

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – January 11, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held remotely on Wednesday, January 11, 2021, at 3:00 P.M. broadcast by WayCAM in the Wayland Town Building.

Present and participating remotely were:

Jeanne Downs, Chair
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair
Kim Reichelt
Chris Ryan
Kathie Steinberg

Also participating remotely:

Arthur Unobskey
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan
Director of Finance & Operations

Also:

Allyson Mizoguchi, WHS Principal
Betsy Mizoguchi, WMS Principal
Heath Rollins, Athletic Director

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the open session at 3:03 p.m. WayCAM recorded the meeting and it was livestreamed via ZOOM. The meeting was conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 health pandemic and according to the revised open meeting law that allows remote participation. A roll call was taken:

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

1. Superintendent Search:

(a) Update on Process and Search Committee:

Ellen updated the School Committee on the search process. The three finalist candidates are Jennifer Parson, Arcelius Brickhouse, and Omar Easy. The “Day in Wayland” schedule will be published as follows: Jennifer Parson on January 15, Arcelius Brickhouse on January 19, and Omar Easy on January 21.

In response to questions from the public about the Search and Screening Committee’s process, Ellen noted that the Committee conducted the search under Purpose 8 of the Open Meeting Law, which states that the screening of candidates is confidential and will remain confidential according to the confidentiality agreements signed by the Committee members. Upon recommendation of finalists by the Search and Screening Committee, the School Committee moves forward with the next phase of the interview process.

The School Committee discussed the “Day in Wayland” schedule as well as the role of the Committee members. The schedule will be posted in advance, and Ellen will provide the Committee with possible questions for the finalists during the one hour virtual meeting with the candidates. Jeanne described the search firm’s process to check references for the three finalists, and some members expressed their desire to call at least one reference for each candidate. The Committee agreed to pay up to \$500 of Arcelius Brickhouse’s travel expenses and discussed COVID protocols for each visit.

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

(a) Approval of Minutes: December 14, 2020

(b) Approval of Accounts Payables and Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated January 11, 2021, in the amount of \$1,061, 301.10.
- Wayland Public Schools Payroll Warrants (13) in the following amounts: \$222,237.40, \$239,822.81, \$243,044.53, \$1,489,768.58, \$1,681,104.74, \$1,534,395.62, \$1,531,716.95, \$1,542,412.85, \$1,702,009.81, \$1,549,462.24, \$1,551,743.55, \$1,565,606.38, \$1,559,941.24

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda with items as described on the agenda. 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	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

3. **COVID-19 Response (out of order):**

(a) Surveillance Testing Program Update and Possible Vote to Approve Fee:

Ellen reported that Governor Baker announced that the State will provide pool testing for school districts for six weeks at no cost. The timetable is not known at this time. She will attend a Safer Teachers, Safer Schools meeting to get more information. The State testing program may change the way in which Wayland’s testing program will launch. There will be a virtual meeting on Thursday evening with Ellen and Kim for families to ask questions about the testing program and DESE will have a virtual informational session on Thursday morning.

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

There were no comments and written statements from the public.

5. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Continued Review of Capital Requests and Five-Year Capital Plan:

The School Committee reviewed an amended memo to the Finance Committee recommending changes in the capital budget as the Committee discussed in a prior meeting. Jeanne described the changes in the memo in terms of the Feasibility Study and a request for qualifications (RFQ) for design services referring to elementary space needs. The Town Administrator suggested that the School Committee draft a separate Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the short-term needs costing about \$2M.

Susan explained the two CIP’s in progress, one of which is being created to focus on the short-term needs driven by COVID. To achieve the goal of bringing as many students back to school in the fall, the space utilization and space capacity needs must be reviewed. TBA Architects will meet with the principals to identify the space issues in each elementary school, which will be paid through the new Esser grant or through the operating budget, depending on what is defined as an eligible expense through the Esser grant. The cost ranges from \$15,000 to \$30,000. Susan added that the study could be focused only on Happy Hollow and Claypit Hill, the schools with the most need. Susan explained why Loker may not be considered in this study. Jeanne will present a specific list of needs to the Finance Committee.

Kathie added that the Feasibility Study that was presented and approved at Town Meeting needs to be amended, as it does not reference Happy Hollow. She asked if the Middle School could be included in the request given it also has space issues. A discussion ensued in this regard and the consensus was not to include the Middle School.

(b) Discussion of FY22 Recommended Budget: High School, Middle School, Athletics:

Wayland High School:

Allyson Mizoguchi spoke about the request for a clinical counselor/social worker at Wayland High School and the severe mental needs of the students which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. The current WHS staff are working extremely hard in this regard and in conjunction with Wayland Family Youth Services and other community organizations. A clinical social worker would run support groups, co-teach classes, conduct community outreach, and work with school staff before situations move into crisis mode. To confirm the importance of this request, Allyson

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described the eleven known intense student incidents that have occurred from September through January, adding that WHS typically averages about eleven incidents per year.

Allyson responded to questions from the School Committee regarding past data in this regard, other districts' experience in the rise of mental health crises, the makeup of the current staff supporting students, the instructional model and necessary resources post-COVID, and the urgency of the unmet needs of the High School, such as the anatomy section/course, another campus outdoor supervisor, and an intervention specialist.

Wayland Middle School:

Betsy Gavron reflected on the silver linings of this pandemic and the current instructional model for students, some of which could be ongoing for FY22. She reported that the Middle School is in good shape, but she is excited about restoring some things, such as the full-time writing center, and the continuation of the newly hired special educator and guidance counselor. Betsy addressed the makeup of the cluster model this year, past years, and moving into FY22, the success of the 6th grade world language program, and the instructional online component of the writing center.

Athletics:

Heath Rollins commented that the FY22 athletic budget will be level-funded much the same as FY21 in terms of running the athletic program. Susan addressed those expenses that are funded from the budget and what is funded from the revolving fund (coaches, officials and police details). She added that there is a second revolving fund made up of gifts. Although some athletic expenses have increased and the coaching structure was changed, coaching stipends have remained the same for eight years.

6. COVID-19 Response (out of order):

(a) Review and Discussion of Winter Sports:

Due to the recent increase in positive COVID cases in Wayland and across the State, there are questions and concerns about continuing interscholastic sports due to the risk of spreading the virus. The winter season is five weeks in and 220 athletes are participating. Heath reported that masks are mandatory at all times, on and off the field, although spread does not come from the activity of the sport, but from locker rooms, team benches, and transportation, all of which are not in use. Athletic directors meet often and districts are encouraged to continue with safety protocols. Although some team members have tested positive, there has not been a team spread. Heath is in constant contact with the health nurses.

Arthur noted that the Director of the Health Department did suggest a suspension of inter-scholastic competitions for two weeks to minimize any risk and minimize the potential for many contact tracing events. Arthur felt that the data did not warrant the suspension but would revisit this discussion in a few days. Heath described the sports schedule moving forward given that Wayland and other towns have currently been classified as a "red" town. Kim suggested communicating with students about off-campus gatherings, and Heath confirmed that students have been informed of the guidelines and repercussions.

7. Financial Matters (continued):

(a) Discussion of Possible Warrants:

The School Committee will review two warrant articles at its meeting on January 13. The School Committee will also discuss the possibility of additional funding to bring students back to school in April.

(b) Review of Budget Calendar:

Budget discussions on January 13 will include Special Education, Facilities, and Central Office. Susan is preparing the ongoing Q & A document. Thursday, January 14, Arthur will present the budget to the public at which time questions via Chat can be asked about the budget. Kathie will manage the questions.

8. Superintendent Update:

(a) Hybrid Mode Update:

Arthur shared his experiences in first and second grade classrooms at Claypit Hill during which students were having phonics lessons and three other classes were drafting their New Year's resolutions.

9. COVID-19 Response (continued):

(a) Review and Discussion of Post-Holiday Break Attendance and Possible Planning for Upcoming Breaks:

This discussion was passed over until the next meeting.

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- (b) Discussion and Review of Planning for Remainder of School Year, including Kindergarten and Synchronous Augmentation:
Parry reported that work is being done regarding the specialists' schedules and Kindergarten families were asked to fill out a form if they are considering WRAP in lieu of all-in. Susan confirmed that materials and equipment are being purchased for the transition, and Ben Keefe will provide a list of the spaces being used as classrooms and areas for mask breaks.

In terms of staffing for synchronous augmentation, the principals are currently reviewing resumes.

- (c) Special Education Update:
Richard supports the mental health issues presented by Allyson and Betsy and the need for more support, adding that there is a ripple effect starting with the elementary schools up to the middle school level where the caseloads are developed.
- (d) Ongoing Review Groups: Remote and Hybrid Learning Progress Committee and COVID Learning and Safety Committee:
There were no updates.
- (e) Transportation Update:
No update.
- (f) Ventilation Update:
No update.
- (g) Next Steps:
Next steps were addressed earlier in the meeting.

10. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

- (a) Discussion of Upcoming Meeting Schedule:
The schedule was discussed earlier in the meeting.

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

Susan addressed the payroll warrants noted in the Consent Agenda in terms of the approval process starting with the Town Administrator during COVID.

12. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 5:32 p.m. for the purposes of (a) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with Wayland Teachers Association (WTA), WESA, Custodial, and Food Services, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3), as a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee; and (b) the approval of the following executive session minutes, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §22: January 4, 2021.

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 adjourn in Executive Session and will not reconvene in open session. 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	X	
Kim Reichelt	X	
Chris Ryan	X	
Kathie Steinberg	X	

13. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn at 7:08 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Revised Draft FY22 Facilities Budget
3. FY22 Recommended Budget Q & A
4. Student Opportunity Plan
5. Joint Minutes (BOH, BOH, SC) of January 2, 2021
6. Minutes of January 4, 2021
7. Minutes of January 6, 2021
8. Minutes of January 15, 2021
9. Executive Session Motion