lease:

Leisha Simon updated the School Committee regarding the quote for a three-year A/V tech lease and requested the Committee's approval in order to move forward with the purchase of the audio visual equipment so that it can be installed over the winter break. The funds for this project are in the FY20 budget. Leisha noted that there is a five-year plan to put all hardware, including Chromebooks and iPads on a sustainable lease. Susan confirmed that the maintenance warranties do carry directly over to the school department.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the three-year lease for custom classroom audio visual equipment.

(b) Review and Possible Vote to Authorize and Post the AV/VM Administrator Position to Report to Town IT Director:

The AV/VM administrator position was funded from the FY20 school budget. The position is vacant currently and will be posted on the Town website according to the Town's revised job description. However, this employee will remain in the school department budget until June 30, 2020 and will then fall under the auspices of the Town going forward.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to authorize the Town to post and hire the AV/VM administrator position, even though the schools will be funding it for the first year.

(c) Review and Possible Vote to Approve FY21 TCW Budget and Fees:

Katy Merrell presented The Children's Way budget that remains in deficit, as well as the proposed tuition increase of three percent. Despite the deficit, the annual OPEB parity payment of \$125,000 over a five-year period has been eliminated due to the support of the administration and School Committee. A question was raised about whether TCW can recoup the parity payment from past years. Susan will look into this possibility. Katy spoke about the two employees who share the previous role of Gretchen Lutz, as well as the one day a week guidance support from the school adjustment counselor at Claypit Hill.

After reviewing the budget deficit with the Finance Subcommittee, it was decided to raise tuition costs by 3% while still remaining at a \$17,000 deficit. However, The Children's Way will receive approximately \$12,000 from the Special Education budget, bringing the deficit down to about \$5,000. Katy noted that TCW's tuition is higher than most preschools in Wayland, but TCW's program is unique, given the needs of some of the students and the collaboration with the school department. Katy added that the needs of the students are growing and are more complex. Thus, beginning next year, the needs will be tracked for the purpose of providing staff the time to assess these needs. A child study team will be formed for the purpose of making improvements to the program. Finally, Katy noted that The Children's Way has urgent space needs now and going forward. Arthur, Ben Keefe and Katy are working together to address this issue.

*Ellen, Kathie, and Susan left the meeting at 7:44 p.m. to attend the Finance Committee.*

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to approve The Children's Way budget as presented and the 3% tuition fee increase.

(d) High School Master Athletic Plan (taken out of order):

- Project Update

If the School Committee applies for CPC funds for Phase 3 of the athletic plan (baseball fields and grass fields), the application is due on December 4. Jeanne and Kathie will tweak the application and bring it to the December 2

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meeting for School Committee final approval.

Arthur provided updates on the progression of the project. The celebration of the grand opening of the complex will be April 7, 2020.

4. **Educational Matters:**

(a) Presentation regarding MCAS Results:

Parry presented an MCAS Summary of the spring 2019 results which remained positive across the district. Student performance remains high, with no big changes from last year in terms of the percentage of students scoring in the “MET” or above in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. However, at the elementary level, there was an increase in the percentage of students scoring at the “EXCEEDS” level in both ELA and math. This year’s MCAS at the high school level was difficult to compare to previous years, as there were changes in the reporting categories. Parry explained this difference, as well as the changes in the science test.

Parry displayed and described charts showing little or no changes from 2018 for Grades three to eight. He also spoke of Wayland’s tenth grade comparison to the state overall. Parry noted that subgroups do not seem to grow at the same rate as the overall Wayland population.

In terms of some of the next steps, the subgroup data will be analyzed at the K-2 level. Parry is also working with the schools and grade level teachers to analyze MCAS data, and the work is continued to align the K-5 science curriculum with the new state standards.

Finally, Happy Hollow School received the Massachusetts School of Recognition for High Achievement.

(b) Superintendent’s Report:

- School Visits
- Newsletter Update
- School Start Times Update:

Arthur reported that some of our high school students attended a summit at the Kennedy School at Harvard University regarding school activism and civics. He shared an article written about some of our students, which was a positive interview in comparison to other schools. In addition, two of our students volunteered at the Musicians of the Old Post Road. The general manager wrote a letter to Allyson in praise of our students’ willingness to help. Finally, a parent of a Newburyport high school soccer player wrote another letter to Allyson and Heath Rollins complementing our athletes for their talent and character during and after a competitive soccer game.

Arthur informed the School Committee that The Quarterly newsletter was sent out, and positive feedback was received. The next one will be complete in January 2020.

Arthur provided an update regarding School Start Times. The test runs for the newly designed bus routes and times will be implemented December 2, 2019. Families will be notified just prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. Susan will provide more details regarding the tracking app. Arthur met with the start times working group on November 6, and focus groups will be formed to develop recommendations for families working through this change to possibly implement more efficient strategies. The group will prepare a report to be presented to the School Committee in the spring of 2020.

5. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

(a) Appointment of Ben Downs as WHS Assistant Swim & Dive Coach:

Arthur announced the appointment of Ben Downs as the volunteer WHS assistant swim and dive coach. The notice was filed with the Town Clerk and Jeanne and Ben Downs filed conflict of interest forms.

(b) Discussion of Topics for State of the Town Presentation on December 10:

The Buzz has organized a State of the Town presentation, which will be televised by WayCAM, on December 10. The format includes the Town Administrator and Chair of the Board of Selectmen informing the public about those things that are going in the town, and Arthur and Jeanne will speak about the schools. There will be a 15 minute Q & A session following the presentations.

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Topics were discussed for this presentation, including social emotional learning, diversity inclusion, FOSS, school start times, fields, state of facilities and capital projects, METCO initiatives and deepening the connection between Boston and Wayland families, and how the schools are engaging students every day. A discussion ensued regarding the timing of the program and who is the target audience.

(c) Discussion of Columbus Day Holiday:

Other communities and states have begun to make the transition to “Indigenous People’s Day”. A discussion ensued about the proposed complete name change advocated by Kim and honoring the real history of this day. Kim explained her viewpoint about this celebrated day. Nate noted that some communities are using Columbus Day - Indigenous People’s Day. Arthur added that it is important for children to know what happened historically, even though this was not a positive time in history. Arthur agrees that the change to Indigenous People’s Day is appropriate. It was suggested by Nate that students become involved in this potential change. The Committee discussed this, as well as the decision some time ago to remove the spear from the official logo of the high school. This discussion will resume on December 2.

(d) Review and Discussion of any Outstanding Document and/or Minutes Requests:

None.

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

None.

(f) Discussion of School Committee Communications and Information for the Buzz:

No updates or information provided in some time. Kim will provide tonight’s meeting.

6. **Policy Matters:**

(a) Update/Review of Policies to Put Out for Public Comment:

- IJNDD – Policy on Social Media

This new policy accommodates communication needed between coaches and athletes and teachers and students regarding after school activities. Kim also consulted with Heath Rollins. The School Committee discussed this policy. Arthur will research how coaches and teachers currently communicate with students, as the opinion is that texting is the preferred method.

*Kathie, Ellen and Susan returned to the meeting at 9:06 p.m.*

- IJOA – Field Trips

Updates to Policy IJOA are the result of the last Policy Subcommittee meeting at which time the School Committee’s policy was incorporated into the MASC policy.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to put Policy IJOA out for public comment.

7. **Financial Matters (continued):**

(a) Discussion and Review of FY21 Capital Budget Presentation to Finance Committee:

Ellen and Kathie updated the School Committee on the Finance Committee meeting that they attended this evening for the purpose of reviewing the CIP’s with the Finance Committee.

(b) Review of Q4 and EOY Financial Reports:

Susan reported an end of year outcome which basically broke even with just over \$19,000. Savings were realized and reduced spending in the salary areas mostly related to degree changes, staffing turnover, and the decision not to open two additional kindergarten sections. However, this surplus was offset by facilities deficits mostly related to ground and building repairs. Susan will present the Q1 FY20 financial report at the next meeting.

Susan also produced an EOY report for DESE from FY14 to FY19. Susan responded to a question regarding legal fees. She noted that legal fees were increased for FY20.

(c) Discussion of Community Forum Dates for Budget Presentations:

The School Committee discussed dates for the school budget presentations to the community. They are as follows:

- Elementary – January 14, 2020 at Loker at 6:30 p.m.

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- MS/HS – January 10, 2020 during the PIE meeting at WHS at 8:45 a.m.
- COA – TBD, possibly during either week of January 6 or January 13

Kathie will confirm with Allyson and Nate will reach out to the Middle School PTO. Jeanne will reach out to the elementary schools and Kim will reach out to the COA.

(d) Discuss Upcoming Bus Strategy:

First Student has made available a free district and parent application for tracking routes. Wayland is scheduled to receive both beginning mid-December. Susan noted that Sudbury's application was available ten months ago from First Student and has had positive results with the product. Susan described the purpose of these apps and what is available to the district, such as the District Dashboard, and to parents, such as notifications. Parents will only have access to their children's bus routes. First Student will provide training and technical support.

Susan and Janet Delano are refining bus routes for the high school and Claypit routes even more to prepare for inclement weather, as well as working with Transfinder to decouple routes for Loker and Claypit Hill. Arthur will notify parents of these changes beginning in December.

An offer has been extended to a new part-time transportation coordinator. She is a Happy Hollow parent and a morning bus monitor at Happy Hollow.

Susan has reached out to many school districts regarding bus bid strategy, and, based on a survey, about 90 districts have not received more than bid or response, thus, eliminating competition among bus companies. She provided the Committee with a spreadsheet in this regard. Via the DESE list serve, Susan put out a request to districts asking if there has been a different bidding process developed, but has received no response. Susan will create a RFP in hopes of receiving innovative proposals. If this process is not successful, she will revert back to the bidding process. Wayland's transportation costs are about \$1.1M and approximately 1,200 students are bussed on 16 Wayland busses and 4 Boston busses. In addition, staff children are transported from one school to another.

(d) Diversity Training Update:

Arthur and Caroline Han have identified eight potential dates in February and March for diversity training. Each session will be three hours, and participants must commit to four sessions. Jeanne will create a Doodle Poll for the School Committee members.

### 7. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated November 18, 2019, in the amount of \$296,009.10
- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Student Activities Warrant, dated November 18, 2019, in the amount of \$3,178.23

(b) Approval of WHS Model UN Overnight Trip

(c) Approval of Minutes:

- November 4, 2019

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

### 8. **Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:**

Jeanne received a request from the Town Administrator asking if the School Committee would co-sponsor an application for CPC funds for improving the handicap access at the Happy Hollow and Claypit Hill playgrounds. Arthur noted that there is a high standard for accessibility and the Town's capital plan calls for some of this needed work.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to co-sponsor Recreation's request for the money to improve handicap access at the playgrounds.

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### 9. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter executive session at 9:38 p.m. for purposes of discussing strategy with respect to and in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel, the Superintendent, as permitted to M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(2); and approving the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: October 21, 2019 (1 and 2). The School Committee will reconvene in regular session for adjournment purposes only.

### 10. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn at 10:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk  
Wayland School Committee

### **Observers:**

Alexia Obar, Wayland

### **Corresponding Documentation:**

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. FY20 AV Equipment Lease
3. The Children's Way FY21 Budget & Fees
4. FY19 EOY Financial Report – Grants
5. FY19 EOY Financial Report – Non-Personnel
6. FY19 EOY Financial Report – Personnel
7. FY19 EOY Financial Report – Special Revenue Accounts
8. FY19 Q4 Financial Report
9. Adjusted Five-Year Capital Plan and CIPS for FY21
10. MASS/MASC – Opportunities in Mass Student Transportation Spreadsheet
11. Policies IJNDD (Policy on Social Media) and IJOA (Field Trips)
12. Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants
13. Trip Request for WHS Model UN Trip
14. Regular Session Minutes of November 4, 2019
15. Email re: CPC Funding Request
16. Executive Session Motion