

MINUTES – WAYLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Budget Forum/Regular Meeting – December 15, 2016

A Budget Forum/Regular Meeting of the Wayland School Committee was held on Monday, December 12, 2016, at 7:00 P.M. in the School Committee Room of the Wayland Town Building.

Present were:

Ellen Grieco, Chair
Barb Fletcher, Vice Chair
Jeanne Downs (arrived at 7:54 p.m.)
Kim Reichelt
Kathie Steinberg

Also:

Paul Stein
Superintendent

Brad Crozier
Assistant Superintendent

Susan Bottan
Business Administrator

Chair Ellen Grieco convened the regular session at 7:01 P.M.; the meeting is being recorded by WayCAM. Barb distributed the November 14, 2016 regular session minutes for the Committee's review prior to approval of the Consent Agenda.

1. Budget Forum:

(a) Presentation of the Superintendent's Recommended FY18 Budget:

Paul presented a brief overview of his recommended FY18 budget which is based upon the guiding principles of maintaining and achieving academic excellence and remaining cognizant of fiscal constraints and the Finance Committee's guideline of no more than 2.5% for a town-wide increase. These principles are driven by the Wayland Schools UNITED goals.

In the early stages of developing the budget, principals were instructed to start with 0% increases in their non-personnel budgets and, although they are not included in the budget, the administrators developed a list of unmet needs. The process begins with a level services budget from the year before, however, it changes from year to year due to contractual obligations and enrollment shifts. The recommended budget is both foundational and forward thinking, which is represented by cornerstones and stepping stones. The foundation of the budget or cornerstones includes meeting class size guidelines, support staffing for the middle school cluster model, providing for both breadth and depth in program offerings at the high school, servicing students with special needs and the English language learners, continuing to offer a variety of after-school extra-curricular programs, maintaining the upkeep and maintenance of facilities, and supporting the infrastructure and hardware needed for instructional technology.

The enrollment shifts warrant adding a 5th grade classroom at Loker, a 1st grade classroom and the continuing need for an additional kindergarten classroom at Claypit Hill, as well as a .8 FTE staff reduction at the middle school in 8th grade but adding a .7 FTE at the high school for the incoming 9th grade, and additional teaching assistants for students with special needs PreK to 12. In terms of operations and facilities, there will be a significant savings of \$227,400, including about \$90,000 as a result of the solar and other energy savings work done within town. The new bus/transportation contract costs have increased by \$172,000. The increases in the budget represent \$1.1M, but when the savings are realized in several areas, the increases actually total \$901,873.

The stepping stones represent the philosophy that the district should move forward and accomplish more. However, keeping in mind the time, staffing, and funding limits, a strategic approach was taken to create pilots and build on past successes. Paul identified and explained the next steps regarding the following six stepping stones: 1) launch an elementary world language immersion program; 2) respond to the social/emotional and mental health well-being of the youngest students; 3) launch a middle school writing lab; 4) begin a high school interdisciplinary small learning community; 5) hire a night custodial supervisor and hire an outside contractor to service the HVAC systems on the roofs of the school buildings; and 6) hire a technology assistant at the high school to repair and troubleshoot computers in order to build capacity toward the vision for digital and blended learning.

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Overall, the total recommended budget represents \$38,624,706 or a 2.39 increase from last year. Paul informed the School Committee that there has been a budget revision/savings due to constant analysis of the personnel budget. Finally, Paul reviewed the unmet needs for the School Committee's consideration. These include, but are not limited to, a .50 FTE elementary school assistant principal, a .60 FTE middle school writing center teacher, and a 1.0 FTE high school academic center teaching assistant.

(b) Q & A Session between the Public and the School Committee:

Maureen Tillett thanked the School Committee and the Superintendent for valuing athletics and including it in the budget process. She commented that there are some sports that are still self-funded and under-funded, and she supports the work of the Athletic Director to keep all sports teams on the same level. Maureen also supports the implementation of a language immersion program in the elementary schools.

Nick Haddad expressed his excitement and the value of implementing a language immersion program at the elementary level. He asked if Wayland would consider the prospect of funding a full day kindergarten program, since the majority of students attend full day and a large number of towns have already done this. Paul responded that it would cost about \$600,000, and it would create cuts in the budget to stay within the FinCom Guidelines. Paul explained the hybrid model pilot class at Happy Hollow School and noted that it is being considered for the other elementary schools. It was suggested that a separate warrant article drafted by the School Committee on this topic would have to be submitted in time for Town Meeting; it could also be submitted by a petitioner. Brad explained the cost structure of the full day program. He added that there is a commitment to mitigate the lack of full day kindergarten across the district.

Tom Sciacca noted a correction in the Wayland Voters Network article that was sent out earlier in the day. He commented that those who are collecting Social Security benefits will not get an increase this year due to the lack of inflation. In his opinion, Wayland's town expenses always rise above inflation and present a problem for seniors and retirees. Tom does, however, support the language immersion program that is worthwhile and not so expensive to implement. He suggested that the School Committee look to not so affluent communities for program ideas that are inexpensive.

(c) Comments & Written Statements from the Public:

Tom Sciacca told a story about his visit to a South African school of about 650 kids with an average class size of 50 and not all students had chairs on which to sit. The total staff is 18 and includes 10-12 teachers, some assistants, a principal and an assistant principal. He likened the size of the school to Claypit Hill Elementary School in terms of students and noted his support to add an additional .5 FTE for an assistant principal to enhance the operation of the school rather than add to the teaching staff.

A resident acknowledged the increased cost of salaries and healthcare and the proposed budget as a whole. She asked how salary costs are managed when looking 5 to 10 years down the road. Ellen explained the collective bargaining process, including the last round of negotiations.

Jeanne arrived at 7:54 p.m.

Paul explained that there are contractual obligations to consider when preparing and beginning at a level services budget, but there are also unanticipated expenses to consider. Ellen and Barb added to the discussion in terms of the budget that is funded for the most part by the taxpayers. Kim referred to the per pupil costs that are lower than most towns in the state.

Tom also asked the School Committee to consider ways in which to control transportation costs, such as parent car pools.

2. **Financial Matters:**

(a) Review Schedule for Submitting Questions and Materials Needed for FY2018 Budget Review:

Barb distributed a budget schedule and a schedule by which to submit budget questions to the administrators. Barb informed the School Committee that given its budget schedule, the Finance Committee will attend a Finance Subcommittee meeting on January 4th at which time the FinCom will have an opportunity to ask questions related to the budget. The Finance Subcommittee will report back to the School Committee on January 5th.

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3. **Administrative/Procedural Matters:**

(a) Continued Discussion regarding Superintendent Search Process and Timing, including Selection of Screening Committee and Communications:

Jeanne updated the Committee regarding the superintendent search process, including the makeup of the screening committee to include 4 parents, 3 community members, 2 administrators, 3 teachers, and 2 support staff. Jeanne noted that Admin Council discussed the administrative representation on the screening committee. Brad confirmed that they would prefer to have 2 principals and a central office administrator. The School Committee agreed. Jeanne commented that the town-wide PTO will choose the parents, Admin Council will choose the administrators, WTA will choose the teachers, WESA will choose the support staff, and School Committee will choose the community members. Barb reviewed the interview process for the finalists, including the individual school visits. Jeanne reviewed the interview process for municipal staff by NESDEC, noting that a member of the FinCom will be included in the process.

The Committee reviewed the application and communications regarding the Screening Committee. The School Committee will review the applications from community members on January 17th and make its selections. Changes were made to the communication regarding the time commitment and the expectation of confidentiality during the process. Per Kathie's suggestion, language was added regarding the School Committee's goal to achieve a cross-section of the community. The application deadline is January 13th.

(b) Continued Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Funding for Exterior Security Cameras around School Grounds:

Barb noted that the source of funds for the security cameras will come from various accounts.

- Wayland High School - \$9,875 from the parking lot revolving account
- Wayland Middle School - \$6,775 from the building use fund
- Elementary Schools - \$14,980 from the BASE account

The ongoing costs are minimal, but Susan will confirm. A discussion ensued in terms of the ultimate use for the cameras.

Upon a motion duly made by Kim Reichelt, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve using \$9,875 from the parking lot revolving fund, \$6,775 from the building use fund, and \$14,980 from the BASE fund, for the security cameras at the various school locations.

(c) Continued Discussion of Selection of Peer Communities:

Kathie and Barb reviewed the analysis that was previously done. Based on the review, their recommendation is to remove Belmont from the current peer community list and add Bedford, since Bedford fits more with the metrics used. The administrators agreed given the work they have done in this regard. Kim commented on the information provided on ClearGov regarding peer towns.

4. **Consent Agenda:**

(a) Approval of Model UN Conference Trip:

(b) Approval of METCO Appeal Letter Donations (re-vote from 11/28 meeting)

(c) Approval of Minutes:

- Regular Session of November 14, 2016

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the consent agenda that includes the approval WHS Model UN conference trip and the November 14, 2016 regular session minutes as amended.

Jeanne and Kathie left the meeting before the vote regarding the METCO donations.

Upon a motion duly made by Barb Fletcher, seconded by Ellen Grieco, the School Committee voted (3-0) to approve the METCO appeal letter donations from the November 28th meeting.

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

None.

6. **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion duly made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the School Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Stein, Clerk
Wayland School Committee

Observers:

Tom Sciacca, WVN, BUZZ
Maureen Tillett, Wayland Boosters
Nick Haddad, Wayland

Corresponding Documentation:

1. Agenda & Backup Information
2. Budget Schedule
3. Screening Committee Application and Communication
4. Superintendent Search Document re: Makeup of Screening Committee
5. Comparison of Selected Community Indices
6. WHS Model UN Conference Trip Request
7. METCO Appeal Letter Donations
8. Regular Session Minutes of November 14, 2016