

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Special Session – September 9, 2013

A Regular Session of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, September 9, 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 7:16 p.m.)

Absent:

Donna Bouchard

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent of Schools

Brad Crozier

Assistant Superintendent

Marlene Dodyk

Director of Student Services

Geoffrey MacDonald

Business Administrator

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

1. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to convene in Executive Session at 7:12 P.M. to review the Executive Session minutes as listed on the agenda, pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, section 22. The Chair announced that the School Committee will reconvene in Open Session following Executive Session. 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	

School Committee reconvened in Regular Session at 7:45 p.m.

2. **Vote to Release All or a Portion of Executive Session Minutes Listed Above:**

Upon a motion duly made by ellen Grieco, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to release the Executive Session minutes as listed on the agenda under Executive Session, except for July 9, 2012, with some portions of certain minutes redacted. 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	

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

To be put into record, Barb Fletcher read emails from Cynthia Lavenson and Lisa Valone regarding the School Accounts Report.

Tom Sciacca commented on expense reporting in the district. He believes that the issues were not a failure of individuals, but a management failure.

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4. **Discussion re: Process for Releasing Executive Session Minutes Going Forward:**

The School Committee reviewed a document that Barb Fletcher drafted regarding a process for releasing Executive Session minutes going forward. The language was, for the most part, taken from a School Committee policy.

Malcolm left the meeting at 7:55 p.m. to attend the Board of Selectmen's meeting.

A discussed followed in terms of applying a time table and within a certain number of meetings. It was agreed that the document would read, "Within the next quarter."

Beth will look into the Open Meeting Law requirements.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to approve this process for reviewing Executive Session minutes or a possible declassification on an ongoing basis.

5. **Discussion re: Topics to be covered in the Annual Town Report:**

The School Committee reviewed last year's report. Beth will write the Annual Report for July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013. The following topics were recommended for inclusion in the report: goals (e.g. RTI), operating and capital budgets, work of Elementary Building Use Task, fiscal work, negotiations update, China Exchange, Laptop Initiative, and the METCO Fathers' Mentoring Group.

6. **Review of Draft 2013-2014 School Committee Calendar:**

The School Committee reviewed the 2013-2014 draft calendar, with suggested agenda topics. Barb also provided a preliminary budget timeline/schedule; however, it hasn't been approved by the FinCom and the Board of Selectmen has not set Town Meeting dates.

The School Committee discussed the Fall Forum on October 7 at which Paul may present his goals and include an extended public comment period. Also discussed were the proposed School Committee goals, decided upon at the August 22nd retreat. Ellen will present her draft format regarding her assigned objective on October 7, two objectives will be presented on October 21, the last two on November 4, and the public will have the opportunity to comment on the School Committee's objectives on November 18. It was suggested that the School Committee draft a communication identifying the Committee's objectives and also inviting the public to comment.

Paul commented that some goals may lead to actions steps for some reports, i.e. the School Improvement Plans. Paul also noted the tentative time table for the Elementary Building Use Task Force: 1) Public Forum on September 30; 2) recommendation by end of October; 3) based on School Committee's response, the budget process will be analyzed to include the final decision.

7. **Continued Discussion re: the OML Complaint Filed by George Harris on August 28, 2013 re: Release of Executive Session Minutes:**

The School Committee reviewed and discussed a draft response regarding the OML complaint of August 28, 2013, written to the Attorney General's office by Mark Lanza on behalf of the School Committee. The Committee made changes/additions to the draft response.

Malcolm returned to the meeting at 8:24 pm.

Paul also made suggestions in terms of the timeline in reviewing Executive Session minutes.

Barb updated Malcolm regarding the changes/additions made to the response.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Beth Butler, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the School Committee taking the following remedial action as outlined in the draft letter to the Attorney General's office, as amended tonight.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to send the letter to the Attorney General's office and to authorize Barb Fletcher to sign the letter on behalf of the

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School Committee.

8. **Discussion re: Legal Counsel Related to Powers & Sullivan Report:**

Barb commented that as part of the Power's & Sullivan Report, Jim Powers recommended attaining legal counsel for an opinion in terms of the School Committee's appropriate next steps. Barb also commented that she received one or two emails implying that there may be future litigation.

The School Committee questioned if this discussion should take place in open or Executive Session. The Committee discussed the need to retain legal counsel, the legal expertise of potential attorneys, the cost, and how to move forward in this process. Many factors were considered, including retaining town counsel. Ellen recommended the Committee ask Jim Toomey of Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane for his legal opinion. They discussed what Mr. Toomey's professional opinion would entail in this process.

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Malcolm Astley, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to engage Jim Toomey, assuming his availability, to review the Powers & Sullivan Report, to speak to Jim Powers, and to see if there are any areas where he believes we should take additional action.

Barb will contact Jim Toomey regarding his availability and send him the Powers & Sullivan Report.

Barb updated Malcolm regarding the Committee's discussions during the time he was not present. Malcolm and Beth agreed to continue serving on the Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee. Paul will attend an Evaluation Subcommittee meeting sometime in the fall to discuss his goals.

9. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants:

- Wayland Public Schools Accounts Payables warrant, dated September 9, 2013, in the amount of \$214,575.15
- Wayland Public Schools Payroll warrant, dated September 5, 2013, in the amount of \$1,264,913.79

(b) Approval of Wayland-Weston Crew Trips:

- New Hampshire Championships on October 13, 2013
- The Head of the Fish in Saratoga, NY from October 26 – 27, 2013. See attached form.

(c) Approval of Minutes:

- Special Session of August 1, 2013
- Special Session/Retreat of August 22, 2013 (excluded)
- Regular Session of August 26, 2013

(d) Acceptance of Gifts:

- A check in the amount of \$200 from Mr. Gilbert Dailey, Wellesley, MA, as a donation to the scholarship fund for a participant of the China Exchange Program.
- A check in the amount of \$563.74 to Happy Hollow School from the Target "Take Charge of Education Program," as a result of purchases made from Wayland teachers and community residents.
- A check in the amount of \$10,000 as a "Learning Forward Team Grant" from the Learning Forward Foundation. The grant money will be deposited into its own account with its own project code and will be administered by Karyn Saxon and Tricia O'Reilly for teacher professional development and books at Claypit Hill and Happy Hollow Schools.

Beth asked that the August 22, 2013 minutes be excluded from the consent agenda.

Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the Consent Agenda, including only the Special Session minutes of August 1, 2013 and the Regular Session minutes of August 26, 2013, both as amended.

10. **Superintendent's Report:**

Paul distributed to the School Committee the Sullivan, Rogers & Company report dated June 17, 2013, which was

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done by Dan Sullivan. He also distributed information regarding the technology-related conference he, Betsy Gavron, and Allyson Mizoguchi will be attending in California. Paul explained the purpose of the trip and commented that is a TEC organized program.

Paul stated that Brad put a proposal together, which he also passed out, regarding the Recording Secretary's stipend to include Executive Session minutes, as well as Regular Session minutes. He confirmed that she is a confidential administrative assistant.

Paul commented that he was part of the ceremony welcoming five students from the Chinese delegation, the two teachers who are chaperoning, as well as the Principal of the school in China. Malcolm also made some welcoming comments at the ceremony. The delegation presented gifts to the school, and Paul is pleased that connections are steadily building.

Paul praised the Loker staff for a job well done in planning for the start of the school year for the kindergarten students. The students had a comfort level on the first day as they walked around the school and met their teachers.

11. **School Committee Reports & Future Agenda Topics:**

(a) Review of Upcoming School Committee Retreat:

The School Committee discussed how to communicate individually with Rob Evans regarding the retreat on September 23 within the provisions of the Open Meeting Law. Beth will call the Attorney General's office for an opinion. Gini Tate or Mark Lanza will be contacted, if necessary.

(b) Review of Follow-up Report:

The School Committee reviewed the Follow-up Report for missing agenda items and prioritization of tasks. Subtitles will be changed to educational impact, policy impact, procedural impact, financial impact, and administrative impact. Additions to the report were suggested, and, as an action item, the Committee will prioritize within the categories as high, medium and low – 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest ranking. The tasks with the most points will be addressed first.

It was suggested that Paul's give his report/presentation earlier in the meeting.

12. **Comments from the Public:**

Malcolm Astley referred to two items in the MASC Bulletin. One report speaks to bullying legislation to include staff members as potential bullies. Also included is the subject of High Stakes Testing and the many components applied to it. The report also refers to an organization (ALEC) who has started a movement to eliminate and/or reduce the influence of School Boards. As a part of this movement is the setting up of charter schools, high stakes testing, and privatizing of public education. Malcolm commented that Suburban Coalition is a network that can help the Committee stay in touch with these important issues.

Tom Sciacca commented on the two public comments read earlier in the meeting. He said that there is no middle ground, as there are extremists on both sides of any issue. In his opinion, there is a group in town who believe that the schools are perfect and can never make a mistake, and there is a group who believes the schools are not perfect. Tom further commented that the reality is the schools are not perfect, but not terrible either. He supported the way the school account reports have been approached. Tom believes that an outside attorney should be hired in moving ahead with the process. His final comment was if the best managers are hired, one can get the best out of them.

Geoff MacDonald clarified a comment made earlier regarding expense reports. The auditor was not citing a lack of detail or supporting documentation for the on-ledger accounts. Jim did cite, however, that there were too many transactions – a practice that he is trying to have curtailed. He also commented that for many years the practice was to submit vouchers.

Malcolm suggested a future topic for the School Committee – what are the needs of the district and what constitutes an emergency expense. It was confirmed that this will be addressed by the administrators in their follow-up report. Paul described what the report will include.

13. **Executive Session:**

Upon a motion duly made by Beth Butler, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to enter

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Executive Session at 9:41 p.m., as permitted under M.G.L. Chapter 30(a), Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to Collective Bargaining for all school unions (WTA, WESA, Custodial and Food Service) and to reconvene only for the purpose of adjournment, 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 and to review and approve Executive Session minutes of August 1, 2013 and July 15, 2013 (Sessions I & II) pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30(a) Section 22. 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	

14. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Malcolm Astley, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 10:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Tom Sciacca, WVN
Mary Ann Borkowski, Wayland
Betsey Brigham, Wayland

Corresponding Documentation:

1. FY12 Annual Town Report
2. FY14 School Committee Draft Calendar
3. FY15 Budget Timeline Draft
4. Accounts Payables & Payroll Warrants
5. Wayland-Weston Crew Trip Request Form
6. Special Session Minutes of August 1, 2013
7. Special Session Minutes of August 22, 2013
8. Regular Session Minutes of August 26, 2013
9. Sullivan & Rogers Company Report – “Fraud Examination Town of Wayland School Department”
June 17, 2013