

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Session – May 1, 2012

A Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, May 1, 2012, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Barb Fletcher, Chair
Beth Butler, Vice Chair
Malcolm Astley
Ellen Grieco
Shawn Kinney

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent of Schools

Brad J. Crozier
Assistant Superintendent

Geoffrey S. MacDonald
Business Administrator

Marlene M. Dodyk
Director of Student Services

Also:

Chris Hinckley, Account Analyst

Chair Barb Fletcher convened the Regular Session at 7:07 p.m. and commented that the agenda order may be changed to accommodate all members. She announced that the meeting was being taped live by WayCAM. Barb thanked the community for its support of the FY13 capital and operating budgets during Town Meeting, which will support many new initiatives and programs for students. Barb also stated that the School Committee heard the concerns of the community at Town Meeting and they will work hard to regain the trust of the community.

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

Rob Schechter, parent of a first grader and a child who will enter kindergarten in the fall, stated that he has been waitlisted for FDK. He asked the School Committee for an update on the program.

Although this part of the meeting is for comment only, Paul stated that the current numbers have, thus far, resulted in not being able to meet everyone's requests, but is hoping that this will change as people make final decisions. However, he also stated that it will be some time before a final decision is reached and that there are about 17 or 18 families whose requests could not be met for FDK.

Malcolm reiterated the protocol that the School Committee must follow during meetings, but recommended that they speak to the Superintendent at another time.

Regarding equity in the quality of education, Mr. Schechter commented that he feels that there are inequities between FDK and the traditional Kindergarten program and is also concerned that non-residents who are in the FDK program are taking precedence over residents.

2. **Report on Goal #5:**

Fiscal Accountability and Transparency:

Geoff MacDonald provided an overview of the progress-to-date on the implementation of system-wide goals, which states: "to restructure the fiscal operations within the school system with an eye toward efficiency, transparency and accountability."

Geoff reviewed each objective associated with this goal and they are as follows:

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Objective #1: To revise the development, presentation, and reporting of the budget so it provides district financial information in an easily understood and readable format leading to greater transparency.

Objective #2: To restructure the Fiscal Operations (organization, protocols and procedures) to increase accountability and efficiency.

Objective #3: To improve service and find cost efficiencies in ancillary operations (transportation, food service, facilities) for the benefit of students, staff, parents, and residents.

Account analyst Chris Hinckley demonstrated the MUNIS on-line process of creating purchase orders. He stated that once all of the information is put in to MUNIS, approval is required from the creator's immediate supervisor, then Chris, then Geoff MacDonald. Chris also stated that he has trained all administrators, department heads, and secretaries and will continue training other staff members going forward.

Geoff answered questions from the School Committee regarding both presentations.

Malcolm Astley offered suggestions/recommendations in terms of carrying out this goal regarding timing and responsibility of each task within each recommendation from the Abrahams Group. He also praised Geoff's work in terms of what's been done, what's anticipated, and its comprehensiveness. He is also concerned about step and salary total (percentage increase) monitoring, consumer price index listing each year, supplies and provisions cost per student, the supervisory ratio, the number of evaluations and observations per staff member per year, and possible areas that are not being addressed.

Paul Stein commented that he appreciated the time allowed so that Geoff could report on the infrastructure and efficiencies that are maintained in the business office. He also added that Chris Hinckley has been an asset.

Barb requested that the goal presentations be posted on the website. Barb commented on the new initiatives and the impact they would have in terms of their value to the schools and reminded everyone to keep this in mind as they prepare for next year's budget.

3. **Regular Matters:**

(a) **Review of Town Meeting and Follow-up:**

The School Committee had a general discussion and review of the recent Town Meeting. Barb Fletcher asked the Committee to comment on Town Meeting, the procedures that are in place, and if anything should be done differently.

The Committee also discussed protocol and ethics in terms of board members identifying themselves as individuals, if speaking at Town Meeting or in other platforms, as opposed to speaking on behalf of the entire School Committee. It was suggested that the Committee introduce matters at meetings via the Chair before using another venue, so they can be introduced and discussed by the entire School Committee first and possibly come to a mutual understanding/agreement at the meeting. It was also recommended that boiler plate language be implemented, which would be read prior to any member speaking on their own behalf.

It was also suggested that the School Committee should respond to the vote of Article 28 and to submit written correspondence to the Board of Selectmen in support of Article 28 and offer their assistance. The School Committee also discussed Article 28 in terms of the next steps taken if the state auditor agreed or declined to perform the audit.

The School Committee discussed the draft of the School Committee's response to Part II of the Abrahams Group Report in terms of previous discussions regarding the timeline and process of Article 28 and the revolving accounts.

Barb will confirm that the \$30,000 to perform the audit is tied to the article or not, and in the event that the state auditor declines to do the audit, the School Committee will have a conversation about being able to access the money for some type of a review/audit upon which the School Committee will decide. As Plan A, Barb will reach out the BOS to offer the School Committee's assistance, if needed. Moving forward, Plan B will include a discussion in terms of the definition of the scope and the process in terms of who will oversee the audit.

Paul Stein asked the School Committee if the Budget Presentation Booklet served their needs during Town Meeting. He also asked the Committee to review the Table of Contents in terms of going forward to FY14. The consensus by the School Committee was that this document is a valuable tool and should be continued.

(b) **Preliminary Discussion of Superintendent's Evaluation:**

As members of the Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee, Beth Butler and Malcolm Astley reviewed the draft document that Beth provided to the Committee. Beth outlined the procedure that she and Malcolm followed, as well as reviewed the timeline. The School Committee also discussed whether the superintendent's evaluation is a public document or not. Committee members were asked to review the draft document and send suggestions or questions to Beth. Beth and Malcolm will discuss any input from the other School Committee members at their next open evaluation meeting and then follow up at the May 7 School Committee meeting.

Barb commented that Jim Hardy of MASC is willing to conduct a training program in Wayland regarding teacher evaluations and would open it up to other neighboring communities as well.

(c) **Request for Additional Special Education/TA Services:**

The district has identified increased student needs in the area of Special Education/TA services, particularly for a student at Claypit Hill School. Paul Stein and Marlene Dodyk requested authorization to increase staffing up to 5.6 hours per day/44 days from now until the end of the year for a maximum of \$5,480 and to transfer funds from the tuition account in order to meet this immediate need.

Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to increase TA staffing up to 5.6 hours per day (44 days) from now until the end of the year for a maximum of \$5,480 and to transfer funds from the tuition account in order to meet this immediate need.

4. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) **Approval of Minutes:**

- Regular Session of March 26, 2012
- Special Session of April 9, 2012
- Special Session of April 10, 2012

Upon a motion duly made by Shawn Kinney, seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve all minutes, as amended, and noted under the consent agenda.

5. **Superintendent's Report:**

(a) School News:

Paul Stein praised the work of the students involved in the Claypit Hill 5th grade play, which was Hollywood themed, as well as the high school production of Fame.

Paul also stated that a formal agreement has been worked out in terms of the China Exchange Program and host families are being recruited both here and in China, which is a huge accomplishment in a short amount of time.

6. **Follow-up and Future Agenda Items:**

(a) School Committee Website:

As manager of the School Committee private domain website, Jeff Dieffenbach updated the School Committee on its status. He stated that the registration is current, but no longer being paid for by some individual School Committee members. However, the High School Building Committee is paying to keep their information on the site and to keep it active. A decision must be reached as to what should be done with the content/information that is out there. Jeff's recommendation was to leave all HSBC content accessible, as it is with its own set of URL's, and redirect "schoolcommittee.org" to the WPS School Committee page. Also to be decided is what to do with all other pages that contain School Committee content, not HSBC content, such as old budget documents and newsletters, etc. He also gave suggestions on how to proceed. Jeff stated that the website will expire March 9, 2013. Barb offered to review the content on the "schoolcommittee.org" website this summer and recommend to the Committee a plan for how it should be archived.

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- (b) School Committee Report re: Part II of the Abrahams Group Report:
Ellen Grieco provided a draft of the School Committee's response to Part II of the Abrahams Group Report and stated that this report followed the same format as Part I. She asked the School Committee to review and comment on each section and make recommendations if they would like changes made.

A discussion ensued as the School Committee reviewed the response, specifically each section/finding, and then recommended some changes in the wording of the document.

Barb stated that in areas where there were no recommendations, there should be commendations, as that is an indication that things were being done correctly. She also suggested that a discussion as to the achievability of the cost savings associated with certain recommendations be included in the Committee's response.

- (c) Discussion re: Two Articles of an Audit Firm:
Shawn Kinney commented on two articles that refer to auditors, Melanson & Heath, who had been hired by the Town, but were found not to be doing an adequate job in other towns. He brought it to the Committee's attention, as they are being considered for the schools' audit of the student activity accounts. Also discussed was the potential cost of the upcoming school audit of five student activity accounts. Barb will follow up regarding Melanson & Heath.
- (d) Discussion re: Public Records Request:
The School Committee discussed the protocol of a recent public records request. Barb Fletcher recommended that each committee member review their School Committee and personal emails for the month of April, print or copy them to a USB, and send them to the School Committee secretary for compilation by May 7.
- (e) Discussion re: Email Protocol:
The School Committee discussed the protocol of sending emails to a member or members of the Committee in terms of the Open Meeting Law. Barb Fletcher will get clarification from the MASC.
- (f) Future Agenda Items/Discussions:
Malcolm commented on a national resolution circulating against the current forum of high stakes testing. He recommends that the Committee examine the findings or consider other options. He will send the link to Barb to be considered for a future meeting.

Malcolm stated that, thanks to Dianne Bladon, the Alumni Association can act as a committee within WHSPO and will have a place to hold onto a budget that can be audited. Since the Association needs a budget by May 20, he has asked the Committee to discuss this matter at the next meeting.

Malcolm informed the Committee that he attended the Suburban Coalition's recent program at which he witnessed an excellent presentation on the state budget criteria for a good tax system. He also stated that State Representative Tom Conroy is willing to make a presentation to Wayland town officials, as well as officials from surrounding towns. Malcolm will contact Representative Conroy in terms of a possible date.

Malcolm requested that the School Committee examine specific areas where computers can substantially take over in terms of instruction. He also suggested that the Technology Task Force or a curriculum committee also examine this subject. Malcolm will send the information to Barb, which could be included in the Technology Goal.

7. Comments from the Public:

Jeff Dieffenbach commented on the issue of public documents and suggested ways in which the School Committee can move forward in this area, as the Open Meeting Law is very clear on quorums and committees. He also spoke to Malcolm's earlier request in terms of an examination of where computers can take over in areas of instruction.

Louis Jurist commented on an earlier comment made by a resident about full day kindergarten, and suggested that if FDK is educationally worthwhile, the inequity is for those families who cannot afford the program. He recommended that the School Committee have a discussion and further evaluate the program and to arrive at a conclusion of whether FDK should be fully funded by the school department and made available to all children and families. He also commented on Article 28, which was discussed and passed at Town Meeting, and suggested that the Committee should not feel obligated to do what is not mentioned in Article 28.

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Molly Upton requested copies of documents in the future that are referred to at the meetings.

8. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Shawn Kinney, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to convene in Executive Session at 10:40 P.M. to discuss matters pertaining to the Custodial union arbitration, as set forth in M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) (1). A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Barb Fletcher, Chair	X	
Beth Butler, Vice Chair	X	
Malcolm Astley	X	
Ellen Grieco	X	
Shawn Kinney	X	

9. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Shawn Kinney, seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 11:19 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:
See attached.

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Goal #5 Presentation – Fiscal Accountability
2. Draft of Superintendent Evaluation Instrument
3. Regular Session Minutes of March 26, 2012
4. Executive Session Minutes of March 26, 2012
5. Special Sessions of April 9 and 10, 2012
6. Draft of School Committee Report of Part II of Abrahams Group Report
7. Payroll and Accounts Payables Warrants