

# MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## Budget Work Session/Regular Session – January 17, 2013

A Budget Work Session/Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Thursday, January 17, 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  
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:

Debbie Bearse, Principal of Claypit Hill School  
James Lee, Principal of Happy Hollow School  
Brian Jones, Principal of Loker Kindergarten School  
John Moynihan, Public Buildings Director

Chair Barb Fletcher convened the Budget Work Session/Regular Session at 7:12 P.M. and announced that WayCAM was taping the meeting.

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

Tracey O'Rourke commented that she is very happy with the education her children are receiving, however, the class sizes at Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow Schools are very high. She said that the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at Claypit Hill is extremely tight and is interested to hear feedback from other parents.

Barrett Brontas also commented on her concern regarding class size, as people are moving to Wayland in large numbers for the schools. She specifically commented the possible addition of a 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom at Claypit Hill, as a result of the large numbers in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Barrett also asked if new incoming students could be redistricted.

Caroline Brogran commented on her concern that her son's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class has 26 students, and even though he has a wonderful teacher, he is having difficulty. She also advocated for another 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom at Claypit Hill.

Tom Sciacca commented that Wayland Cares is asking the Town for \$100,000 in order to continue with their programs.

Barb Fletcher stated that she/School Committee received 38 emails regarding the budget: 15 supported the MOE or level services budget, 5 supported the MOE or the Superintendent's Recommended Budget, 11 supported the Superintendent's Recommended Budget, 6 supported the FinCom Guideline Budget, and 1 supported the level funded budget. Nine emails were related to class size at Claypit Hill School.

### 2. **Operating Budget Work Session (Elementary Schools & Facilities Budget):**

#### Elementary Schools:

The elementary principals answered questions from the School Committee regarding projected enrollment staffing, and reallocation of teacher assistants. Each of the principals reviewed with the Committee the individual budgets.

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Brian Jones, Loker Principal, commented that there will be no staffing changes for next year. He said that the NESDEC enrollment projection is 147, including Boston students; however, based on what he knows now, he estimates kindergarten to be about 149 students in September 2013, not including Boston students. He also commented that there is a budget reserve if a ninth classroom is needed.

Jim Lee, Happy Hollow Principal, said that he looked for ways to keep reductions away from the students. He commented that there were no staffing changes, but there was a reallocation in FTE's. Jim also stated that under the FinCom Allocation Budget, a third grade class could be eliminated and explained how it was chosen.

Debbie Bearse, Claypit Hill Principal, said that, similar to Happy Hollow and for the same reasons, she concentrated on the non-personnel side of her budget, which included cuts in Art, PE, and Social Studies. However, she said that she would add a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher if the Superintendent's Recommended Budget were to pass.

#### Facilities:

John Moynihan and Geoff MacDonald provided a historical view of utility expenses for the district. Geoff explained the analysis based on square footage in each of the buildings, which also took The Children's Way and Full Day Kindergarten into account.

Geoff commented that more funds for utilities were requested by the Facilities Department, as a result of a larger high school building. John Moynihan will provide actual heating costs for the new high school building. John stated that the current gas contract will end in late spring and a new 2 to 3 year contract will be renegotiated, as costs have gone down; however, electricity costs have escalated. He noted that the hiring of an HVAC/electrician on staff is working out well, as more work is being done in-house. John also commented that we belong to Mass. Higher Education Collaborative.

John discussed the payroll allocation of the Administrative Assistant in the Facilities Department, the potential impact from the FinCom Allocation Budget of the summer maintenance program at the schools, and savings in terms of part-time temporary custodial help and overtime.

#### General Discussion:

The School Committee reviewed a document drafted by Paul describing ways in which the School Department has found efficiencies in different areas over the past two years. Paul commented that this document was prepared in response to the public. The School Committee discussed ways in which to find more efficiencies, and Barb will note this as an action item for a future meeting.

Paul explained how he developed his Recommended Budget; however, he commented that the Special Education budget was approached differently. He discussed the Special Education prepay for FY13 and FY14, which becomes more difficult during each budget process.

Paul also reviewed with the School Committee corrections made in the proposed budget that could result in a positive variance of about \$65,000, which will be used to reduce the cuts in his recommended budget. Also discussed were the budget drivers in order to gain a better understanding of the major budget drivers in the FY14 budget.

### 3. **Review of Draft FinCom Presentation:**

The School Committee discussed the draft budget presentation prepared by Barb Fletcher. Barb reviewed the contents of the presentation and the order in which it will be presented. The School Committee members gave their suggestions as to additional content pages.

### 4. **Discussion with Finance Committee Representative re: Financial Outlook:**

The School Committee met with Bill Steinberg of the Finance Committee. He commented that the FinCom looked at the FinCom's Allocation Budget, the Maintenance of Effort Budget, and the Superintendent's Recommended Budget. From a global standpoint, the FinCom looked at what the impact would be on the tax rate and, depending on the budget chosen, how the Town would pay for it. He also said that the FinCom would be presenting the budget to the Board of Selectmen on February 4<sup>th</sup>.

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Bill also gave a brief overview of the fiscal health of the town and commented on the tax rate vs. the average household tax bill, as well as the property values based on real estate sales over the past 12 months. Bill discussed the commercial tax base in Wayland compared to peer towns and whether or not more revenue would be generated from the Town Center in 2015.

5. **Discussion and Vote on Recommended Budget to Present to Finance Committee:**

The School Committee expressed their individual opinions and personal feelings about the budgets being presented and the direction to which each are leaning. The Committee also discussed the \$65,000 accrued as a result of noted differences in the budget and in which areas the money could be put to the best use.

Some of the Committee's concerns are enrollment, increase in utilities budget, the Special Education prepay, and the allocation of the \$65,000 found in the recommended budget. After taking all the facts into account, four budget options were presented, and each member stated his or her budget choice from these four options.

The School Committee also discussed the topic of fees and looked at all the options, to determine if the fees should be raised.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted (4-1) (Shawn Kinney opposed) to present and recommend the Superintendent's Recommended Budget in the amount of \$33,462,005 to the Finance Committee on January 22.

6. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Wayland High School WSPN Club Trip:

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

7. **Superintendent's Report:**

Paul Stein commented that they are still working on recommendations with regard to security in the schools, and John Moynihan is doing a tremendous amount of work in this area.

Paul also reported that he spoke to and met with Peter, Werner and Elaine Gossels, and they support the use of funds from the Gossels Fund for Academic Excellence for online learning. Paul will work towards providing them clearer reporting.

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

Draft RFP for Audit:

The School Committee agreed to invite Jim Powers and Rebecca Chasen to the next meeting or, if possible, an earlier scheduled meeting to review and discuss the draft RFP and steps going forward.

9. **Comments from the Public:**

There were no public comments.

10. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Shawn Kinney, seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to convene in Executive Session at 10:52 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          |           |

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11. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Shawn Kinney, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 11:07 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk  
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

See attached list.

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Memo re: WHS WSPN Club Trip
2. Budget Questions re: Elementary Education, Central Office, & Facilities
3. School Department Historical Efficiencies