

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Special Session – January 26, 2012

A Special Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Thursday, January 26, 2012, at 8:15 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Barb Fletcher, Chair
Beth Butler, Vice Chair
Malcolm Astley (absent)
Ellen Grieco (arrived at 8:26 p.m.)
Shawn Kinney

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent of Schools

Brad J. Crozier
Assistant Superintendent

Geoffrey S. MacDonald
Business Administrator

Marlene M. Dodyk
Director of Student Services

Also:

Finance Committee

Chair Barb Fletcher convened the regular meeting at 8:21 P.M.

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

Louis Jurist commented on the list of potential cuts that might be necessary if FinCom lowered their guideline. He asked the School Committee to very strongly support Dr. Stein's budget as it was presented and originally drafted and to grant him flexibility, as he did follow the instructions given to him by the Finance Committee. Louis again stated that Dr. Stein's budget presentation showed a real vision, was consistent, strong and coherent, and was well received by the public. Louis also asked if the School Committee had changed their policy in terms of public participation in school meetings. He reminded the Committee that he was interrupted during a meeting when he tried to interject facts and some history regarding instrumental fees, but that during a recent meeting, there was public participation by another observer. He asked the School Committee to be consistent in their policy.

2. **Approval of Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants:**

Upon a motion duly made by Shawn Kinney, seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to approve the payroll warrant, dated January 23, 2012, in the amount of \$1,154,638.02.

3. **Continued Budget Discussion:
Update Space Utilization Study:**

Paul updated the School Committee regarding John Moynihan's conversation with TBA Architects. They will be in Wayland on Tuesday, January 31, to meet with the elementary principals. John informed them of the February 6th School Committee meeting and they indicated that they will try to have a report by that meeting.

Revolving Accounts:

Ellen Grieco referred to the statement written by Town Counsel Mark Lanza regarding revolving accounts, as a result of his communications with Dr. Stein. She suggested that Attorney Jim Toomey see the document and be made aware of how it came to be and possibly have a discussion with Mark Lanza. The School Committee also discussed attorney/client privilege in the context of being a public body and will seek an opinion and guidance as it relates to this discussion. The discussion was tabled in order to meet with the Finance Committee.

4. **Joint Meeting with Finance Committee (8:38 p.m.):**

Barb Fletcher thanked the FinCom for their flexibility in allowing the School Committee time to review their FY13 Operating Budget. Barb presented a power point presentation to show how the School Committee's FY13 Operating Budget was developed, starting with enrollment and maintenance of effort budget at each level, including cost saving opportunities and new initiatives. The presentation also provided a summary of the budget drivers.

Paul Stein reviewed the new initiatives with the Finance Committee. He commented that in developing the budget, he respected the guidelines given him and wanted to end FY13 without significant surplus. He also stated to the FinCom that there is a lot of excitement about this budget and what is being offered in terms of education for the students.

Barb briefly summarized the budget presentation, which resulted in an appropriated budget of \$32,526,704, met the FinCom's guideline, and was unanimously supported by the School Committee. Barb also updated the Finance Committee on where the School Committee is in terms of the TAG recommendations. She stated that the Committee is in the process of developing a spreadsheet in order to keep track of each recommendation and will report back on each of the four areas (budget report, cost saving initiatives, the restatement, and revolving accounts).

Before opening the meeting to discussion, Barb passed out a FY09-FY13 Budget Analysis and a Savings Analysis to review with the Finance Committee. They also reviewed, in anticipation of a possible lower guideline by the FinCom, a list of the reductions developed by the Superintendent and administrators, but stated that upon review by the School Committee, they were not comfortable with these reductions. As a result, the School Committee unanimously approved the Superintendent's FY13 Budget as recommended. Paul explained to the Finance Committee the process by which the administrators developed the reduction list, stating that he tried to avoid any item that would directly impact the students.

Barb Fletcher opened the meeting to discussion and the School Committee and administrators answered questions from the Finance Committee.

In light of the School Committee's recent vote on the budget, Cherry Karlson asked Shawn Kinney to explain to the Finance Committee his request via emails that the FinCom reduce the budget guideline by \$1.2M and look at a new budget.

The Finance Committee challenged the School Committee and asked them, if they were to approve their budget, not to focus on the budget per se, but to focus on the delivery of the budget and the value creation. The Finance Committee agreed that the budget was very impressive, but encouraged the School Committee to start the FY14 budget process earlier. Cherry Karlson stated that the Finance Committee would deliberate and if they had further questions, they would forward them to Barb Fletcher.

The Finance Committee left the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

5. **Continued Discussion re: Revolving Accounts;**

Paul Stein continued to explain the chain of events that led up to his communications with Mark Lanza regarding his informal opinion on revolving accounts, as well as other communications that followed between town officials and the ORC. A discussion followed. The School Committee concluded that they would continue to work with Jim Toomey, but provide him with the information obtained from Mark Lanza.

6. **Public Comment:**

Donna Bouchard commented on the revolving accounts in terms of the formal opinion written by the Department of Revenue regarding the BASE account and did not think another ruling was necessary to conclude that the program was compensatory. She stated that programs should not generate a profit, and if the fees are not spent for what they were intended and the surplus put back in a revolving account, then the taxpayers are getting charged twice. She asked the School Committee as a gesture of good will and understanding to return the profits back to the fee payers of BASE and the taxpayers, as a precedent was set when money was returned to the FDK parents.

Kim Cook commented that BASE parents should be refunded their money, as the FDK parents received refunds twice. She stated that there is a legal issue of precedence and does not want the School Committee to spend any money for another legal opinion. She also stated that these BASE balances have been building up since 2006 and feels that parents should get, not only what they paid, but also a return rate of interest. She urged the School Committee to come up with a fair and equitable timely solution.

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Special Session – January 26, 2012

Annette Lewis complimented the School Committee on their budget process and thanked them for answering all of her questions in terms of the budget. She posed questions to the School Committee and asked them for a response at a future meeting. Paul Stein also directed Ms. Lewis to the budget book as a reference.

Stephanie Leong also asked a question regarding FDK and whether Brian Jones salary in full or part is paid from that program.

7. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Elizabeth Butler, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 10:27 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:
See attached.

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Updated Questions from Finance Committee