

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE Emergency Meeting – March 11, 2020

An Emergency Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 6:45 pm in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Jeanne Downs, Chair (participating remotely)
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair (participating remotely)
Nate Buffum (participating remotely)
Kim Reichelt (participating remotely)
Kathie Steinberg (participating remotely)

Also present were:

Arthur Unobskey, Superintendent
Parry Graham, Assistant Superintendent
Richard Whitehead, Director of Special Services

Jeanne called the meeting to order at 6:46 pm noting that the School Committee was convening due to the emergency situation of the COVID-19 virus and the possible need to close schools immediately.

1. Discuss COVID-19 Response and Possible Closure of Schools

Arthur informed the Committee of his thoughts concerning a two week closure of the schools due to the COVID-19 virus and his desire for the Committee's input. He noted, among other things, that both Loker and the middle school had been closed today for cleaning due to a parent's presumptive case of COVID-19, distance learning possibilities, and the input of the administrators regarding closing the schools. He also noted that the DESE Commissioner was not encouraging schools to close at this point. A discussion ensued regarding the need to close the schools and the timing of possibly closing the schools. Kim noted that the research points to the need to close schools before the first COVID-19 case appears in a school. Parry noted that if the schools were closed, a two week closure made the most sense. He did note, however, that once the schools were closed, there would need to be a good reason to reopen them and they could very well be closed longer than two weeks. There was concern raised by Committee members that closing the schools as of tomorrow was very short notice to families at this hour of the day.

Arthur asked each Committee member for their recommendation. While all Committee members agreed that a two week closure of the schools was a good idea and urged the closing, the closure start day recommended varied from tomorrow (Thursday) to Monday. Jeanne reminded the Committee and administrators that the choice to close the schools is legally the Superintendent's decision.

2. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Downs
Wayland School Committee