

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – December 1, 2021

A Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Wednesday, December 1, 2021, at 5:30 P.M. broadcast by WayCAM in the South Building Lecture Hall at Wayland High School.

Present:

Chris Ryan, Chair
Ellen Grieco, Vice Chair
Jeanne Downs
Jessica Polizzotti
Kim Reichelt

Also present:

Dr. Omar Easy
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Ellen Whittemore
Director of Finance & Operations

Also:

Kathie Steinberg, Bus Parking Working Group
Becky Stanizzi, Bus Parking Working Group

Chair Chris Ryan convened the regular session at 5:43 p.m. The meeting was recorded by WayCAM.

1. Public Comment:

Former Wayland employee and resident, Stephen Cass, presented Dr. Easy with some documents. He commented on the sequence of events leading up to his departure as Athletic Director, those events that took place up to the current time, and, in his opinion, an alleged cover-up. Since he and his predecessor was let go, he commented that Wayland has not hired an independent body to investigate why this happened. Mr. Cass continued with his accusations, but was stopped after three minutes, the usual time for each public comment.

2. Special Matter:

(a) Bus Parking Presentation:

Becky Stanizzi presented the status of school bus parking as well as a preview of the bus parking forum scheduled for December 6 in order to determine the next steps for bus parking. Kathy Steinberg provided a history of bus parking in Wayland beginning in 2016. Before the development of Rivers Edge, the buses parked on that parcel during which town parcels were inventoried and more than 70 potential sites were reviewed by TEC from which five sites were recommended followed by site assessments, conceptual drawings and preliminary cost estimates ranging from \$140,000 to \$440,000 for necessary capital improvements. The TEC study concluded in February 2017. The School Committee held several discussions, received public comments, as well as a signed petition with over 800 signatures.

In March 2017, off-site parking was considered and an RFP was issued for a parking lease for which only one bid was received. Although the School Committee's next steps were to move to this off-site location, the River's Edge development was delayed allowing the buses to remain there indefinitely.

A Mass DOT site in Sudbury became available and was being prepared until the site was sold in March 2020 and became unavailable for parking. Rivers Edge construction began and the buses were moved to the Town Building since the building was closed due to the COVID shutdown. Then a permit was issued by the ZBA to keep the buses at the Town Building until the summer of 2022. Given the work done to date at the Town Building, the cost to prepare another site or parking offsite at an annual of approximately \$200,000, the Town Building could potentially be used long-term for bus parking.

In terms of next steps, the bus parking group has identified its goals to minimize the number of buses, minimize capital costs, minimize operational costs, look for a site that is equal distance from North and South Wayland resulting in low impact to neighborhoods, and possibly maximize use of the existing asphalt at the Town Building.

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Becky Stanizzi reviewed the initial 2020 Town Building revision that added 17 buses in the back resulting in 38 parking spaces lost, created a one-way entrance from Route 27, added 31 parallel parking spaces in the front of the building, and new asphalt was not needed. There is now an updated plan to the back lot that includes defining crosswalks, establishing a “no daytime” parking row, securing parking at the Trinitarian Church, moving trailers and dumpsters in the rear of the Town Building, and defining The Children’s Way morning drop-off spaces with signage in the first two rows. Ms. Stanizzi described the plan further. The working group will report to the ZBA in February 2022 in terms of the success of the work done at the Town Building in anticipation of a more permanent solution.

The School Committee asked questions about the Conservation Commission’s concerns with the Town Building space, what the requirements have been, how they are being met, and if there other issues going forward. Ms. Stanizzi described the Commission’s concerns in terms of some of the parking spaces. Other questions were about the two school locations and the town beach in terms of a centralized area being considered for bus parking and how the parking at the Town Building has been received by the Town Administrator and town officials. A discussion ensued. Dr. Easy suggested putting lights in the church parking lot if it were to be used by bus drivers or building staff and the potential of a designated space for drop-off by the TCW parents.

3. Superintendent Update:

(a) COVID-19 Response:

- Presentation of COVID Cases by Dr. Graham:

Parry Graham reported on the 18 positive COVID cases since November 17 at the school buildings. A pattern showed that the cases were not evenly distributed across the elementary schools at the same time. However, out of a total of 60 cases, the most cases occurred among fifth graders. There were fewer cases among the students ages 12 to 18, given that they were eligible for the vaccines, adding that cases were transmitted from sibling to sibling. Parry described the definition of a close contact in school, particularly during lunch, as well as the test and stay program vs. quarantine. Parry noted that the staff is providing support for students who must quarantine.

- Status on Vaccinations:

A booster clinic will be held on December 4 and all of the 400 spots were reserved within a short time. There will be another clinic for the second vaccination on December 13. The vaccination data is as follows: 89% for ages 5 to 11 have had the first shot, 93% of high school students have had the first shot, 91% for 8th graders and 88% for 7th graders.

(b) Presentation of Superintendent’s Entry Plan:

Dr. Easy first presented the current state of the Wayland Public Schools that includes, but not limited to, the Fine Arts Department being recognized as one of the best for music education in the school communities, the Spanish Immersion Program that begins in Kindergarten and where students learn Spanish naturally in the classroom, Loker Elementary School is ranked #19 out of 964 Massachusetts schools and Wayland High School is currently ranked #18 out of 348 ranked Massachusetts schools.

The purpose of Dr. Easy’s Entry Plan is to present his intentional leadership actions during his first year as Superintendent, and the entry process will include many strategies that include building on current successes and assessing those areas of need while moving toward the future. Dr. Easy’s goals will include deepening his understanding of the district’s core values and culture, ensuring that systems, structures and supports are in place to preserve the school operations, identifying strengths and critical issues facing the schools, providing opportunities for the community to come to know and understand him, and building trusting collaborative relationships.

There will be four phases within Dr. Easy’s Entry Plan, all of which he described. The first pre-entry phase began in April 2021 through July 2021, the second phase was from July 2021 to September 2021 that focused on the pandemic and re-opening schools, the third phase began in September 2021 and will continue to April 2022 during which Dr. Easy will gather information via interviews, forums, surveys and key district document reviews, and the fourth phase will continue through June 2022 at which time Dr. Easy will present his findings and recommendations to the School Committee for discussions around Dr. Easy’s 2022-23 goals.

Priorities will include increasing student performance and reorganizing and streamlining educational systems and platforms for efficiencies and improving student learning, developing school-based action plans for ways to address interrupted learning due to COVID-19, and reorganizing Central Office to effectively deliver services for all students. Dr. Easy elaborated on other district priorities to improve student learning. Additional priorities include finances and

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the budget, the organizational structure of the Facilities Department, effective communication with town officials, and a possible facilities study of the elementary schools.

The School Committee was pleased with the detailed presentation and the emphasis on academics. Dr. Easy commented that the district goals for 2021-2022 are being revised, adding that one goal around addressing interrupted learning due to COVID is currently being researched. Chris suggested incorporating teaching kids in Kindergarten through second grade how to behave in a classroom due to the pandemic and virtual learning. A discussion followed.

(c) **Financial Matters:**

Approval of Travelship Gift from the Johnson Family:

The Johnson family gifted \$37,728.61 to the Wayland Public Schools so that the Mary L. Johnson Travelship Award can continue for a few more years. Ellen Whittemore read the letter from the Johnson family in terms of the gift and its purpose. Jeanne described the annual award event that has taken place over the last 30 years.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the gift from the Johnson family for the Mary L. Johnson Travelship Fund.

4. **Administrative Matters:**

(a) **Vote to Appoint Kim Reichelt to the Route 20 South Landfill Visioning Committee:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted to appoint Kim Reichelt to the Route 20 South Landfill Visioning Committee as the School Committee representative.

Amended Motion:

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that Kim Reichelt be appointed to the Route 20 South Landfill Visioning Committee as the School Committee representative.

(b) **Review of OML Determinations:**

There were 20 OML complaints since the last time Kim gave an update. She reviewed those complaints in Billerica, Marblehead, Everett, Andover, and South Hadley.

(c) **Review Upcoming School Committee Regular Meeting Dates:**

The School Committee reviewed the meeting calendar for the remainder of December and the month of January.

(d) **Discuss School Committee Goal Setting and Self-evaluation Exercise:**

After reviewing articles and information on the MASC website about School Committee goal setting and self-evaluating, Chris suggested that this process, although not required, could be beneficial to the Committee. A discussion ensued in this regard. The self-evaluation exercise will be done later in the school year. Kim added that Policy BA does call for this process to take place. She recommended that the School Committee asks the public for feedback on the group as a whole. Chris will send the packet for the School Committee's review.

5. **Financial Matters:**

(a) **FY22 Operating Budget Update:**

Ellen Whittemore updated the School Committee regarding the FY22 operating budget. Special education students and changes in out-of-district placements continue to be monitored as there could be some unanticipated expenses. From the CARES Act, the Town Administrator was able to fully cover the funds of \$69,183.50 used to prepare for coming back to school in the fall, such as the rental of the tents and additional PPE. However, the reimbursable cost for the additional cleaning in the building is yet to be determined. Dr. Easy noted that there has been additional cleaning in the schools since September, and this process will be re-examined as a result of the cost.

(b) **Capital Project Update:**

The Loker rooftop units will be ordered on January 1 and the project will move forward upon receipt of the units. The electric rooftop units at Claypit Hill will require more upgrades, and Ben Keefe is researching more economical units. The Claypit Hill cubbies will be done during the school year, and Loker's and Happy Hollow's will be done over the summer. The Happy Hollow chairlift should be delivered at the end of December and it's possible that its use will be ready in late January. Ellen Whittemore also updated the progress of the Loker egress doors and the PA system. The Claypit Hill playground was reopened and is being used by the students.

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(c) FY23 Operating Budget Discussion:

The preliminary budget process will not be extended beyond December 15 as according to the Town Code.

(d) FY23 Capital Budget Update:

At the last Finance Committee meeting that Chris, Jeanne and Dr. Easy attended, Dr. Easy asked that the Feasibility Study for the schools be moved to FY25, and a timeline was discussed for an MSBA project. Funds in the amount of \$100,000 will be available in FY23 for a study of either two or three elementary schools. A discussion ensued about the capital budget moving forward. There is a possibility that a committee will be put together regarding the future of the elementary schools.

6. Policy Matters:

(a) Discussion and Possible Vote to Put Following Policies Out for Public Comment:

- IJNDD – Social Media Policy

The School Committee reviewed and discussed Policy IJNDD. Kim identified the change in the policy. This policy applies to all representatives of the Wayland Public Schools. A discussion followed to be sure to identify and be specific for all those who come in contact with students during school activities.

- BEDG – Minutes

The changes in this policy are recommended by MASC. The School Committee discussed the idea that the minutes are available to the Committee 48 hours in advance of the posted meeting for its review.

- JBB – Educational Equity

This policy was developed by MASC and was discussed at an earlier meeting.

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to put out for public comment Policy BEDG (Minutes) and Policy JBB (Educational Equity).

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) that the School Committee will authorize Kim to make the edits as discussed and to give it to Dr. Easy after which the policy will be put out for public comment.

(b) Training and Materials for School Councils:

Kim reached out to Glenn Koocher of MASC about having a School Council training in December during which School Committee members can attend as well. A virtual meeting is preferred and having the training sometime in January was recommended. Kim will follow up with School Council members in terms of their interest.

(c) Policy Manual Website:

This agenda item was passed over.

7. Consent Agenda:

(a) Accounts Payables Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables Warrant, dated December 1, 2021, in the amount of \$599,839.93.

(b) Declaration of Technology as Surplus for Recycling:

(c) Approval of Minutes: November 3, 2021

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda.

8. Matters not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair:

None.

9. Executive Session:

Upon a motion duly made by Chris Ryan, seconded by Jeanne Downs, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to enter Executive Session at 8:15 p.m. for the purposes of a) discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Wayland Teachers Association (WTA), 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) discussing

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strategy with respect to litigation, as permitted by M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(2), as a discussion in open session may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

The School Committee will be joined by Dr. Omar Easy, Superintendent, Parry Graham, Assistant Superintendent, and Diane Marobella, recording secretary.

The School Committee will adjourn in Executive Session and will not reconvene in open session.

10. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Jess Polizzotti, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 9:00 p.m. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Omar Easy, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda
2. Travelship Gift and Letter from the Johnson Family
3. Policy IJNDD – Social Media Policy
4. Policy BEDG – Minutes
5. Policy JBB – Educational Equity
6. Accounts Payables Warrant
7. Minutes of November 3, 2021