A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, December 14, 2015, 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Ellen Grieco, Chair (arrived at 7:15 p.m.)

Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair

Donna Bouchard

Jeanne Downs

Kathie Steinberg

Also:

Paul Stein

Superintendent

Brad Crozier

Assistant Superintendent

Susan Bottan,

Business Administrator

Marlene Dodyk

Director of Student Services

Finance Committee:

Nancy Funkhouser, Chair

Dave Watkins, Vice Chair

Carol Martin

Gordon Cliff

Bill Steinberg

Tom Abdella

Vice Chair Barb Fletcher convened the Regular Session at 7:02 P.M. and noted that the meeting is being recorded by WayCAM.

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

Juliette Fay commented on school start times noting that research has become stronger in this regard. Performance in academics and mental, emotional, and physical health improves when kids get the sleep they need. She referred to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey at Wayland High School that shows 35% of students are stressed and 5% have attempted suicide. Juliette recognizes the many reasons that would make this change difficult and asked the School Committee to consider this matter seriously, as it’s about what is best for the kids.

John Flaherty agreed with the first comments stating that Wayland could take the lead in the area of school start times.

2. **Consent Agenda (taken out of order):**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

* Wayland Public Schools Payroll warrant, dated December 9, 2015, in the amount of $1,354,270.58
* Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables warrant, dated December 14, 2015, in the amount of $204,104.41
* Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Student Activities warrant, dated December 14, 2015, in the amount of $22,437.65

(b) Acceptance of Gift:

* WHS Donation from Men’s Wearhouse Cash for School Program

(c) Approval of Minutes:

* Regular Session of November 2, 2015
* Special Session of November 9, 2015
* Special Session of November 10, 2015

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the Consent Agenda with the November 2, 2015 and November 10, 2015 Minutes as written and November 9, 2015 as amended.

3. **School Policy Matters (taken out of order):**

(a) Provide Policy Subcommittee Update:

Jeanne noted that the Policy Subcommittee is meeting with the support organizations on December 16th. She commented that many policies have been reviewed and some will be put out for public comment as noted in the press release given to the Town Crier. Kathie Steinberg thanked the Policy Subcommittee for its hard work in this regard.

4. **Administrative/Procedural Matters (taken out of order):**

(a) Discussion of Warrant Articles and Schedules for Annual Town Meeting Scheduled for April 7, 2016:

As discussed at the Finance Subcommittee, Barb informed the School Committee that it will have one warrant article for spring Town Meeting related to the Professional Development/Curriculum revolving funds as recommended by Jim Toomey. The statute related to these two revolving funds would be 53E½ requiring Town Meeting vote. Mark Lanza will draft the warrant language for review by the Finance Subcommittee and School Committee. Brad is developing budgets for Professional Development and Curriculum programs. The deadline to submit the warrant article is January 15, 2016.

(b) Continued Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve and Authorize Chair to Sign Contract with MCC for Student Activity Account Online Payments:

Susan provided the School Committee with a copy of the MCC contract and Mark Lanza reviewed it for form. Moving forward with this contract will allow all student activity account payments to be made online. This payment process will be phased in and completed by the Spring of 2016. Susan described the difference between MCC and UniPay, noting that the process will run more efficiently with MCC. It will especially ease the process for teachers when planning field trips. Also, the town uses the vendor MCC for its tax payments. Susan will be meeting with MCC in early January regarding training for staff.

*Ellen arrived at 7:15 p.m.*

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Donna Bouchard, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve and authorize Chair Ellen Grieco to sign the contract with MCC for student activity online payments as presented tonight.

*The Finance Committee joined the School Committee at 7:19 p.m.*

5. **Special Matters:**

(a) Superintendent’s Recommended FY17 Budget Presentation, and the School Committee will be Joined by the Finance Committee:

Paul began by announcing that the Budget Book and the supplementary information regarding the Personnel Budget are posted online. He thanked Susan Bottan for an extraordinary job in preparing all the budget information.

The FY17 recommended budget represents the goals actualized, reflecting what happens in the school system. The first part of the budget came from the long range planning process beginning with the School Committee Summit that included five areas: Raising the Bar, Enhancing the Curriculum, Promoting Health and Wellness, Employing Technology, and Exploring Early Childhood Education. These areas help to define the system- wide goals and the budget.

In terms of the District-wide HEART Goals, Paul noted that the strategic objectives have changed again this year, especially regarding the Exploration goal in the areas of Early Childhood Education, Student Information System, Technology Plan, World Language K-6, and Full Day Kindergarten.

Paul reviewed how the recommended budget is developed. He, along with the administrators, begins by making sure that the budget will support level services with funds from the current year’s. The priorities are reviewed in preparation for moving items in or out of the budget or shifting from one place to another, keeping in mind the fiscal restraints and the FinCom Budget Guideline of no more than a 2.5% overall increase for both the town and schools. This represents an increase for the School Department of $918,000. Finally, certain unmet needs from the FY16 budget are again considered for FY17.

Paul identified the components and drivers of a Level Service Budget that include contractual obligations, utilities, transportation and enrollment. He noted that a 10th kindergarten class will be needed in September 2016; however, there are anticipated savings in utilities as a result of the solar panel installations. Taking all savings and increases into consideration, it represents a 2.99% total increase or $1,096,208 over last year’s budget and totals $37,815,439.

Paul’s overall theme for his recommended budget is “Thriving in Place.” This represents Wayland’s high ranking among other districts and the high levels of achievement in academics, athletics, and Fine Arts, all indicating that Wayland schools are thriving. There is a strong sense of community in the schools despite the fiscal restraints.

Paul reviewed the reductions that are built into his recommended budget to allow the implementation of other priorities that have been identified. Some, but not limited to, include 0.6 FTE at the high school, 0.6 FTE at the 8th grade level, a 0.65 FTE kindergarten classroom aide in the new Fall 2016 class, and kindergarten classroom supplies and equipment. All of the reductions indicate a savings of $205,208. In response to a question regarding the music fees, Susan explained that expenses related to the instrumental music program are reduced by charging more to the revolving account.

Paul introduced a cost neutral proposal that includes extending the WHS computer lease one year for a one-time savings of $139,000. This savings would allow the district to install and implement a new Student Information System, restore a system administrative position to full time from a 0.6 FTE, and will provide funds for computer repair and replacement. In addition, and brought back from last year’s recommended budget, Paul added a 0.5 FTE Claypit Hill Assistant Principal. As a result of the Special Education Assessment done this year and a recommendation by the Inspector General’s office, Paul included a 0.5 FTE Assistant Student Services Director in response to the recent Special Education study. Paul elaborated further on the job description, which would also include overseeing the finances of the METCO department. These two positions total $106,000.

Finally, Paul reviewed the unmet needs that he would like the School Committee to consider in its budget deliberations. Paul recommended a budget resulting in a total increase of 2.79% or $1,024,000 for a total budget of $37,743,231. However, to stay within the budget guideline of 2.5%, the addition of the two new administrative positions would have to be eliminated.

Donna asked about the money in FY15 that was turned back to free cash and if there was an accommodation for an adjusted FY17 budget. Paul noted that it was not applied to the FY16 budget. A discussion ensued regarding the increase in utilities, which may impact any projections of surplus going forward, and how it affects the FY17 recommended budget.

The Finance Committee asked questions regarding the FY17 recommended budget. Paul’s commented on the unmet needs that have appeared in budgets for two years or more. In regard to the .5 FTE for an Assistant Principal at Claypit Hill, Paul noted that this position will be difficult to fill given the half time position. Paul described his thought process for the 3 elementary schools in terms of this position if it was a full-time position.

Other areas addressed were:

* The $12,000 cut in kindergarten for equipment and supplies
* The district’s utility expenses and increase in delivery charges
* Technology infrastructure replacement cycle at the High School
* 6.89 FTE increase in personnel
* Personnel expense increase related to the teachers’ contract

Paul encouraged the Finance Committee to send him or Susan additional questions and a Q & A will be issued.

Barb asked the Finance Committee how they arrived at the 2.5% guideline. Nancy Funkhouser responded in terms of the thought process in reaching the guideline. The Finance Committee agreed that it was their responsibility to ask for a budget that the School Committee was comfortable in presenting and supported the needs necessary to operate the schools, keeping in mind that there is an overall 2.5% town-wide increase. In Nancy’s opinion, the Superintendent’s recommended budget has achieved the FinCom’s request. Other members added to this discussion in terms of how the guideline was determined.

(b) Discussion and Review of Budget Schedule and Budget Guidelines:

The School Committee and Finance Committee will meet on January 21st at which time the School Committee will present its FY17 budget.

(c) Identification of Materials Needed for Budget Review:

Ellen asked the Committee to review the Budget Book and send questions and requests for additional materials regarding the budget review. Barb will work with Susan on a timetable for submitting questions in preparation for the Committee’s meetings with Department Heads.

Donna asked about the possibility of tracking a ten-year enrollment history for the elementary schools, Middle School, and High School, including the total FTEs for Regular Ed teachers for each of those years. Rather than hiring more administrators, she would prefer to invest the money in teachers to avoid overcrowded classrooms. A discussion ensued regarding class size past and present.

6. **Educational Matters:**

(a) Receive and Possible Vote to Accept FY2016 School Improvement Plans for Claypit Hill School, Happy Hollow School, Loker School, Middle School, and High School:

The School Committee reviewed the School Improvement Plans. Paul commented that there is tremendous coordination between levels and the three elementary principals are all working toward the same goals, while definite differences remain between the buildings in terms of the initiatives on which the principals are working. Paul described the process that the Principals undertake. It begins with creating the system-wide goals as an administrative team with Paul.

Barb asked why the Technology Plan was not mentioned in the elementary School Improvement Plans as it was in the High School and Middle School SIP’s. Paul noted there is more technology being used at the secondary schools. However, technology at the elementary level is coordinated more centrally. A discussion followed on the schools’ distribution of these reports.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to accept the FY16 School Improvement Plans for Claypit, Happy Hollow, Loker, the Middle School and High School and distribute through the respective List Serves the FY16 SIPs for the five schools.

(b) Superintendent’s Report, including Curriculum Spotlight #6:

There was no Superintendent’s Report.

*Curriculum Spotlight #6: OWL – Organic World Language*

This presentation is Part 2 of looking at World Languages in terms of proficiency based learning and how World Languages has changed in Wayland. The OWL methodology is focused on community, is empowering and student-centered, is focused on communication skills, and redesigns the classroom structure.

Two brief examples of Circle Activities were shown. Paul described what was taking place within these circle activities. They are fun, the students are actively engaged, and there is nowhere to hide.

The five goals of the OWL methodology:

* The language is used 100% of the time.
* Takes away the fear of being in a second language environment.
* Encourages taking risks even if mistakes are made.
* Teaches how to infer and circumlocute (speak in a roundabout way using the language).
* Encourages participation and becoming part of a community.

Characteristics of Proficiency Based Learning which are part of OWL:

* Activities are entirely in the target language.
* Designed to overcome students’ reluctance to speak.
* Textbooks are only used in the class as a reference.
* There are no translations, except when there is a need to clarify something in context.

In summary, Paul noted that community becomes very important in terms of a safe environment in which the students learn that it is okay to make mistakes and take risks. They are “playing with language” creating a more fun activity in which there is no scripted curriculum. Paul explained how Wayland teachers have approached this concept, including the Circle Activity.

The presentation was culminated with a three-minute video from the OWL organization.

(c) Discuss Possible Topics for School Staff Members to Present at Future School Committee Meetings, including Assessment and Testing, Chinese Language Program, English and Writing Curriculum, and Ramp Up Courses:

The School Committee discussed possible topics that it would like to see presented at future meetings by school staff. Paul noted that Ramp Up Courses will be discussed with the Committee on January 4th. Another area suggested was an update on the Three-Year Technology Plan. Assessment and Testing, the Chinese Language Program, the English and Writing Curriculum, the use of surveys, and Flipped and Blended Classrooms were also included in the discussion in terms of identifying specific areas related to each topic that the Committee would like to focus.

7. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Discussion and Review of Wayland School Community Programs Budget for FY17 and Use of Surplus Funds:

Barb commented that Pat Keefe met with the Finance Subcommittee and provided additional information about other school districts who offer programs similar to Wayland’s BASE program. Pat provided recommendations for the use of the program’s surplus funds and a potential fee increase for the enrichment programs. Barb encouraged the School Committee to review the public documents posted for the last Finance Subcommittee meeting. Barb noted that Susan and Pat will work together to revise the budget detail and narrative for Pat’s recommendations. The School Committee will review the detail during its budget deliberations in January. In terms of the surplus funds, Susan will consult with Jim Toomey and the Department of Revenue to confirm that what Pat is recommending for the surplus funds is possible.

A discussion ensued regarding suggestions to use the surplus funds, such as using them for a one-time expense or for items that will increase the budget year after year. However, after confirmation from Jim Toomey and the DOR, the Finance Subcommittee will discuss Pat’s priorities, such as capital expenses or financial assistance, again before bringing back to the School Committee for a vote.

Also discussed was the possibility of offering financial assistance to METCO students to participate in after school programs and the limited use of a METCO elementary late bus due to lack of funds.

(b) Review and Discussion of Registration Fee for The Children’s Way:

The Finance Subcommittee discussed the registration fee for The Children’s Way (TCW) and would like to understand how many families are on a waiting list and how many families do not get into the program. Katy Merrell, Director of TCW, provided information regarding registration fees of other preschools in the area. The Finance Subcommittee will have another discussion to determine if the registration fee can be refundable and will report back to the School Committee.

(c) Provide Finance Subcommittee Update:

There was no further update.

8. **Administrative/Procedural Matters (continued):**

(a) Update and Discussion on the Review and Evaluation of School Start Times:

Kathie distributed study materials and data that have been collected regarding school start times. She reviewed some of the highlights noted in this information. Current research indicates that the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Mass. Medical Society, and the CDC recommends a later start time for high school and middle school students. Kathie noted that there is a link provided for the 2004 Public School Report that contains more information in this regard. Other information gathered includes schools from the DCL and/or peer towns that have an 8:00 a.m. or later start time. The Massachusetts Association of School Committees has adopted a resolution to study later school start times, and the “Start School Later” chapter in Wayland has met with Paul and other departments to identify the challenges in implementing later start times. Kathie asked the School Committee to review the information, so that a decision can be made of whether to move forward proactively with this issue.

Paul commented that he met with the transportation coordinator in terms of the cost associated with this issue and the estimated pickup times for high school, middle school, and elementary students. For instance, elementary students would be picked up at 7:10 a.m. for a 7:50 start time and high school students would be picked up at 7:50 for an 8:30 start time. In Paul’s opinion, a change in school start times should benefit all students, not just secondary students. It was suggested conducting a survey to solicit feedback from parents. Also suggested was to ask the Wayland group to draft a list of pros and cons in changing school start times. A discussion ensued regarding some of the challenges and constraints related to this issue, including WTA 2016 negotiations.

(b) Continued Discussion of Possible Uses of School Property at Alpine and Holiday Roads:

Barb distributed information provided by the School Committee’s WRAP Committee liaison (Tom Abdella) that includes an inventory of school properties, a delineation of Alpine and Holiday Roads produced by the GIS system, and questions that the WRAP Committee would like answered in terms of a needs assessment, some of which will need input from Ben Keefe related to the aging school buildings. In Paul’s opinion, this type of assessment would require a consultant to study the buildings’ structure. Barb will ask Tom for additional clarification regarding the information provided. It was noted that Space Utilization Studies were done in the past for the elementary schools. Barb identified the areas that would be most significant in doing a needs assessment, noting that the questions are the first step of the WRAP Committee’s process.

(c) Follow-up on Letter Received from Inspector General:

As noted in the letter from the Inspector General, Donna questioned why the recommendation in the Powers Report regarding putting future fundraising money in a revolving fund only has not been implemented. She asked about additional safeguards and the accountability of those who have not followed through with this recommendation.

In response, Barb informed the School Committee that the Finance Subcommittee began a process in which policies have been revised to address these issues, Susan has held training sessions at the schools, and the auditors will be asked if additional steps should be taken in this regard. Paul commented that there is a goal in place and included in the process is to make sure that there is a clear understanding of the roles of the support organizations relative to fundraising, including the Boston Parent Council.

In terms of the METCO budgets, Barb stated that there will be more clarification in terms of where the funds are coming from and where the funds are going, similar to what is done with the special revenue funds. Donna referred to a personal checking account in which fundraised money was deposited. A discussion ensued to clarify the type of account that was opened and why it was opened. It was determined that it was a METCO – Boston Parent Council account, similar to PTO checking accounts. Again, Donna asked about employee accountability in opening a DBA account in support of a Wayland program. Barb commented that, going forward, guidelines and policies are in place specifically for school support organizations. Paul related the history of the establishment of this account.

Donna informed the Committee that, in her opinion, her question was not answered and she will be publishing a letter in the newspaper. Given that there were different levels of understanding of this situation, Donna was asked to be certain that the information she writes about is factual. A discussion ensued as to whether there are existing accounts that have been opened by employees that are or are not in compliance.

Paul responded that he is certain that, although the Boston Parent Council account is different, all the discretionary accounts were closed in 2011 as a result of the work by the Business Administrator and the Town Treasurer. In addition, Paul sent a memo to the administrators on January 13, 2012 asking them to confirm that there are no savings or checking accounts associated with any school activity, curricular or extracurricular, except for student activity accounts that have been authorized.

Ellen commented that enormous efforts, some by Barb and Donna, have been made to put in place more responsible management of school-related funds as a result of pre-existing activities many years ago. However, even today, blame still exists and it is inaccurate to accuse the School Committee/School Department to be poor custodians of school money. This topic will be on a future agenda to answer if there are pre-existing accounts and how the system will safeguard against them. Donna stated that she will withhold her letter to the newspaper for now.

(d) Update Regarding Open Meeting Law Matters:

Ellen updated the Committee on the September 2, 2015 OML complaint which is being reviewed by Kevin Manganaro of the Attorney General’s office. Per his request, Ellen sent him a copy of Jim Toomey’s letter. On November 6, 2015, Mr. Harris filed the complaint with the Attorney General’s office specifying that his request for documents was not answered within the ten days by Ellen, resulting in a violation of the Open Meeting Law. Ellen confirmed that she did not comply within the ten days.

Ellen noted that the September 6, 2015 and November 2, 2015 posted agendas contain a statutory citation mistake. Ellen explained further and noted that this may not be an OML violation in terms of the citation. Ellen will call the Attorney General’s office regarding the mistakes in the posted agendas. She will report back to the Committee in January.

Ellen reminded the Committee to think about who will be delegated to work on issues related to the Open Meeting Law.

(e) Continued Discussion of Proposed Topics and Titles for School Committee Communication Plan for the 2015-2016 School Year:

Jeanne noted that Mary Barber will draft a schedule to submit articles for the journalism students. Kathie will write an article for the January 4th meeting. WHS students will attend the January 4th meeting.

(f) Future Meeting Agenda Topics, including School Start Times, Schedule for Superintendent’s Evaluation for FY17, Review of Jamieson Lawsuit, and Review of Follow-up on SPED Report:

Jeanne asked the Committee to consider inviting Liz McGonagle from The Education Cooperative (TEC) to talk about its programs.

The budget schedule was discussed, including the School Committee’s vote for a recommended budget that will be presented to the Finance Committee. For the benefit of Kathie, Barb reviewed past budget schedules and processes. Barb noted that the Finance Subcommittee discussed the Budget Booklet that is distributed to the residents in terms of similar content to the Budget Book and the amount of work involved. Thus, she suggested that the Committee think about other options in getting the budget information out to the community.

Donna informed the School Committee that she visited Adam Simm’s office recently to read the depositions related to the Jamieson lawsuit. In total there are six depositions, but she was only able to read about 1¼ within a seven hour period.

9. **School Committee’s Report and Concerns:**

(a) Discuss and Potentially Vote to Approve Proposal Related to Time Management, Conduct of Meetings and Delegation of Matters:

This agenda item was passed over.

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

None.

11. **Comments from the Public:**

John Flaherty asked the School Committee to spend more time talking about curriculum and other things that benefit the children instead of discussing OML complaints and other issues that contribute to discord among Committee members. He referred to a statement by Ellen Grieco in which she stated that she received an award from him relative to being a supporter of the First Amendment. He explained the purpose of the award at that time and

questioned whether it still holds true today for the Committee, given what he claims to be just the opposite as it relates to honesty and transparency, OML issues, and placing limits on the time for public comment.

Tom Sciacca agreed that the School Committee should spend more time discussing curriculum. On a different topic, Tom was very surprised at the utilities increase and, in his opinion the delivery charge doesn’t explain the increase. He commented that the anticipated installation of the solar panels on school property will save the district on energy and delivery charges. Tom noted that the Energy Committee will meet in mid-January and will have a discussion in this regard to possibly better understand the increases.

Regarding school property on Alpine and Holiday Roads, Tom had a vague recollection that Alpine Road was deemed too small to build a new school. Therefore, he suggested that the School Committee let the property go, since there may not be any use for it. Finally, Tom is interested in the new fall kindergarten class of about 12 students. He commented on the benefits of small class sizes less than 17 students, as it can fundamentally change teaching in smaller classes.

12. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Barb Fletcher, the School Committee voted (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 10:48 p.m. for the purposes of continuing discussions regarding strategy with respect to healthcare with WTA, WESA, Custodial and Food Service Workers, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3), as such discussion in open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee and an Executive Session is necessary to protect the bargaining position of the School Committee, and approving minutes from prior executive sessions, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22, for the following meetings: November 2, 2015 - #1 and #2 and November 30, 2015. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Roll Call** | **Yes** | **No** |
| Ellen Grieco, Chair | X |  |
| Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair  Donna Bouchard  Jeanne Downs  Kathie Steinberg | X  X  X  X |  |

The School Committee will be joined by Paul Stein, Superintendent of Schools, Brad Crozier, Assistant Superintendent, and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will reconvene in open session for the sole purpose of adjournment.

13. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Barb Fletcher, the School Committee voted unanimously

(5-0) to adjourn at 11:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk

Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Tom Sciacca, WVN/BUZZ

Kim Reichelt, Wayland

Jenny Silberman, Wayland

Jen Murray, Wayland

Juliette Fay, Wayland

Holly Landsittel, Wayland

Jen Pearlman, Wayland

Redo Yosef-Or, Wayland

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda & Backup Information

2. Superintendent’s Recommended FY2017 Budget Presentation

3. Memo regarding the FY2017 Operating Budget Process

4. FY2017 Budget Development Calendar

5. 2015-2016 School Improvement Plans

* Wayland High School
* Wayland Middle School
* Claypit Hill School
* Happy Hollow School
* Loker School

6. Metropolitan Communications, LLC (MCC) Contract

7. Points for Discussion with Boards, Commissions & Departments

8. Information regarding School Start Times

9. Request to Approve a WHS Donation from Men’s Wearhouse Cash for School Program

10. Regular Session Minutes of November 2, 2015

11. Special Minutes of November 9, 2015

12. Special Minutes of November 10, 2015

13. Executive Session Motion