

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 10, 2019

A Regular Meeting/Budget Work Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Thursday, January 10, 2019, 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 (arrived at 8:00 p.m.)
Kim Reichelt
Kathie Steinberg

Also:

Arthur Unobskey
Superintendent

Parry Graham
Assistant Superintendent

Richard Whitehead
Director of Student Services

Susan Bottan
Director of Finance & Operations

Also:

Carol Martin, Finance Committee
Ben Keefe, Public Buildings Director
Patricia Keefe, WSCP Director
Katy Merrell, TCW Director

Chair Jeanne Downs convened the regular session at 7:01 p.m.; the meeting was recorded by WayCAM.

1. Comments & Written Statements from the Public:

There were no comments or written statements from the public.

2. Educational Matters (taken out of order):

(a) Hear Superintendent's Report:

- School Visits

Arthur met with High School department chairs, Allyson Mizoguchi, Ethan Dolleman, Parry Graham, and Leisha Simon to discuss a trip to Phillips Academy (Tang Institute) with the teachers on January 23 to observe their model for innovative creative teaching methods in an effort to develop new approaches in curriculum at WHS. Arthur explained how this model works.

(b) School Start Times Update:

Again, Arthur directed the School Committee and the viewing audience's attention to a School Start Time Progress Chart on the school website. Since the last update, Arthur and Pat Keefe have met with YMCA personnel and the project manager in charge of leasing at the Wayland Town Center. Arthur will have a more detailed report on childcare at the February 11th School Committee meeting. Arthur noted that the Athletic Director has changed the schedule for most of the fall sports to coincide with a later dismissal, with the exception of a few towns currently. He will continue in this regard.

Parry added that currently elementary teachers report fifteen minutes before the start of school and stay fifteen minutes later upon dismissal. Based on the earlier elementary start time in September 2019, they discussed shifting the seven-hour window somewhat, so that teachers could arrive a little later in the morning and stay later in the afternoon. This shift is supported by the elementary principals.

Arthur reported on the budget presentations for the Council on Aging and at Happy Hollow.

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3. **Special Matters:**

(a) Budget Work Session – Review of Budgets for Special Education, Facilities, Central Office, Special Revenue Funds, including Wayland School Community Programs and The Children's Way:

Special Education:

Richard Whitehead informed the School Committee that there are no major changes in the Student Services budget this year although he is seeing more students with more challenging needs and will continue to develop current programming to be more flexible to meet all students' needs, as well as anticipating their needs going forward and making changes when necessary.

Richard described a transitional skills program that may be necessary over the next 3 or 4 years for those young adults who are 18 to 22 years of age who don't graduate, as well as anticipating program needs for those younger students beginning in third grade who are severely emotionally challenged. Richard explained why the district continues to develop its inclusive program that services students in the district as opposed to out placement. However, there are some students whose needs cannot be met in-house and who are thoughtfully placed out of district. The non-negotiable tuition rates for out-placement are set by the State and there is no set reimbursement rate through the Circuit Breaker, and, although it has been a 70% reimbursement rate, there are times when it could be much less. Richard also addressed transportation costs.

Questions were asked about the Special Education Budget:

- the savings for in-house programs vs. out-of-district placement/programs
- the transitional skills program for students 18 to 22 years old and are they included in the total enrollment and in what category
- the effectiveness of the elementary counselor position that was funded two years ago
- the total cost and what percentage of the budget is for the special education program

Facilities:

Ben Keefe commented that facilities have benefitted by the Onsite Insight Report and some small capital items were identified and included in this year's budget in the amount of \$100,000. Ben added that a 7% increase is anticipated for gas and electric in the Town's and schools' budgets, as there will be an increase in the delivery of these utilities. In terms of the Edvocate Study in which some facilities recommendations were cited, equipment is continuing to be updated, and a night manager has been hired. An additional evening custodian at the Middle School is still needed. Progress is being made, but there is a shortage of funds to address everything at this time.

Ben was asked about the tracking of utility usage separately from the solar impact on utilities. Ben responded that although electricity and gas costs have decreased, the buildings are being used more and technology devices are being charged overnight. Moving forward, he will implement methods to conserve energy. Ben addressed the ongoing issue of deferred maintenance, adding that progress is being made in this regard.

The Children's Way:

Katy Merrell noted that compensation for her excellent staff is the largest part of her budget, and, because her staff is of the highest caliber and experience, the ever increasing complex and more challenging needs of special education students are addressed and met. Including Professional Development in the budget also helps in keeping up with the needs and challenges, and it is supplemented by The Children's Way PTO as well. Katy updated the School Committee on the newest additions to the playground, adding that the TCW budget pays for the equipment costs and Recreation pays for the installation costs. Moving forward, a TCW and Recreation Memorandum of Understanding will exist in this regard. Costs for classroom equipment and other equipment have decreased due to cost sharing with Recreation. Katy described some of the equipment they would like to purchase in order to give some students easier access to the playground and in the classroom.

There is a pilot project to replace the HVAC system replaced in one classroom for now, with the understanding that other classrooms will be in need of HVAC replacement in the future. OPEB parity is huge in the TCW budget and may reach unsustainability by the year 2021. It has been removed from the budget for now given the ongoing discussions in terms of its legality. However, the annual OPEB payment has doubled to \$13,000. Pat Keefe noted that TCW has utilized guidance support from the elementary schools.

Wayland School Community Programs:

As a result of Pat Keefe's past discussion with the School Committee and in an effort to recognize long-term staff,

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adjustments have been made for salary increases, as well as a formula change in longevity payments. Pat provided more detail regarding these changes. Pat is also researching pay scales for steps and categories much like the WESA pay scales which are based on education and experience for all BASE employees. Pay scales could be in place for FY21.

In terms of Pegasus, Pat is looking for more cost savings this year, particularly for the use of SPED teacher assistants and electronic communications. Pat has submitted a proposal for a 3% increase in Pegasus fees for this year; enrollment was slightly down last summer. Enrichment programs may be rotated to create diverse programming from year to year. Private music lessons are the biggest tutoring component, and Pat would like to increase the private music coordinator's stipend. She is also considering a \$10.00 travel allowance for music teachers for three or less students, including some longevity compensation for those teachers who are committed to the program year after year. Pat offered the reasoning behind these proposals.

Pat was asked if she anticipates an increase in usage next year for the Enrichment and Music Programs due to the change in start times. Susan explained what the fee offset is for WSCP programs.

Central Office:

Parry commented that the non-personnel budget is unchanged and the change in the personnel budget is a proposal to pay substitutes \$10.00 more per day (\$75.00 to \$85.00), as Wayland's sub rate is much less than its peer districts. The long-term sub rate is much higher at \$250.00 per day and could increase after 40 days.

Curriculum:

With EL numbers increasing, there are increased budget costs, such as \$7,500 in non-personnel and an additional full time teacher assistant at Claypit Hill hired this year, and Parry is proposing that a full time district-wide teacher be hired next year for EL. Textbooks and supplies are increasing primarily at the elementary level. Parry detailed the curriculum areas in which the increases are occurring. Given that Spanish Immersion is expanding to first grade, there are some associated costs. Contracted services have decreased; Parry explained.

- (b) Continued Discussion of Budget Drivers, Assumptions, Fees and Funding Sources and Requests for Information:
This agenda item was covered in the previous budget discussion.

4. **Financial Matters:**

- (a) Approval of Prior Year Invoices for Eversource, Keane Fire & Safety, and Buckeye Cleaning Center:

Susan informed the School Committee that the prior year invoices arrived in the fall of 2018 and after the close of the fiscal year. These invoices will go before Annual Town Meeting, but to pay them out of the current budget, School Committee approval is necessary. A discussion ensued regarding the invoices.

Upon a motion duly made by Kathie Steinberg, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve prior year invoices.

- (b) High School Master Athletic Plan:

- Project Status
- Budget Update
- Warrant Article

Ben Keefe updated the School Committee regarding the status of the master athletic plan on the following issues:

- the Order of Conditions (193 and 194)
- the Planning Board's concerns about the design of the ramp and tennis and basketball courts

A discussion ensued about the School Department's possible annual operating budget cost of \$60,000 to extensively test the wells, as requested by the Conservation Commission in the Order of Conditions. The goal is to ensure that the fields are not contaminating the wells. Jeanne reviewed some of the anticipated costs previously discussed. Ben will research lower costs for this contracted out service as soon as possible.

As a result of a third party cost estimate of the master athletic plan, Ben noted that the budget is increasing substantially; however the process is not complete. Ben described the process and how the cost was determined, adding that he hopes to have a more concrete number by Friday as well as a complete breakdown of the costs at

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the next PMBC meeting. The approach taken in determining a cost estimate by the architect, owner's project manager, and third party estimator are all different and includes different line items. The School Committee must receive the final cost estimate before it submits its warrant on January 15 by 4:00 p.m. Ben is anticipating that bids will be received before Town Meeting. To ensure the safety of high school staff and students during the construction of this project, Ben and others looked at the staging and the working traffic flow.

Pat Keefe returned to the meeting to ask the School Committee for a discussion and vote on a 3% increase for all fees related to the Pegasus Program, as the registration will be opened by the end of January. Given the time sensitive nature of this request, the School Committee will discuss this under "Matters not Anticipated by the Chair."

A School Committee meeting will be posted for Tuesday morning at 8:00 a.m. for the purpose of voting to submit the warrant article. The School Committee reviewed the draft warrant article for the master athletic plan in terms of the language and the amounts to insert into the article once they are determined.

Susan commented that the ongoing maintenance costs to monitor the wells are not included in the FY2020 budget. In order to include maintaining the artificial turf, additional custodial work, and other costs, would have to be included in the budget and something else would have to be removed from the budget. Susan will follow up with Recreation to determine the financial responsibilities of both Recreation and the School Department. A discussion ensued in terms of a potential adjustment to the budget and the necessary understanding of the Order of Conditions in order to move forward. Ellen and Kathie will follow up on the Order of Conditions.

5. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

(a) Discussion of Superintendent's Review Process, including Elements for Review and Feedback:

The School Committee and Arthur reviewed the elements pertaining to each of the four standards of Arthur's goals. The elements represent specific indicators of Arthur's work with the principals, the budget, communication with families, and the work being done around his two major goals of Social Emotional Learning and Elevating Achievement.

(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.

(d) Discussion of School Committee Communications and Information for The Buzz:

Kim is working on articles regarding the budget and the work being done to prepare for the change in school start times. She will also write an article thanking the support organizations for their contributions to the district.

6. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

None.

(b) Approval to Declare Textbooks as Surplus:

Jeanne asked if there was an update regarding last meeting's discussion about the liability of the Debate Team trip. Parry will follow up at the next meeting.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda.

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

Approval of Fee Increases for the Pegasus Program 2019:

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kim Reichelt, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the fee increases for the Pegasus Program for 2019.

8. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Jeanne Downs, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 9:53 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Unobskey, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. Responses to Questions re: the FY2020 Recommended Budget
3. WPS FY2020 Fee-Based Special Revenue Funds with Annual Budgets
4. Prior Year Invoices – Eversource, Keane Fire & Safety, Buckeye Cleaning Center
5. Article J – High School Athletic Complex Renovation
6. Draft Communication re: Budget and School Start Times
7. List of Surplus Textbooks