

# MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – February 24, 2020

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, February 24, 2020, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

*Present were:*

Jeanne Downs, Chair  
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair  
Nate Buffum  
Kim Reichelt

*Absent:*

Kathie Steinberg

*Also:*

Arthur Unobskey  
Superintendent

Parry Graham  
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead  
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan  
Director of Finance & Operations

*Also:*

Tricia O'Reilly, Happy Hollow Principal

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session in the School Committee Room at 7:07 p.m.; the meeting was recorded by WayCAM.

**1. Superintendent's Report:**

Arthur announced that he has appointed Tricia O'Reilly as the permanent Happy Hollow principal. She has been the interim principal for a few months and received overwhelming support for this appointment. Twenty-seven resumes were received and after a thoughtful and rigorous interview process by the search committee, three finalists were chosen. The three finalists spent a day in Wayland meeting with parents, students, and teachers.

Tricia O'Reilly thanked everyone for their confidence in her leadership. She is excited to call Happy Hollow her professional home.

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

Robin Sklar commented on the WHS AP Biology testing process in which students will receive extra points if the test is taken on a specific day, and, if not taken on that day, the students will be penalized by about 5 to 12 points which could affect the letter grade. Her concern is that students are going to school sick and are jeopardizing not only their health but the health and wellbeing of all concerned. Robin asked the School Committee to reconsider the policy.

**3. Special Matter – School Budget Hearing:**

**(a) Presentation of School Committee Recommended FY21 Budget:**

The Budget Hearing was opened at 7:17 p.m. The School Committee's voted a recommended FY21 budget of \$42,941,822, an increase from FY20 of \$1,022,072 or 2.44%. It will educate 2733 students which is 24 students more than last year by supporting the academic and social emotional growth of all students while respecting the fiscal constraints in Wayland. This budget does not include negotiated contract settlements as they are ongoing, nor does it include a \$150,000 reduction voted by the Finance Committee. In addition, this budget focuses on two district-wide UNITED goals – Elevating Achievement and Deepening Wellness and Skills and Insights.

Jeanne described the complete budget process starting with the Superintendent and the Administrative Council in May 2019. At their meetings after the Town Financial Summit, the administrators began with a zero based bottom up budget by identifying all needs, some of which are funded by grants. The identified core needs, however, total

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about \$1M. After the Superintendent presented his FY21 recommended budget in early December, several School Committee outreach meetings were held in January with building administrators and the Finance Committee after which the School Committee voted on its recommended budget and submitted to the Town.

Jeanne reviewed the enrollment projections for next year: Claypit Hill will increase by 11 students, Happy Hollow will lose 6 students, Loker will add 38 students, the Middle School will lose 15, and the High School will lose 4. In addition, Jeanne reviewed the contractual obligations and non-personnel and personnel expenses, new positions in the budget, two pilot programs, building maintenance, and other revenue sources, such as the METCO Grant, WPSF Grants, PTO Grants and fee-based programs. The list of unmet needs includes but is not limited to a high school social worker, part-time assistant principals at Happy Hollow and Loker, an administrative assistant for the facilities department, maintenance projects, and the elimination of a fee-based full-day kindergarten program.

After the budget process ended, the Finance Committee voted on January 30 to cut \$150,000 from the FY21 recommended school operating budget. This budget reduction is not supported by the School Committee. However, the Superintendent and the administrators met to come up with a list of reductions that would satisfy the Finance Committee's vote that includes reducing hardware, eliminating maintenance projects, reducing the FTE for the Spanish Immersion interventionist, reducing the FTE for the human resources administrative assistant, eliminating the anatomy and physiology additional elective section, reducing the curriculum and instruction budget, and eliminating the ClearGov data information subscription. Finally, Jeanne reviewed and explained the capital budget that includes the imminent capital projects being done but also defers other projects as voted by the Finance Committee.

Ellen conveyed that the school buildings are in need of much investment and when postponed, the costs increase dramatically. The School Committee spent a great deal of time discussing the capital budget, as the constant postponements are a serious concern of the Committee.

(b) Open Discussion regarding School Committee Recommended FY21 Budget:

Elizabeth Cullen spoke on behalf of the Spanish Immersion Parent Advisory Council. There are 60+ students, including her daughter, in the Spanish Immersion Program at Loker School. She thanked the School Committee for not supporting the reduction of a .5 interventionist to a .3 position and thanked the administrators for their commitment and passion. Concerned that the long-term success of this program will be at risk without a bi-lingual interventionist, she and the advisory council members are advocating for the full funding of this position. Ms. Cullen asked about the process going forward, particularly at Town Meeting.

Brian Jones thanked the parent council for their input and described the challenges to move forward with the Spanish Immersion program if hiring a .3 interventionist vs. a .5 and added that given the time allotted during the day, this person would not be very productive in his/her role and RTI would not be supported at a formidable level.

Anette Lewis commented that demographics don't address the out-of-district students attending the Wayland Public Schools, specifically the 81 children of staff which is a 70% increase over the past five years. Given that the schools are facing space issues, she asked the School Committee to address this matter in its policies going forward that would limit the children of staff including those children with special needs. In Ms. Lewis's opinion, the current policy for teachers is unfair to taxpayers, especially if additional classrooms and materials are needed. Jeanne responded to Ms. Lewis's concern in this regard.

Ms. Lewis asked who pays for staff benefits for those working in the WSPF grant pilot programs. According to Susan Bottan, there are no benefits packages for the two positions. Leisha reported that there are two IT positions (assistant administrator and network administrator) that were transferred to the town budget from the school budget.

Chris Ryan referred to page 7 of the budget booklet in regard to the delay of maintenance projects in FY20 totaling \$205,000 that are not considered capital projects. In his opinion, maintenance is a significant priority, but it continues to be delayed and unmet in the buildings. Mr. Ryan asked about the sense of urgency and timing regarding these projects.

*Ellen left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.*

Chris Ryan asked for clarification in the .5 FTE assistant principal at Claypit Hill in terms of adding another person or just adding to the time of the current assistant principal. He commented that assistant principals are typical in other

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towns. Mr. Ryan also asked for clarification in the Finance Committee's vote to reduce the school operating budget by \$150,000. Jeanne explained the Finance Committee's process and vote.

Chair Jeanne Downs closed the budget hearing at 8:05 p.m.

### 4. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Continued Review and Discussion of All School Budgets, including Budget Drivers, Assumptions, Fees and Funding Sources, and Requests for Information:

There was no discussion.

(b) Discussion and Possible Revote of FY2021 OPEB:

Susan Bottan distributed a revised OPEB chart, as the calculations have changed. She reviewed it with the School Committee, including the benefits that are charged to the four special revenue funds for a percentage of retirement, Medicare and health care benefits which total \$736,761 plus \$41,522 for OPEB for a grand total of \$778,283. Pegasus employees are not included in the calculations because they are part-time employees. The Committee must revote FY2021 OPEB contributions.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to approve the revised numbers for the OPEB annual contribution and transfer benefits from revolving funds as listed on Susan's handout.

(c) Discussion and Possible Vote of FY2021 Health Care Benefits Transfer from Special Revenue Funds:

This topic was discussed in 4(b).

(d) Review and Possible Vote on Position on Collective Bargaining (CC) and Budget Preparation (FF) Articles for Town Meeting:

Petitioners' Article CC allows the Finance Committee to be invited to collective bargaining with all town unions. The Personnel Board, Board of Selectmen and the School Committee all contributed to the comments in the article. Thus far, the Personnel Board does not support this article, the Board of Selectmen will decide at its meeting this evening, as will the School Committee. The Committee reviewed the comments in favor and those opposed in the article. The School Committee will take its vote when Ellen returns to the meeting.

Petitioners' Article FF moves the responsibility of the budget to the Board of Selectmen.

(f) High School Master Athletic Plan:

- Project Status:

The contractor has not confirmed the April date for the grand celebration of this project.

### 4. **Educational Matters:**

(a) Review of High School Math Data Request:

The School Committee discussed Kim Reichelt's math data request for the first quarter, as she would like to be more informed of the status of the policy of not returning math assessments to students. Kim would like a sense of those students who have moved down a level and on students' grade averages and to compare this year from prior years.

A discussion ensued in this regard and the concern of just how far the School Committee's responsibility goes in terms of curriculum matters and if enough time has passed in order to gather the necessary data. Kim noted her reasons for her request, adding that the School Committee may be able to provide additional support in some way. She added that a new procedure was put in place without implementing a pilot process first or providing pedagogical backup. In Kim's opinion she is representing all those parents who feel they don't have a voice in this matter. School Committee members expressed differing opinions in this matter. Arthur updated the Committee on the information he received in terms of grades and drop-downs and feels that this is a school-based decision. He also confirmed that Allyson Mizoguchi will respond to all parents who have concerns.

With Kim dissenting, the School Committee agreed not to ask for anything in this regard at this time.

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- (b) Review of TEC (The Education Cooperative) Annual Report and Amendments to TEC Collaborative Agreement:  
The School Committee reviewed TEC's Annual Report and amendments to its Collaborative Agreement. Jeanne noted that Medway will be joining the TEC collaborative and Wayland's yearly assessment will decrease.
- (c) Superintendent's Report:
- School Visits

Arthur reviewed with Klara Sands the 6<sup>th</sup> grade language transition. A group of 8<sup>th</sup> graders were trained to teach the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students a lesson in language to help them make a decision about their choice in Spanish, French, Latin, or Mandarin for next year. The students who are entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade next year have signed up online under the FAQ's. Foreign language is able to be added to 6<sup>th</sup> grade as the 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes that met five times a week will meet four times a week moving forward. This will also fit in with the Spanish Immersion program. Nate shared his positive experience with his 5<sup>th</sup> grader.

### 5. Policy Matters:

- (a) Review and Discussion of Policies:
- DBC – Budget Deadlines and Schedules
  - DBJ – Budget Transfer Authority
  - DGA – Authorized Signatures
  - JH – Student Absences and Excuses
  - JFABE – Educational Opportunity for Military Children
  - JFABF – Educational Opportunity for Children in Foster Care
  - EFDA – Charge and Collection of Payment for School Meals
  - BEDH – Public Comment at School Committee Meetings

As part of this process, Kim is working through all of the policies to be sure they are all addressed at some point. She updated the School Committee on the recommendations that the Policy Subcommittee made regarding Policies, DBC, DBJ, DGA, JH, JFABE, JFABF, EFDA, and BEDH. Those policies that will be put out for public comment are DBC, DBJ, and DGA. Kim, Nate and Arthur will discuss Policy JH further in terms of student absences during a Policy Subcommittee meeting.

Policies JFABE and JFABF will be added to the next meeting agenda. Richard added that as part of the DESE review cycle, including the Educational Stability Program Review, the information regarding homeless, military and foster children/families must be submitted to DESE by June.

- (b) Review of Policy for Possible Approval:
- IJOA – Field Trips

Kim put Policy IJOA out for public comment today.

Upon a motion duly made by Nate Buffum, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to put Policies DBC, DBJ, and DJA out for public comment.

### 6. Administrative/Procedural Matters:

- (a) Discussion of Superintendent and Student Presentations at School Committee Meetings:  
The School Committee discussed which topics they would like presented by students and Arthur in terms of what is being done relative to the district goals. There will be five-minute presentations prior to public comment.
- Kim suggested that public comment be added to the agenda at the conclusion of each meeting and/or hold a public forum at which the public can come and discuss anything in open discussion. Kim will propose a date after Town Meeting.
- (b) Review and Discussion of any Outstanding Document and/or Minutes Requests:  
None.
- (c) Review and Discussion of any Outstanding Open Meeting Law Matters:  
None.

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- (d) Discussion of School Committee Communications and Information for the Buzz:  
 Kim will submit a summary of tonight's meeting.

7. **Consent Agenda:**

- (a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:
- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated February 24, 2020, in the amount of \$378,226.24
  - Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Student Activities Warrant, dated February 24, 2020, in the amount of \$2,968.69
  - Wayland Public Schools Payroll Warrant, dated February 26, 2020, in the amount of \$1,550,040.46
- (b) Approval of Updated Financial Assistance Guidelines and Application Form for 2020-2021: Susan noted the changes she made to the forms.
- (c) Approval of Minutes:
- January 21, 2020
  - January 23, 2020

Upon a motion duly made by Nate Buffum, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to approve the Consent Agenda without the regular session minutes of January 21, 2020 and January 23, 2020.

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

None.

9. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to enter executive session #2 at 9:24 p.m. for purposes of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wayland Teachers Association (WTA), pursuant M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3) as discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee, discussing strategy with respect to litigation, Mabel Reid-Wallace v. Wayland Public Schools et al, MCAD Complaint, pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3) as discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the School Committee and discussing strategy with respect to and in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel, the Superintendent, pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(2). Agenda item 9c, the approval of executive session minutes, will be passed over. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Jeanne Downs, Chair	X	
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair	absent	
Nate Buffum	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Kathie Steinberg	absent	

The School Committee will be joined by Arthur Unobskey, Superintendent of Schools, Parry Graham, Assistant Superintendent, and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will reconvene in open session to complete the items on the agenda.

*Ellen returned to the meeting at 9:30 pm.*

*Arthur Unobskey, Parry Graham and Diane Marobella left the meeting at 9:57 p.m.*

9. **Financial Matters (con't)**

- (d) Review and Possible Vote on Position on Collective Bargaining (CC) and Budget Preparation (FF) Articles for Town Meeting:

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco and seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) not to support Article CC (Collective Bargaining).

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10. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Nate Buffum, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn at 10:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk  
Wayland School Committee

**Observers:**

Kate Sambuco, Wayland  
Elizabeth Cullen, Wayland  
Robin Sklar, Wayland  
Annette Lewis, Wayland  
Chris Ryan, Wayland  
Diane Burke, Wayland

**Corresponding Documentation:**

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. FY21 Finance Committee Capital Budget
3. FY21 Revoted CIP's and Five-Year Plan
4. Article D – OPEB Funding
5. Article CC – Finance Committee Participation in Collective Bargaining
6. FY21 Special Revenue Benefits, including Revised
7. FY21 TEC Annual Report
8. Policies: DBC, DBJ, DGA, JH, JFABE, JFABF, EFDA, BEDH, IJOA
9. Financial Assistance Forms
10. Executive Session Motion