

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Budget Work Session/Regular Session – January 14, 2013

A Budget Work Session/Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, January 14, 2013, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Barb Fletcher, Chair
Beth Butler, Vice Chair
Malcolm Astley
Ellen Grieco (arrived at 7:13 p.m.)
Shawn Kinney

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent of Schools

Brad J. Crozier
Assistant Superintendent

Marlene M. Dodyk
Director of Student Services

Geoffrey S. MacDonald
Business Administrator

Also:

Betsy Gavron, Principal of WMS

Chair Barb Fletcher convened the Budget Work Session/Regular Session at 7:11 P.M. and announced that WayCAM was taping and broadcasting the meeting.

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

Tom Sciacca commented on the Gossels' Fund request to support teacher stipends for potential online learning at the high school, which, in his opinion, would produce excellent results.

Tom referred to an article about the imminent advent of machine translation, and feels it will come to fruition within ten years. He suggested that the Committee look toward the future and involve more strategic planning when preparing the budget, as some academic programs may not be as important going forward.

2. **Operating Budget Work Session (Middle School, Central Office and Special Education):**

Middle School:

Betsy Gavron, Principal of the Middle School, answered questions from the School Committee.

Betsy updated the School Committee on the 7th grade Chinese program. Betsy also commented on the second language trial in the 8th grade (Latin, Spanish, and French) that is for students who love languages and taken in lieu of study hall. She commented that even though enrollment is increasing, class size was the determining factor in where to make cuts, as well as the cuts in areas of the non-personnel budget. Also discussed was the cluster model at the Middle School, which, Betsy stated, embodies the Middle School philosophy. Among "wish list" items for the Middle School budget would be a third cluster in the 6th grade.

Special Education:

Marlene Dodyk and Paul Stein answered questions from the School Committee.

Paul and Marlene commented on FTE staffing changes in terms of the decision-making process and the reasons that drove these decisions. Marlene also discussed the referral rates and if there has been a noticeable difference in lowering the numbers as a result of RTI. She said that the staffing has not been impacted at this time and discussed the long-range plan going forward. Paul explained the different levels of students' needs having an impact on staffing and RTI in terms of resources, but he stated that the larger costs are found in out-of-district placement and transportation. Paul further stated that with an effective RTI model, the number of students on IEP's should decrease.

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Marlene praised the special ed teachers, as they are constantly adjusting teachers' schedules on a daily and weekly basis, and they do not have the same planning time as regular ed teachers. Marlene commented on expenses for out-of-district transportation and the process involved in trying to achieve cost savings.

Central Office:

Geoff MacDonald answered questions from the School Committee regarding bus transportation and bus fees. Paul commented that based on the financial climate in the town, there is no plan to raise bus fees. Based on comparables of peer towns, it was suggested by a Committee member that an increase of \$25 could be a possibility.

Paul commented that in looking over the budget during the last two weeks, they discovered certain corrections to be made of upwards to about \$70,000 as a result of personnel changes. The numbers will be more accurate in terms of the line items and will be available at the next meeting on January 17.

Marlene answered a question regarding the Guidance Department and the student to counselor ratio at all grade levels, Pre-K to 12. Brad Crozier commented that a health and wellness consultant has been hired to review the current operational curriculum in health and wellness in light of state standards; however, it is not anticipated to become a budgetary item going forward. Paul commented that additional guidance counselors at the schools are an item that would appear on a wish list for future consideration.

A discussion ensued regarding topics of priority to be included in the health and wellness curriculum.

Barb reviewed the agenda and the process for the meeting on January 17. She will send the FY14 Budget Presentation to the Committee members to review for format and topics covered, in preparation for Thursday night's meeting. Barb did an analysis of peer towns' per pupil expenditures compared to Wayland's based on the DESE's per pupil expense information and will send to the Committee, also to prepare for the next meeting.

Barb also referred to the communication/article that will encourage the public to send feedback/input to the School Committee regarding the three different operating budgets that were presented by Paul Stein. The Committee members discussed the intended message of the article and offered their suggestions. The article was edited by the School Committee during the meeting to avoid further delay. It will be sent via the Town Crier, Patch, Wayland eNews, Wayland Voters Network, and the List Serve.

Also added to the agenda for discussion at the next meeting was the Budget Wish List.

The School Committee members discussed their availability for a possible meeting during the week of January 28. They tentatively scheduled a meeting for the morning of January 29.

3. **Consent Agenda:**

- (a) Approval of Payroll Warrant
 - Wayland Public Schools Payroll warrant, dated January 10, 2013, in the amount of \$1,215,171.88
- (b) Approval of WHS Field Trip to New York
- (c) Acceptance of Gifts
 - A donation to Wayland High School of a King brand trombone model 606 from James and Cherry Karlson, Wayland

Upon a motion duly made by Shawn Kinney, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Consent Agenda.

4. **Superintendent's Report:**

Paul Stein commented that he was at a training for Symphony Math, an impressive program, which is an online tool designed to give quick assessments for students in Kindergarten through Grade 4. This program was made possible through a Wayland Public Schools Foundation grant.

5. **Follow-up and Future Agenda Items:**

- (a) Update re: Audit/Review of School Accounts:
Shawn Kinney commented that he reached out to Rebecca Chasen and the Audit Committee's Chris Riley. Chris Riley told Shawn that the Committee has completed its charge for Phase I and will review all proposals

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from various firms regarding the RFP for Phase II and then rank the firms.

The School Committee discussed the Student Activity Accounts Audit/Review by Melanson & Heath.

(b) Update for Superintendent's Evaluation:

Beth Butler distributed a document containing elements that tie into the Superintendent's goals that will be discussed on January 22nd.

6. **Comments from the Public:**

In response to the School Committee's previous discussion regarding communications to the residents of Wayland, Tom Sciacca commented that unless a situation directly impacts a certain group in general, they do not pay attention to what is going on around them. He cited an example of the recent social security tax hike affecting pay checks, which came as a total surprise to many.

Susanne Geiger commented that the FinCom is receiving a great deal of feedback from the community members regarding the FY14 operating budget. In light of WTA negotiations, she urged the Committee to look for ways to achieve cost savings that spread across a large number of staff members, rather than cutting directly into the classroom. She stated that the public is behind the belt tightening exercises. She also commented on COLA increases, as well as step and lane increases.

7. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Shawn Kinney, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to convene in Executive Session at 9:43 P.M. to discuss strategy with respect to Collective Bargaining for all school unions (WTA, WESA, Custodial and Food Service), as set forth in M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) (3), as such a discussion in open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee and an Executive Session is necessary to protect the bargaining position of the School Committee. The Chair announced that the School Committee will reconvene in Open Session following Executive Session for adjournment purposes only. A roll call vote was taken as follows:

<u>Roll Call</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Barb Fletcher, Chair	X	
Beth Butler, Vice Chair	X	
Malcolm Astley	X	
Ellen Grieco	X	
Shawn Kinney	X	

8. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Shawn Kinney, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 10:17 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Tom Sciacca, WVN

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Memo re: WHS Field Trip Approval
2. Spreadsheet re: Athletic Statistics
3. Q & A of Budget Questions re: Middle School, Special Education & Central Office