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# TOWN OF WAYLAND

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
LEA T. ANDERSON  
MARY M. ANTES  
THOMAS J. FAY  
CHERRY C. KARLSON  
DAVID V. WATKINS

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**  
**Joint Emergency Meeting of**  
**School Committee, Board of Health**  
**and Board of Selectmen**  
**Saturday, January 2, 2021**  
**11:30 a.m.**  
**Wayland Town Building**  
**Council on Aging Room**  
**41 Cochituate Road, Wayland, MA**

**Note: In compliance with the March 12, 2020 Massachusetts Office of the Governor's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 20, this meeting of the Board of Selectmen was live streamed on local broadcast on the WayCAM Government Channel and open to the public to view and participate via Zoom. No in-person attendance of members of the public was permitted. Public Comment was available by both telephone and Zoom during the time designated for Public Comment.**

**Attendance (with participation by video-teleconference via Zoom and WayCAM):**

**Board of Selectmen:** Lea T. Anderson, Mary M. Antes, Thomas J. Fay, Cherry C. Karlson, David V. Watkins

**Board of Health:** Robert Defrancesco, Susan E. Green, John G. Schuler, Arnold R. Soslow

**Absent:** Brian J. McNamara

**School Committee:** Jeanne Downs, Ellen Grieco, Kim Reichelt, Christopher Ryan, Kathie Steinberg

**Also participating by video-teleconference via Zoom and WayCAM:** Town Administrator Louise Miller, Information Technology Director Mike McCann, Health Director Julia Junghanns, Public Health Nurse Ruth Mori, School Physician Ellen Mahoney, and Superintendent of Schools Arthur Unobskey

**A1. Call to Order by Chair, Review the Agenda for the Public** At 11:41 a.m., C. Karlson called the emergency joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen (BoS), Board of Health (BoH) and School Committee (SC) to order when a quorum was available by video-teleconference. C. Karlson announced that the meeting would be broadcast and recorded for later broadcast by WayCAM in compliance with revised Open Meeting Law requirements. C. Karlson announced by full name each member of the BoS who was participating remotely and that no member was physically present at Town Building. C. Karlson announced that no in person attendance of members of the public would be permitted and announced the ways in which the public could participate by phone and via a virtual 'hand-raise' via Zoom. J. Downs conducted a roll call attendance by full name for each member of the SC who was participating remotely. S. Green announced by full name each member of the BoH who was participating remotely. C. Karlson reviewed the agenda and the protocols for the meeting. The participants would first review a document titled *Local Metrics for Wayland School Opening or Closure* issued on September 30, 2020, then have a joint discussion which would result in a recommendation to the Superintendent.

**A2. Announcements and Public Comment** There were no announcements. C. Karlson tabled the Public Comment until after the metrics were reviewed by the BoS, BoH and SC. C. Karlson noted that the Public Comment period would be limited to ten minutes.

**A3. To discuss and possibly vote recommendations regarding protocols about closing schools, pivoting to remote learning, and topics related to the reopening of schools on January 4.** C. Karlson asked the group to focus on the decision-making document to determine how to return to school on Monday Jan. 4, specifically whether to return to in-person learning or remote learning. The decision-making tool was divided into three areas: I. Activity Metrics II. Wayland School compliance with COVID-19 protocols III. Other Variables

**I. Activity Metrics: Local Metrics for Wayland School Opening or Closure** L. Miller reviewed the three COVID-19 indicators for Local Activity Metrics which included: 1) Two Week Case Count, 2) Average Daily Incidence Rate per 100,000 and 3) Percent Positivity. L. Miller reviewed the local data that showed an increase in spread of COVID-19 in Wayland. L. Miller reported that Wayland was currently in the yellow/moderate category but heading toward the more severe red-category. L. Miller noted that Health Director Julia Junghanns and Public Health Nurse Ruth Mori were reporting higher levels of community spread in the last week.

J. Junghanns noted an obvious recent increase in coronavirus spread at Wayland's retail businesses, restaurants, gyms, salons and assisted living facilities. J. Junghanns noted that she anticipated an additional uptick in household transmission due to the recent holidays. R. Mori reported that the contact tracers were continuing to trace the cases being reported, but Wayland was experiencing significant community spread which may be an indicator to pivot to remote learning for a week. A. Soslow noted that he did not agree with the data that was being characterized by the staff.

**II. Wayland School compliance with COVID-19 protocols: Local Metrics for Wayland School Opening or Closure** Superintendent of Schools Arthur Unobskey reviewed the second metric in the document which measures Wayland School compliance with COVID-19 protocols which includes: school social distancing, mask use, hand hygiene, grade/class cohorting, distancing on buses and parental attestation of student health. A. Unobskey felt that overall there was very good compliance with mask use and hand hygiene and had observed minimal spread in the buildings. A. Unobskey deduced that the eight recent cases in Cohort A were not likely contracted at school, because Cohort A was last physically in school on Dec. 15. Cohort B was last in the school buildings on Dec. 22, and had no known cases. A. Soslow expressed agreement with the characterization by A. Unobskey that the spread was not happening in the school buildings. K. Reichelt expressed concern about families being accurate on the required parental attestations and asked if there was data available that would indicate that they can trust the results from the parental attestations.

**III. Other Variables: Local Metrics for Wayland School Opening or Closure** L. Miller reviewed the third metric which measures other variables such as Wayland's ability to provide personnel and to conduct contact tracing.

L. Miller reported a specific staffing issue at the Middle School where the Schools would not be able to provide the appropriate staffing to support what is required. R. Mori indicated that the lack of medical personnel at the Middle School was the primary priority. K. Reichelt asked for clarification on the staffing issue. L. Miller reported that the staffing issue was a short-term absence for the upcoming week at the Middle School. R. Mori noted that this vacancy developed on Thursday after the BoH had its meeting on Wednesday. R. Mori reported that the Town does not have nursing support in place for the Middle School for the upcoming week and would not have support in place until Jan 11. Medical support is needed to staff the health rooms to be able to support some medical complexities of the current student body. Personnel in the substitute pool or other schools do not have the same qualifications and expertise to meet the current needs at the Middle School. R. Mori recommended that the Middle School shift to all remote learning for one week.

C. Ryan recognized the staffing issue and asked about resources. L. Miller noted that the Town had two full-time employees working on contract tracing as well as R. Mori, and a variety of other part-timers. J. Junghanns reported that there are four medical volunteers currently being trained, but can only commit part-time. L. Miller noted that there is a shortage of contact tracers available across the state. L. Miller noted that one case can take the entire Public Health Department to follow up with the close contacts, and that tracing continues to be demanding on staff. L. Miller gave an example where a single positive case in Wayland had 38 close contacts, and it took nine Health Department staff to conduct contract tracing for that one case; each close contact can take up to an hour. L. Miller noted that it is preferred to conduct contact tracing at the local level. There is a state-level contact tracing program that has less than a 50% rate of completion of contact tracing and low levels of satisfaction from its users.

E. Grieco asked if the restraints on the capacity for contract tracing would impact the ability to return to school on Monday. C. Karlson indicated that the resources described have a capacity that is dependent on the details of the specific contract tracing case. A. Soslow offered his own services to provide contract tracing, and suggested that J. Schuler would also be willing to help with contract tracing. D. Watkins asked a question about the ventilation to which L. Miller reported that the ventilation systems present no issues, and that the ventilation systems currently meet all code requirements and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Guidelines.

**Discussion: Local Metrics for Wayland School Opening or Closure** C. Karlson opened the topic for discussion. E. Grieco requested clarification that the discussion was to determine whether to pivot to all remote learning or to resume hybrid in-person cohort learning for the week of Jan 4. C. Karlson read the statement from the document: “All protocols and metrics will be examined collectively by the Town Administrator, School and Health Departments, in consultation with the BoS, BoH, and SC (or a designee of) and a recommendation will be made to the School Superintendent on opening or closing Wayland schools.”

K. Reichelt noted that there is a new variant of the coronavirus which is unknown and could make response problematic. C. Ryan asked for a comparison to other school districts planning to return to school and asked if other areas in Town would see restrictions in addition to schools. A. Unobskey reported that eight of the nearby nine communities he communicated with were returning in-person on Mon. Jan. 4; one was returning on Jan. 5.

E. Grieco asked for further clarification on the pending recommendation to the Superintendent. L. Miller indicated that the recommendation that needed attention would be for one week, beginning Mon. Jan. 4 and ending by Mon. Jan. 11; this would allow the contract tracers to support the travel attestations, and to fill the absences among the medical providers at the Middle School.

**A2. Announcements and Public Comment** At 1:37 p.m., C. Karlson opened the meeting for public comment for ten minutes and read a phone number for the public to call in and described a virtual ‘hand-raise’ via Zoom.

Traci Green, Old Connecticut Path, joined by teleconference and reported that she was an epidemiologist and was willing to volunteer her services to assist in contact tracing. T. Green anticipated that the need for contract tracers will increase and encouraged the Town to secure more personnel to assist. T. Green expressed concern about the fear-mongering associated with the increase in positivity rates. T. Green also encouraged the Town to track the number of people who are vaccinated in the community and include that data in the decision-making metrics.

Matthew Thomas, Alden Road, joined by teleconference and indicated that there were a lot of risk controls in place that may be challenged by an increase in community spread, and that it would be appropriate for the Town to act to reduce the rate of exposure.

Nancy Seward, Jeffrey Road, joined by teleconference to offer a comment and ask a question of the Superintendent. N. Seward commented that if the school building closed it would make sense to also close other areas like restaurants, bars and gyms. N. Seward asked A. Unobskey to clarify his statement about the travel guidelines. A. Unobskey later noted that the schools are following the state’s travel orders and guidelines.

Kori Rogers, President of the Wayland Teachers Association, joined by teleconference to supplement her submitted written comment, and noted that the schools focus on the students who are under 19 years, but the personnel are adults and are equally at risk. K. Rogers described that the school personnel are in consistent close contact with students and that social distancing is challenging for fourth graders. She indicated she was personally terrified during mask breaks, because students talk, engage and get close together. K. Rogers indicated that Special Educators also have unique exposure risks.

Joe Goldberg-Giuliano, Riverview Cir, joined by teleconference and commented that remote learning is not effective for five year olds; he also commented that if the Town would close the school buildings, it should also close restaurants, bars and gyms.

Joe Polizzotti, Indian Road, joined by teleconference and concurred with the previous comment that remote learning was ineffective and noted that there have been minimal reports of in-school spread. J. Polizzotti commented that it was a sweeping generalization that all residents had travelled over school break, and added that his family had not travelled and followed guidelines so that his children could go back to school.

C. Karlson closed public comment.

**Discussion: Local Metrics for Wayland School Opening or Closure** E. Mahoney recognized the complexity of the topic but recommended that the members also consider the value of children being present in school. J. Schuler summarized that he saw the only reason to not open the schools was to prevent spread from some of the families who may have traveled. R. Mori reiterated the lack of medical providers for the Middle School. A. Soslow indicated he had submitted a written opinion but reiterated that schools should continue with in-person learning, but that the Middle School should not be open. R. Defrancesco concurred. S. Green expressed concern for a surge due to post-

holiday spread and that travelers have not had time to be tested and receive the results, and a week of remote learning would allow more time for families to do that. S. Greene agreed the Middle School should not open.

### **Recommendation to the School Superintendent on opening or closing Wayland schools**

A. Soslow moved that the BoH recommend to the Superintendent that the Wayland Schools continue with a full hybrid model indefinitely. A. Soslow moved that the BoH believes that any school that does not have the required school nurse personnel is not in compliance. In discussion, K. Reichelt offered clarification to A. Soslow's written statement on the methods for which students can opt for all-remote learning formats. L. Miller recommended that the motions be amended and clarified that the medical coverage can be provided by personnel other than nurses, such as medics or other combinations of qualified personnel. A. Soslow amended his motion. A. Unobskey also recommended the motion be more specific about A. Soslow's statement on compliance.

C. Karlson suggested that the first motion be amended to state that the BoH recommends that the schools continue with the hybrid model, and the second to state that the BoH recommends that each school have sufficient medical coverage. R. Mori confirmed that the Town had exhausted all options to provide sufficient medical coverage at the Middle School, to no avail. S. Green voiced disagreement with the first statement and in favor of the second statement in the motion.

Motion 1: Roll Call Vote: YEA: R. Defrancesco, J. Schuler, A. Soslow. NAY: S. Green. ABSENT: Brian J. McNamara. ABSTAIN: none. Adopted 3-1.

Motion 2: Roll Call Vote: YEA: R. Defrancesco, S. Green., J. Schuler, A. Soslow. NAY: none. ABSENT: Brian J. McNamara. ABSTAIN: none. Adopted 4-0.

J. Downs suggested that the SC follow the BoH recommendation that schools continue with the hybrid model and that each school have sufficient medical coverage, and added that the Middle School does not have sufficient medical coverage and that the Middle School should pivot to full remote learning until coverage is sufficient. In discussion, K. Reichelt noted that there are challenges to in-person learning and encouraged families to be tested after travel and before returning to school. K. Steinberg suggested that the data may support that children are safer in school than when not in school.

Motion 1: Roll Call Vote: YEA: J. Downs, E. Grieco, C. Ryan, K. Steinberg. NAY: K. Reichelt. ABSENT: none. ABSTAIN: none. Adopted 4-1.

Motion 2: Roll Call Vote: YEA: J. Downs, E. Grieco, K. Reichelt, C. Ryan, K. Steinberg. NAY: none. ABSENT: none. ABSTAIN: none. Adopted 5-0.

C. Karlson suggested that the BoS also add a recommendation to request that families submit health and travel attestations on Sunday, rather than on Monday morning and recommended that school personnel reiterate the travel protocols for students, parents and teachers. C. Karlson recommended that the administration staff help support some of the non-medical issues around COVID-19. C. Karlson asked the BoS members to opine on the two recommendations. T. Fay, M. Antes and D. Watkins each expressed support for the BoH recommendations. L. Anderson expressed agreement with the BoH recommendation as well as the additional statements that C. Karlson suggested around the attestations, travel protocols, administrative staff and the impact of other businesses in Town.

Motion 1: Roll Call Vote: YEA: L. Anderson, M. Antes, T. Fay, C. Karlson, D. Watkins. NAY: none. ABSENT: none. ABSTAIN: none. Adopted 5-0.

Motion 2: Roll Call Vote: YEA: L. Anderson, M. Antes, T. Fay, C. Karlson, D. Watkins. NAY: none. ABSENT: none. ABSTAIN: none. Adopted 5-0.

C. Karlson summarized the recommendation to Superintendent A. Unobskey who agreed to send a strongly worded update to parents, students and personnel related to these BoH recommendations.

**A4. Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair 48 Hours in advance of the Meeting, if any** There were none.

**A5. Adjourn.** At 2:50 p.m., L. Anderson moved, seconded by T. Fay, that the BoS adjourn the meeting of the BoS. Roll Call Vote: YEA: L. Anderson, M. Antes, T. Fay, C. Karlson, D. Watkins. NAY: none. ABSENT: none. ABSTAIN: none. Adopted 5-0.

At 2:51 p.m., S. Green moved, seconded by J. Schuler, that the BoH adjourn the meeting of the BoH. Roll Call Vote: YEA: R. Defrancesco, S. Green., J. Schuler, A. Soslow. NAY: none. ABSENT: Brian J. McNamara. ABSTAIN: none. Adopted 4-0.

**A3. To discuss and possibly vote recommendations regarding protocols about closing schools, pivoting to remote learning, and topics related to the reopening of schools on January 4.** J. Downs invited the SC to a discussion to address the logistics of carrying out the BoH recommendation in regard to the pivot to remote learning at the Middle School. K. Reichelt expressed frustration with residents who are not compliant with the guidelines and voiced that the current situation was foreseeable. E. Grieco suggested to put the topic of resource planning/nursing personnel on a future SC agenda. A. Unobskey felt the benefits of the hybrid remote/in-person schooling outweighed the risks of in-building spread. There was a discussion about reducing the risk of spread during mask breaks, recess and meal times.

At 3:13 p.m., J. Downs moved, seconded by E. Grieco, that the SC adjourn the meeting of the SC. Roll Call Vote: YEA: J. Downs, E. Grieco, C. Ryan, K. Steinberg, K. Reichelt. NAY: none. ABSENT: none. ABSTAIN: none. Adopted 5-0.

**Items Distributed for Information and Use by Board of Selectmen, Board of Health, and School Committee at the Meeting of January 2, 2021**

1. Local Metrics for Wayland School Opening or Closure, dated September 30, 2020  
[https://www.wayland.k12.ma.us/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_1036352/File/2020 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Updates/Town Updates/Decision Criteria for Opening or Closing Schools 9.30.20.pdf](https://www.wayland.k12.ma.us/UserFiles/Servers/Server_1036352/File/2020%20Novel%20Coronavirus%20(COVID-19)%20Updates/Town%20Updates/Decision%20Criteria%20for%20Opening%20or%20Closing%20Schools%209.30.20.pdf)
2. WPS COVID Metrics Dashboard  
<https://sites.google.com/waylandps.org/wps-covid-dashboard/metrics-dashboard>
3. Email from Dr. Soslow dated January 2, 2021

**Items included in the Agenda Packet during the Board of Selectmen Meeting of January 2, 2021**

1. There were none.

**Correspondence**

Emails to School Committee as Public Comment

1. Jessica Villatro (12/31/2020)
2. Katie Lee (1/1/2021)
3. Michelle Shields (1/2/2021)
4. Kristen Snyder (1/2/2021)
5. Linda Hines (1/2/2021)
6. Wayland Teachers Association (WTA) via Kori Rogers, WTA President (1/2/2021)