

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 13, 2020

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, January 13, 2020, 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
Kathie Steinberg

Absent:

Kim Reichelt

Also:

Arthur Unobskey
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Susan Bottan
Director of Finance & Operations

Richard Whitehead
Director of Student Services

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session in the School Committee Room at 7:03 p.m.; the meeting was recorded by WayCAM.

1. Comments & Written Statements from the Public:

There were no comments and written statements from the public.

2. Financial Matters (out of order):

(a) Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Request for Debt Exclusion for the Loker Roof and Phase 3 of the High School Outdoor Athletic Complex Projects:

The School Committee reviewed the request to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) for a debt exclusion question on the ballot for the Loker roof and Phase 3 of the high school outdoor athletic complex project.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to approve the request to the BOS that a debt exclusion question be put on the ballot for the high school outdoor athletic complex project and Loker.

Jeanne left the meeting at 7:05 p.m. to bring the vote to the Board of Selectmen; she returned at 7:07 p.m.

Kathie arrived at 7:07 p.m.

3. Educational Matters:

(a) Superintendent's Report:

- *Update on Social Emotional Learning:*

While visiting the Middle School today, Arthur observed the students preparing for the MLK celebration on January 20. He elaborated on the preparation that centered on “what makes a beloved community” and how this experience can play a role in cultivating social emotional skills by developing a voice in a way that is powerful.

- *Update on Elevating Achievement:*

Arthur visited a middle school Spanish class in which students stand and/or sit on cushions. He described the teacher's lesson in terms of how students quickly begin to speak to each other given the setting. This approach requires a high level of engagement.

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- *Update on School Start Times:*
The survey will go out to parents, students, and teachers tomorrow. The start time group will meet on January 18 to discuss the data received within individualized focus groups.

Richard Whitehead informed the School Committee that school districts are required by law to have a District Comprehensive Accommodation (DCAP) for any students relative to classroom environment and the materials that they use. One example is preferential seating; Richard explained. He will form a group that will meet within the next month to review the current DCAP in Wayland and compare it to what other districts use in an effort to identify those things that will be most effective and user friendly. This plan differs from an IEP Plan or 504 Plan. Richard hopes this exercise will be done by April.

4. Financial Matters (resumed):

- (a) Discussion of FY2021 Budget, including Budget Drivers, Assumptions, Fees and Funding Sources, and Requests for Information:

Special Revenue Funds: Postponed until the next meeting on January 16.

Parry Graham presented the Central Office budget.

Central Office:

The non-personnel budget is driven by contractual pieces, such as WTA and TA tuition reimbursement, HR software costs, and teachers' license renewals.

In terms of the personnel budget, the school auditors recommended improvements in the human resources structure that includes making better use of MUNIS and increasing accuracy and efficiency. One recommendation was to separate payroll and benefits processing allowing the HR Manager to focus on more strategic aspects of her job and to benefit from the high skilled level of experience that this employee possesses. Thus, there is a request to hire a human resources administrative assistant for additional support. Parry described how the structure of human resources has changed from a year ago, including the job responsibilities of the HR Manager. Susan described the job responsibilities of our payroll and benefits coordinator and the comparison of town's payroll employee given the structure and setup in MUNIS. Susan added that efficiency and accuracy are imperative, as well as a high level of customer service, and she strongly supports this administrative assistant position.

Curriculum & Instruction (C&I):

The C & I budget resembles last year's budget with an overall \$2,000 reduction. It is identified by three areas: textbooks, classroom supplies, and contracted services. The district is fully-resourced at the elementary level, given the amount of textbooks and supplies purchased over the past two years. The Spanish Immersion budget has shifted to Loker School's budget. Parry provided a list of items for the upper elementary grades that are expected to be funded by the C & I FY21 budget, such as materials and professional development for the writing program and the absorption of some non-personnel expenses from school budgets. Parry explained how he will support these non-personnel expenses next year. However, a long-term solution is necessary moving forward.

Parry referred to the English Language costs, given that the EL program received 26 more students this year. A total of 49 students moved out of the program based on their proficiency skills. Six years is an average span of time for a student to be in the program. The budget allows for 86 students, thus, it is not anticipated that the budget will increase for FY21.

Susan addressed a question regarding legal fees, including those for special education.

Diversity & Equity Coordinator:

This year, this position has been funded partly by a Wayland Public Schools Foundation grant and the METCO grant. In FY21, however, this position will be funded from the operating budget as well as the METCO grant. Parry noted that this employee's efforts have been eye opening, effective, and addresses the individual needs of the students.

Facilities:

The facilities budget is made up of two general categories: utilities and building-based costs. Building-based costs include maintenance and repairs, electrical, plumbing, pumping, and custodial equipment. The facilities budget is expected to increase \$110,000 from this year's budget. Susan reviewed the individual increases in the budget. Susan and Ben Keefe have identified four priority areas in the building-based budget, such as custodial equipment,

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furniture replacement, cabinet and sink replacements, and rug replacements. Susan addressed questions regarding these four priority areas, particularly rug replacements in some schools.

Ben addressed the projected 10% increase in the utilities budget this year and next. Ben added that the facilities budget was about \$200,000 to \$300,000 underfunded last year; he explained. Ben noted the budget drivers that caused the budget to increase which was mostly building repairs. Susan will provide a list of building repairs for the last five years at the School Committee meeting of January 16.

Jeanne asked about the potential position in Ben's office that would be shared with the schools as well. A contract has been extended for a full-time employee for both the town and schools. Ben noted that a fiscal specialist may also be hired in his department that will be funded in the Town's budget.

Special Education (discussed after the capital budget discussion):

Richard Whitehead addressed the special education budget and noted that out-of-district tuition costs are the biggest budget driver. However, the costs are decreasing by about 9 percent, as students are graduating and aging out of the district. Richard is not adding staff to the program for FY21, as the specialized programs has the capacity to add students. Other savings are notable, given that the department adopted a digital platform for testing last year which removed some costs related to paper testing.

Richard noted the department's support of the potential guidance position at Loker and the High School ALRT program additional 1.0 FTE teacher position. Acknowledging that there could be some unintentional costs in the future, Richard looks for ways to be more effective in practice without increasing the budget, including accessing grants available to support special education. He noted that there will be more grant funding available for social emotional learning given the national trend.

Although Richard is not actively pursuing the possibility of replacing TA's in the classroom with more professional status teachers, he explained the philosophy and potential value of this inclusive classroom model for students with special needs. As social emotional learning support is available for all students, Richard described the distinction for some students in specialized programs.

The School Committee will review the budget questions and responses given before the January 16th meeting. A discussion ensued regarding the initial budget building process and how savings are recognized and allocated year to year.

(c) Review of and Possible Vote to Approve Updated Capital Budget:

The School Committee reviewed the newly adjusted capital budget comparing it to what the Finance Committee recently voted. The funds for the Loker roof may come out of the school budget and be put into excluded debt. A discussion ensued regarding Phase 3 of the Loker field and the high school baseball and multi-purpose fields based on the FY21 budget requests and debt exclusion requests. Ellen brought up the possibility of moving all field funding requests to FY22, adding that Recreation may not want to postpone the Loker Conservation field request. A discussion followed in this regard, and Kathie expressed her concerns about a postponement. Ben cited the timeline of the procurement steps, including a design selection process, necessary for the fields for an approval of \$2.2M at the April town meeting. He added that it is highly unlikely that the construction would begin this summer. As discussed, there will also be a \$3.8M request for the Loker roof and air handler units to be done in the summer of 2020. It was suggested and discussed to include the funds in the capital budget to repave the Loker parking lot.

Susan may have additional information regarding the air handler units by Thursday. The School Committee capital budget vote will be postponed until January 16.

(d) Review of and Possible Vote of Loker Roof Warrant Article:

Jeanne commented that this article needs to be updated before it can be submitted by Wednesday, January 15.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to submit the two warrant articles as presented tonight and to allow the Chair to make the necessary revisions for submission.

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(d) High School Master Athletic Plan:

- Project Update
- Review of Warrant Article for Phase 3
- Discuss Grand Opening Celebration

This item was discussed as part of earlier agenda items.

5. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

(a) Discussion of Community Budget Presentations:

Six residents attended the Council on Aging budget presentation. The Loker School presentation is scheduled on January 14 at 7:00 p.m.

(b) Review and Discussion of any Outstanding Document and/or Minutes Requests:
None.

(c) Review and Discussion of any Outstanding Open Meeting Law Matters:
None.

(d) Discussion of School Committee Communications and Information for the Buzz:
This topic was passed over.

6. **Policy Matters:**

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

- IJNDD – Policy on Social Media

This policy is still being considered.

(b) Review of Policies for Possible Approval:

- BEDH – Public Comment at School Committee Meetings
- ILD – Student Submission to Educational Surveys and Research
- IHAM – Health Education

Nate said that no comments were received from the public regarding Policies BEDH, ILD and IHAM.

Upon a motion duly made by Nate Buffum, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to accept the policies as written – BEDH, ILD, and IHAM – as they came back without comment.

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

None.

8. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to enter executive session at 9:10 p.m. for purposes of 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 a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; Item (b) will be passed over.

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

The School Committee will reconvene in regular session for adjournment purposes only. 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	
Nate Buffum	X	
Kim Reichelt	Absent	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

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9. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. Revised/Adjusted FY21 Capital Plan Projects – FY21 to FY25
3. Debt Exclusion Letter 2020
4. Loker Roof Warrant Articles 2020
5. WHS Athletic Project Phase 3 Warrant Article
6. Executive Session Motion