

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session – January 15, 2015

A Regular Meeting and Budget Work Session of the Wayland School Committee were held on Thursday, January 15, 2015, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Ellen Grieco, Chair
Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair
Malcolm Astley
Donna Bouchard
Jeanne Downs

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent

Susan Bottan
Business Administrator

Marlene Dodyk
Director of Student Services

Also:

Patricia Keefe, WSCP Director
Cheryl Fertig, The Children's Way Director
Cheryl Judd, Director of Food Services
Mabel Reid-Wallace, METCO Director

Chair Ellen Grieco convened the Regular Session at 7:00 p.m.

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

Cheryl Fertig, Director of The Children's Way for the past 18 years, made a statement about the School Committee's discussions surrounding The Children's Way (TCW) and other fee-based programs. While Cheryl appreciates and respects the Committee's dedication and commitment, she feels that statements made over the past 18 months have weakened the staff's morale and has had a negative impact on the integrity of these programs. She gave a brief history of the excellence of the program. Cheryl presented some of the 30 TCW teachers to the Committee, and noted that they represent a unique longevity of service to the program. Cheryl continued to cite many distinguishing factors about The Children's Way and its staff that creates an environment of trust and respect, as well as an unmatched partnership with parents. Finally, Cheryl asked the School Committee to make its decisions in the framework of the Wayland Public Schools goals and values.

Maura Feldman commented on the WSCP programs – The Children's Way, BASE, Pegasus, and Global Languages. She noted that there are many factors that contribute to these valuable programs and they create a community that is warm, welcoming, real and supportive.

Gretchen Lutz, Early Childhood Coordinator for the past 7 years and The Children's Way (TCW) inclusion coordinator for the past 18 years, commented about the history and the impact of the fee-based programs in Wayland. Gretchen noted that she was the founding Director of TCW in 1984, and she and the entire staff have worked hard and hand-in-hand with the Wayland Public Schools. High quality care is always provided and Gretchen truly believes in the value of these programs.

A resident since 1991, Margo Melnicove came with a similar message that she gave to the School Committee at a past meeting, but noted that she comes with a new sense of urgency. For the purpose of reducing the budget, Margo offered ideas and suggestions that would not affect the education of students. She commented that homes of lesser value jumped 15 to 22% in value, while homes with greater value only increased by 10%. Thus, taxpayers who least can afford it are bearing the increases in the school budget. Margo asked the School Committee to work together to make Wayland affordable.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session – January 15, 2015

Ellen read several emails from TCW parents regarding the quality and value of the program, as well as their personal experiences.

Malcolm spoke to the audience regarding the process of public comment.

As a public comment, Malcolm noted that Committee members speak as individuals. The Committee engages in much dialogue and a majority of three votes is enough to reach a decision, even though members may not agree on all issues. Malcolm commented that, as part of the process, it is the Committee's job to consider all financial alternatives no matter the end result.

2. **Budget Work Session/Financial Matters:**

(a) Budget Work Session/Financial Matters:

Review of Budget for The Children's Way:

Cheryl Fertig, Director of The Children's Way, responded to the School Committee's questions regarding the budget of The Children's Way (TCW). Cheryl noted the changes in the budget this year and the assumptions regarding the projections going forward.

Cheryl pointed out the change in salary for the TCW Director due to retirement; however, all other salaries remain constant. Cheryl commented that the staffing changes from year to year are based on enrollment numbers and the needs of the students. In terms of other contracted services or extraordinary maintenance, Cheryl listed the ongoing maintenance at TCW in recent years adding that overhead costs are significant and have a huge impact on the program. Susan noted that for the past three years (2013, 2014, and 2015), the program is expected to spend \$90,000 from the revolving account for extraordinary maintenance. As Cheryl had stated in the past, she confirmed that it is important to keep a reserve of \$50,000, even though it is not within the 10% accounting recommendation. Further, TCW provides food and supplies, including food for cooking projects, replaced aging equipment, and incurred a one-time expense for computers in FY14 and FY15. In terms of utilities (electric and gas), Susan commented that 10% of the electricity for the town building is allocated for TCW, and there has been an increase of about 12% for electricity and 10% for gas.

Susan spoke to fringe benefits as the big budget driver in TCW budget, and the delta between 2014 and 2015 is 38%. The actual cost in 2014 was \$150,000 and is projected to increase to \$208,000 for 2015. Cheryl elaborated on the allocation of benefits related to some staff. A discussion ensued in terms of the number of staff and FTEs at The Children's Way. Considered a huge burden for the program, Cheryl noted that TCW's OPEB contributions include \$25,000 retroactive for the next 11 years plus the annual contribution of \$8,860 per year.

Cheryl pointed out that beginning in FY12 there was a big change in the budget due to the change in allocation of the WSCP staff, the salary for the custodian, and the unanticipated OPEB costs. Cheryl commented that the tuition costs for TCW are comparable with JCC and Creative Preschools.

Ellen left the meeting at 7:49 p.m.; returned at 7:51 p.m.

Further, for the first time in three years, tuition rates were increased by 5%. However, TCW does not want to price itself out of the competition. In terms of capital repairs, tuition cannot be raised high enough to cover these costs.

In response to a question regarding the length of the school day and the level of responsibility in terms of education, Cheryl commented on the enrollment process and age groupings of children, the hours and staffing of the full and half day programs, and the extended program hours (until 4, 5 or 6:00). Cheryl commented on the benefits and enhanced experience of the extended day program for families. Gretchen Lutz explained age appropriate and developmentally appropriate placement for 2 and 3 year olds.

A member of the audience, also a daycare provider, spoke to the importance of the daycare provider aspect of the program for parents who work.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session – January 15, 2015

Cheryl explained the application process in terms of current families and new families. She also addressed the process for special education students. There is a waiting list for next year of about 25. Cheryl was asked about other preschools in the area in terms of their program hours. She noted that the state regulation for preschools is 2 teachers for 20 children, which is different from TCW classrooms in terms of the goals of the children.

To address the projected program deficits, Cheryl was asked whether fundraising is an option going forward. Cheryl described the specific function of the Space Launch Foundation, which was run by TCW parents to raise \$10,000 per year to pay back the town-sponsored bond that was used to renovate the space in the town building specifically for TCW program. Cheryl believes that everyone needs to work collaboratively to address this issue.

In response to what The Children's Way budget does not support, Cheryl commented that the daily operation is in a good place. However, since TCW is a small non-profit, the cost of OPEB and huge maintenance costs are a severe challenge. Other areas that the budget does not support are teacher salaries comparable to the WTA, a dedicated indoor space when outdoor recess is impossible due to bad weather, and larger therapy spaces.

Joe Winkler, a TCW parent, commented that he is amazed with the TCW staff, as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of the program, both as a result of the staff.

Another parent commented on the projected deficit as being a real crisis for this program going forward and strongly feels that if this program could not sustain itself, it would be a huge loss for the community. She noted that parents do fundraise to enrich teacher and staff Professional Development.

Finally, Cheryl again commented on the hours of the program and the number of children in half day, full day and the extended day. Of the approximately 100 children enrolled, 30% stay until 3:00, 17 until 4:00, 10 or 11 until 5:00, and 5 or 6 until 6:00.

Review of Budget for METCO:

METCO Director Mabel Reid-Wallace was present in response to an earlier question regarding METCO staffing in Wayland compared to Wellesley's METCO program and if it made sense to combine the METCO Director's and high school liaison's position into one for the purpose of increasing the offset. Paul commented that because of the state's 9C cut to the METCO grant, \$11,000 was cut from this year's budget. In terms of next year, the state's METCO budget will be known in August.

Mabel was asked about the Wellesley staff to student ratio in comparison to Wayland's. Wellesley has approximately 65 more METCO students and operates with one less staff member. Mabel commented that each school district is different in terms of staffing, structuring, and its belief system, which makes it difficult to compare. Mabel noted that the primary goal of the program is to provide the support that the students need in order to be successful. In terms of Wellesley's decision to eliminate the high school coordinator and give those responsibilities to the Director, the METCO program is severely understaffed and is causing the remaining staff to work triple time.

Paul elaborated on Wellesley's staffing and noted that comparable districts do operate with a minimum of 5 total staff, addressing the need to have a dedicated person at each level. He confirmed that when he looked in to this, it was difficult to zero in on the specifics of the salary and staffing structures in different districts.

Historically, there was an elementary coordinator at each school, but a few years ago it was reduced to only one. Mabel believes that the current staffing can serve all the students and parents. Since she has been the Director, Mabel has raised almost \$400,000 for the program, unlike any other METCO program. Mabel also commented on how the METCO staff services all students, not just METCO students, as it is not a separate entity from the district. It's about team work for the purposes of advocacy, coaching, love and respect, and human dignity.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session – January 15, 2015

Mabel proudly noted that she received a plaque in recognition of the work she has done for the school district.

Mabel also addressed why there is only one bus monitor in comparison to other towns. The monitor rides on the elementary bus, and the middle school and high school students share a bus without a monitor. This is a result of budget cuts; however, there is a concern because there are students who have health and other issues that sometimes need to be addressed on the bus. She described the change in the discipline structure in terms of the students on the bus.

Review of Budget for Wayland School Community Programs:

Patricia Keefe, WSCP Director, was present to answer questions from the School Committee.

BASE:

Pat Keefe commented that BASE is expected to have a balanced budget for FY15. Once the OPEB catch up expenses are paid, the revolving account balance will be reduced, and then the annual OPEB payment will be made. In addition to explaining BASE salaries, Pat explained her salary in terms of the budget, including her salary for FY16. She reviewed the budget with the Committee in terms of transportation, food, cooking supplies, classroom supplies, phone, electricity and natural gas, course reimbursement, fringe benefits, refunds to families who decide not to sign up after all, employee training, and OPEB payments. Pat noted that fee waiver scholarships were added to the budget this year and have exceeded \$20,000.

Pat reviewed projected expenses for FY16, including the possibility of adding onto the kindergarten extended day from 12:30 to 3:00, if there is a need. Pat would like to research the option of working with a state agency Child Care Resources that provides funding for parents who are eligible for reimbursement of the fees for childcare. Pat commented that BASE is a quality program with a dedicated staff. However, some schools could use more staff due to challenges of mixed-age groupings of children and in terms of safety for these children. Pat is impressed with the continuity of the school day and dedication of the staff, including The Children's Way.

Pat elaborated on the purpose and process of Child Care Resources. This state agency helps low-income parents who are working and/or going to school and are in need of childcare. Reimbursements are given directly to the childcare provider. It is hopeful that this revenue source will be implemented for future years.

Pat explained the possible reversal of the policy for free tuition in terms of reimbursement. This would also eliminate the space issues for paid and free tuition students. Enrollment in some programs is maxed out.

A discussion ensued regarding staffing in terms of full and part time. Pat noted that some employees work for multiple programs. Regarding salaries, Pat commented that when hiring, she tries to stay within a staffing/enrollment ratio. It is only when the ratios increase and the income can cover the salary expense, will she consider a new hire. Susan responded to a question regarding fringe payments for BASE and The Children's Way.

Enrichment:

Enrichment programs include Global Language, tutoring, and all other enrichment programs. Twenty percent of the income for Global Language and tutoring is given back to Wayland Public Schools. Enrichment takes place in the afternoon and are taught by current and retired teachers. She explained the process for these programs, especially private vendors, in terms of a 20% reimbursement to the school district. Pat noted that it is difficult to project out from year to year because of the varied offerings.

In regards to a large amount of money in a revolving account from these programs, the School Committee must vote on a fee-based funding policy before the use of the funds is determined.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session – January 15, 2015

Pegasus:

Because this program crosses over two fiscal years, Pat explained how her salary is allocated between BASE and Pegasus. She noted that because of high salary expenses last year, they are working to correct that this year by restructuring some positions. Given that this is only a six-week program, field trips and transportation are the biggest expenses. Pat explained the Counselor in Training (CIT) program and the associated costs. She noted they are looking into charging the CIT's and, in turn, would offer a more structured supervisory experience for them. Because this program is seasonal, there are no OPEB costs charged to this program. Pat commented that her goal is not to tap into the reserve funds.

Paul praised Pat for her outstanding work since she has become the Director of WSCP, adding that she is thoughtful and analytic, great with kids, and has a musical therapy background.

Review of Budget for Food Services:

Director of Food Services Cheryl Judd was present to answer questions from the School Committee. Barb noted that Cheryl provided information of her operating food service costs as compared to peer communities. Barb provided the Committee with an update of the Finance Subcommittee's work regarding the food services budget. The Finance Subcommittee is also considering an assessment of the Food Service Program by Edvocate. Since Edvocate has conducted assessments in Sudbury, Wellesley, Dover-Sherborn, and Newton, they are in the process of securing those reports for further review by the Finance Subcommittee.

Review of Budget for Technology:

As a preface to this discussion, Barb commented that she is working with FinCom members, Carol Martin and Dave Watkins regarding some technology issues. Leisha and her staff have also been working for the town, and although these issues will not be settled by FY16, there is a need to identify technology staffing resources for the town and the schools. The second issue relates to the 1:1 devices and "teaching spaces" donated by the Wayland Public Schools Foundation (document cameras and interactive white boards) for which there needs to be an annual review of the sustainability of the equipment in order to arrive at a long range replacement program. Leisha spoke about the equipment and licensing issues at the high school.

Leisha commented that for now she and her staff are paid from the school budget, even though a good portion of their time is spent working for the town. However, going forward, assessments will have to be made to make an adjustment of the structure accordingly. A discussion ensued.

Ellen left the meeting at 9:40 p.m.; returned at 9:41 p.m.

To address the increase in software, Leisha commented that the district is using more web-based software and paying a yearly fee for the use of resources online, including general increases from the software companies. Leisha explained the difference between district software vs. school software, adding that the yearly licensing for Microsoft Office is divided among the five schools. Leisha gave examples of different software being used and the expenses associated with them. Leisha will provide a detailed spreadsheet of the district and school budgets to the Finance Committee.

Review of Full Day Kindergarten:

Susan updated the Committee regarding the cost to families regarding Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) and how a projected fee was determined. Susan noted that she looked at the direct costs of FDK, which includes 35% of the teachers and TA's, 25% of custodial, and OPEB fringe benefits. Setting those costs aside, the indirect costs were calculated, such as administrative costs and services and supplies related to 35% of the FDK program. Susan described how the ratio costs for the afternoon programs were calculated. She also reviewed with the Committee spreadsheets for direct and indirect costs for all three schools. Information from the spreadsheets was transferred to a summary page showing that the revenue exceeded expenses. Susan noted that based on the methodology used, an adjustment for next year's tuition could be made of about \$500, as well as a possible modification to the tuition for the second half of this year.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session – January 15, 2015

Paul explained how the reconfiguration contributed to this adjustment in tuition. He added that the tuition this year was \$4,320 and could be under \$4,000 next year. Paul and Susan responded to a question of whether the school budget would have to absorb some of the costs for a nurse and transportation.

Gretchen Lutz commented that as the cost of FDK decreases and the cost of BASE increases, this could increase the number parents choosing FDK, which could impact the number of teaching staff. Paul explained the enrollment numbers for FDK and the issue of placement. Paul added that by totaling the indirect costs, the operating budget will be lowered by \$36,000.

A resident asked what the long term plan is in terms of offering only full day kindergarten in the future.

(b) Continued Discussion of Budget Drivers, Assumptions, Fees and Funding Sources, and Requests for Information:

Paul referred to a document containing answers to the questions 41-70 provided to the Committee, as well as the attachments associated with the answers. Paul also pointed to a document that lists the budget adjustments discovered over the last two weeks.

Susan detailed some of the budget adjustments and amounts that were added to homeless transportation, the admin assistant to the School Committee, an ELL Director position, the SPED consultant, and an ELL teaching assistant, all totaling about \$70,000. Susan also noted the amount reduced in the budget for a one-time WTA expense and the full day kindergarten indirect costs in the amount of \$71,540, for a differential of \$1,540 in the budget.

A discussion ensued regarding passing over agenda item 5(b) in Executive Session since Brad Crozier was not in attendance.

(c) Vote to Approve a Contract Award to WhiteWater, Inc., for the Operations & Management Services for the WHS Wastewater Treatment Plant:

Since a contract was not received from WhiteWater, Inc., this agenda item was passed over.

3. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

(a) Approval of the Fee-Based Fund Policy:

Barb commented that the Finance Subcommittee has revised the Fee-Based Fund Policy, which has also been reviewed by Jim Toomey. Mr. Toomey had no changes, except to cite the Mass. General Laws at the bottom of the document. Based on Mr. Toomey's suggestions, Barb pointed out the additions to the policy regarding year-end balances and indirect costs. However, Barb is recommending another change to the language regarding indirect costs, as these costs are not a part of the long-term obligations. Susan added that indirect costs are incurred in general and difficult to define and difficult to charge directly. A discussion ensued regarding this suggested language change and the language regarding OPEB payments.

The Finance Subcommittee will discuss this policy again at their next meeting.

(b) Discussion of a School Committee Charge to Form a Joint Committee on Concussions, including Possible Appointment of Malcolm Astley as the School Committee Liaison:

Malcolm commented that the effort to form a joint committee is being considered by the Board of Health, the School Committee, the Recreation Department, and youth sports programs. Ellen cited information from emails that she received from Cynthia Hill, a BOH board member. Ms. Hill's feeling is that the BOH is not ready to establish a joint committee, as she and Julia Junghanns, Director of the BOH, feels that this process is premature and is being rushed. They also think that this joint committee should be set up by the Board of Selectmen.

Malcolm gave an account of the meeting he attended and the School Committee discussed this further in terms of who should be on a joint committee and what its ultimate goal would be. The Committee

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session – January 15, 2015

reviewed the draft charge for language and possible revisions. Malcolm will revise again and bring back to the School Committee.

4. **Comments from the Public:**

A resident asked for visual budget numbers. Ellen responded that the budget presentation is online. Paper copies are also available to the public.

In response to the earlier discussion regarding The Children’s Way’s facility budget and competitive tuition with other preschools, Tom Sciacca related his daughter’s experience as head of the Early Education Program at the Framingham YMCA and noted that, in all probability, her facility costs were absorbed in the general budget. He also pointed out that some preschools are housed in churches and, in his opinion, they would not be responsible for those costs. As a member of the Energy Advisory Committee, Tom commented that the Committee recommended overhauling the entire energy system in the town building, but the Selectmen did not approve, even though the energy system was installed in the 1930’s. As a side note, the money allocated for the town building will now be diverted to Claypit Hill and Loker Schools towards energy savings. Tom explained the breakdown of electricity costs and stated that rates will rise considerably as of January 1.

5. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Barb Fletcher, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 10:39 p.m. to review the executive session minutes from previous executive session meetings listed on the meeting notice for possible declassification, as permitted by M.G.L. c. 30A, §22. Agenda item 5(b) will be passed over because the Committee is not prepared to discuss it. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Ellen Grieco, Chair	X	
Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair	X	
Malcolm Astley	X	
Donna Bouchard	X	
Jeanne Downs	X	

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

The School Committee will reconvene in open session to conduct regular matters as noted on the meeting notice.

6. **Regular Matters:**

(a) Possible Vote to Declassify Executive Session Minutes as Listed on the Meeting Notice:
Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted (4-1) (Donna voted no because she did not agree with changes made to one set of minutes) to declassify the executive session minutes with certain redactions as discussed in Executive Session for the following meetings: February 4, 2010, March 22, 2010, November 7, 2011, April 22, 2013, October 28, 2013, November 4, 2013, November 18, 2013, April 28, 2014, June 16, 2014, October 6, 2014, October 20, 2014, November 3, 2014, November 17, 2014, December 1, 2014, December 5, 2014, December 15, 2014.

7. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 11:03 p.m.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session – January 15, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:
See attached.

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. WSCP Budget Analysis & Projections for BASE and Pegasus
3. WSCP Enrichment Programs Actuals & Projections
4. Full Day Kindergarten Cost Allocation Summary
5. Full Day Kindergarten Cost Allocation Details
6. Pegasus Budget FY09 to FY16
7. The Children's Way Budget FY09 to FY18
8. Comparison for Food Service Expenses
9. Enrollment and Staffing Changes Impact
10. List of WHS Classes with Less than 18 Students
11. METCO Grant Configurations Comparison
12. Responses to Part 2 of Budget Questions
13. SPED Comparisons for Tuition and Transportation
14. Budget Adjustments to the FY16 Recommended Budget
15. Draft Policy for Fee-Based Funds
16. Draft Charge regarding Concussions