

MINUTES – FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE OF Wayland School Committee
October 10, 2014

A meeting of the Finance Subcommittee of the Wayland School Committee was held on Friday, October 10, 2014, at 1. P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present:

Donna Bouchard
Barb Fletcher

Also:

Susan Bottan
Business Administrator
Leisha Simon
Director of Technology
Carol Martin
Finance Committee's Liaison for the Schools

The meeting was convened at 1:15 p.m. and announced that the meeting could not be recorded because there were no working CDs available.

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

There were no public comments or written statements.

2. **Regular Matters:**

(a) *Continued Discussion of Finance Committee's FY16 Budget Guideline, including Clarification about Definition of Unmet Programming or Service Needs:*

Barb and Carol Martin, the Finance Committee's Liaison for the Schools, provided clarification about the definition of "unmet programming or service needs" as stated in the Finance Committee's FY16 guidelines. Unmet program or service needs means that if prior budget levels have hampered our ability to meet the needs of the schools, these expenses should be included in a separate schedule. Examples included the Tech position at the High School or the replacement of teacher computers not funded by the FY15 Budget.

(b) *Review of FY16 Budget Timeline:*

Barb will work with Carol to finalize the FY16 Budget Timeline now that the Board of Selectmen has set a date for the 2015 Annual Town Meeting. The timeline will include the Finance Committee earlier in the process, by inviting them to the Superintendent's presentation of the FY16 Budget to the School Committee. Susan reported that she met with the Town Administrator and the Town Finance Department Heads. A concern was raised about the timing of the submission of the write-ups for the warrant articles and the School Committee's Hearing and approval of the budget. These dates will be considered when finalizing the timeline and this topic will be added to the next meeting's agenda.

(c) *Continued Discussion of Possible Options for Conducting an Assessment of the Elementary School Buildings:*

Barb reported that the School Committee asked Jeanne Downs to reach out to the members of the Permanent Municipal Building Committee for their input into this process. Donna will also speak with the architect who conducted the space utilization study of the elementary schools to learn more about cost, timing and scope of such an assessment. Barb reported that she spoke with Lea Anderson, the former Chair of the High School Building Authority, to understand the process and cost of the visioning exercise conducted for the High School project. Barb distributed the proposal submitted by Frank Locker for the High School visioning exercise with an estimated cost of \$55,000.

Carol noted that she confirmed with the Finance Committee that the purpose of its reserve funds is for "emergency purposes", which she believes this assessment would not fall under. However, she noted that if the School Committee decides to pursue this assessment this fiscal year, the Committee should request the funds now rather than wait.

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(d) *Continued Discussion of FY16 Technology Capital Requests:*

The Finance Committee will review the School's capital requests at its next meeting, scheduled for October 15th. Donna will attend the meeting on behalf of the School Committee. Leisha Simon, the Technology Director, will attend for the technology capital request discussion. However, John Moynihan will not attend for the building capital requests.

Leisha reported that the Technology Task Force plans to meet on Tuesday, October 14th, to continue its review of the technology capital requests. Leisha developed the CIP for the Loker rewiring capital request based on State standards, the requirements for PARCC testing and the standards established with the new High School facility. She questioned whether the \$50,000 network capital request should be funded as an operating expense or as a capital request. The Subcommittee agreed that this question should be discussed with the Finance Committee on October 15th.

The Subcommittee also considered two other related topics: 1) how technology should be funded since the Town and School departments have merged (e.g. data center, building based networking) and 2) whether the replacement of equipment should be funded all at once or over a several year period. Susan and Leisha agreed to work with Brian Keveny, (Town Finance Director) and John Senchyshyn (Human Resources Director) or Nan Balmer, (Town Administrator) to develop a recommended funding proposal for operating expenses and capital requests for Town and School technology.

The Subcommittee further discussed the Loker rewiring capital request. Leisha noted that the Technology Task Force will assess if there is a need to complete this request in FY16 or whether it can be deferred, given that the goal is to keep the infrastructure ahead of the devices. The assessment of the elementary school buildings will also be considered in the Technology Task Force's review of this capital request.

On a related note, the Subcommittee discussed the capital request to upgrade the phones in the elementary and middle schools. It was clarified that the rewiring of Loker and the Middle School needs to be completed prior to upgrading the phone equipment. The rewiring of the Middle School is currently not planned until FY17. Therefore, Barb will amend the CIP for the upgrade of the phone equipment to only include the elementary schools for FY16. In addition, Barb will discuss with Paul Stein the issue of safety as it relates to this request and Donna will ask the architects who conducted the space utilization study about any existing standards for phone equipment in classrooms.

(e) *Continued Discussion of Policy for Revolving Account Balances, including Review of Draft Policy and Account Balances:*

Barb distributed a copy of a draft policy for Fee Based funds. It was clarified that this policy is intended for ongoing purposes rather than to address prior account balances. Questions were raised regarding the last bullet of the draft policy, whether balances that exceed the 10% threshold can be used for "reinvestment into the operations of the program".

With regard to prior account balances, Susan noted that she met with Pat Keefe, the new head of the Wayland School Community Programs, to explore any gaps that may exist in the current program offerings. Donna expressed a preference for returning prior account balances to the taxpayers and noted that program offering gaps should be included in future operating budgets. Barb expressed an interest in understanding the program offering gaps and also the appropriate uses for prior account balances. She will provide the Finance Subcommittee with a letter received from the Department of Revenue that describes the appropriate uses for prior account balances. If the letter doesn't provide clarity, Susan will contact the DOR directly. This topic will be put on the next meeting's agenda.

(f) *Discussion of Powers and Sullivan Recommendations related to School Field Trips:*

Susan read the Powers and Sullivan recommendation related to school field trips. She described the procedures currently in place, which include the calculation of the cost per trip and the fee per child. Any surplus at the end of the field trip is put toward "tripships", such that the ending balance is zero. She also noted that the current Middle School tripship balance is approximately \$7,000. She plans to speak with

the Middle School to better understand the balance. She also plans to confirm with Melanson and Heath that collecting funds for Tripships in this way is appropriate. Susan created a budget form to be used for field trips to more accurately estimate field trip costs. The Subcommittee agreed that the schools will work with the new budget form and the new Student Activity Account guidelines through this school year. Field trips will then be reviewed at the end of the year to determine if any further improvements need to be made to the reporting of field trips.

(g) Review of Follow Up Information from Prior Finance Subcommittee Meetings:

Invoices from Purchase of Elementary School Furniture

Susan provided the Subcommittee with the invoices from the purchase of the elementary school furniture this fiscal year. She noted that the vendor, WB Mason, is on the state approved list and, therefore, this purchase does not require a bidding process. Based on Carol's recommendation, Susan will follow up with Pat Morris to determine if it is appropriate to close out this furniture capital request, as well as any other outstanding capital accounts.

Information from Peer Communities regarding Reporting/Approval of Staff Exchange by School Committees

This item was tabled until the next Finance Subcommittee meeting

Information regarding Establishing a School Revolving Account for High School Transcripts

Susan reported that \$6,200 in transcript charges had been collected during FY14 and turned over to the Town. She noted that the School Committee had discussed this topic at a meeting in June, 2013 and had referenced MGL Chapter 74, section 34A, student activity accounts, as a possible statute for these charges. However, Barb noted that she remembers the prior Business Administrator had determined that transcript charges are not considered fees and, therefore, could not be deposited into student activity accounts. Susan will contact the Department of Revenue to clarify whether these charges can be considered fees and can be deposited into student activity accounts.

3. Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda was passed over.

4. Comments from the Public:

Carol Martin requested that the Finance Subcommittee share the draft policy for Fee Based funds with her and she will provide her comments to the Subcommittee.

5. Future Agenda Topics

The Subcommittee agreed to hold its next meeting on Friday, September 24th, at 1PM.

Future agenda topics will include a review of utility expenses at the High School, the FY15 Q1 Financial Report, the school department's practices around managing inventory of equipment, and enrollment projections. Barb agreed to follow up with Anne Harris, a member of the Energy Committee, about gathering utility information for the High School. Barb will also speak with Ellen Grieco about putting the FY15 Q1 Financial Report on the November School Committee meeting.

6. Continued Discussion of Process for Identifying OPEB Eligible Staff Being Paid through School Revolving Accounts and Grants:

This topic was inadvertently skipped over earlier and was addressed at this point in the meeting. Susan reported that Reid Lyons has completed the review of the remaining funds for which the Subcommittee is considering allocating OPEB costs. She noted that this task was very time consuming even when trying to compile basic information. This topic will be placed on a future agenda.

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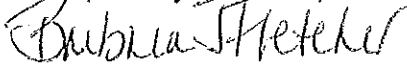
7 **Agenda Topic Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair**

Susan reported on the recent issue regarding the 2012 W-2 information. When trying to resolve a 2012 reporting issue for one staff member, the Town inadvertently sent a file with information for the entire staff to the IRS and the IRS overwrote the original file. The Town is working to resolve this matter. A communication was sent to all town and school employees. At this point, the schools do not need to take further action.

8. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Donna Bouchard, seconded by Barb Fletcher, the School Committee voted unanimously (2-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Barb Fletcher
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Draft FY16 Budget Timeline
3. Locker Visioning Proposal for High School
4. Draft FY16 CIP for Locker Rewiring Capital Request
5. Draft Fee-Based Fund Policy
6. Draft FY14 End of Year Report for Revolving Accounts
7. Invoices for Purchase of Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow Furniture