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**WAYLAND** - The state Attorney General's Office is recommending the School Committee pay a \$500 fine after it intentionally violated the state Open Meeting Law.

The committee did not properly respond to a request by Wayland attorney George Harris for minutes from several non-public sessions pertaining to personnel matters, including the hiring and contract negotiations for the new superintendent, Assistant Attorney General KerryAnne Kilcoyne wrote in an Oct. 16 letter to committee Chairwoman Ellen Grieco.

Harris requested the minutes on June 26 and the committee did not respond within the required 10 days. Harris filed an Open Meeting Law complaint with the committee on July 18. The committee discussed the complaint July 24 and voted to publicly release minutes from several non-public sessions. The committee provided relevant minutes to Harris on July 25 and 26, Kilcoyne wrote.

“The committee should have informed the complainant within 10 days of his request that it was conducting a review of the executive session minutes. ... While we commend the committee for taking remedial action in response to the complaint by promptly reviewing and approving minutes for release at its next meeting, we nevertheless find that the committee violated the Open Meeting Law by failing to properly respond to a request for minutes.”

The Attorney General's Office found the violation was intentional because it told the committee twice last year that it must respond to requests for non-public minutes within 10 days. The office could have recommended up to a \$1,000 fine.

“We recommend the lesser fine of \$500, rather than a \$1,000 fine, because the committee acknowledged that it failed to properly respond to the request for minutes and took immediate corrective action by promptly reviewing and approving the minutes for release,” Kilcoyne wrote.

The committee's options include taking part in a state hearing about the matter and reaching a settlement agreement with the Attorney General's Office.

Harris, who has other Open Meeting Law complaints pending against the School Committee, is pleased with this ruling. Fines get the attention of boards, he said.

Wayland boards have faced numerous Open Meeting Law complaints and some fines. The town paid a \$1,000 fine last year after the Board of Selectmen failed to promptly approve meeting minutes.

Board members should pay fines as individuals rather than have the town pay them, Harris said.

The committee acknowledged in a public meeting the records were not produced within the 10-day window, Grieco said Friday.

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