

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Our mission is for all students to be successful, engaged, lifelong learners.

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 11, 2011
City Hall – Kyrouz Auditorium
7:00 p.m.

Members

Val Gilman, Chairperson
Melissa Teixeira, Vice Chairperson
Kathleen Clancy, Secretary
Melissa Sweet
Roger Garberg
Tony Gross

Administration Present

Interim Superintendent Dr. Joseph Connelly
Assistant Superintendent Brian Tarr
New Superintendent Dr. Richard Safier
CFO Tom Markham
Ellen Sibley, Beeman Principal
Debra Lucey, O'Maley Principal
Jean Perry, West Parish Principal
Gregg Bach, East Gloucester Principal

Recorded by Cape Ann TV

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Gilman called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chairperson Gilman stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools and recognized CFO Tom Markham, Beeman Principal Ellen Sibley, East Gloucester Principal Gregg Bach, Assistant Superintendent Brian Tarr, West Parish Principal Jean Perry, new superintendent Dr. Richard Safier, O'Maley Principal Debra Lucey, O'Maley Assistant Principal Kevin McCormick, O'Maley Assistant Principal Sara Hoomis, O'Maley teacher Leslie Sellers, and Steven Fletcher from the Gloucester Daily Times. Chairperson Gilman also wished Veterans Principal Cherylann Parker a speedy recovery from her injury due to a recent fall and thanked Cape Ann TV for being at the meeting.

At this time, the Agenda was taken out of order.

X. ACTION

- A. Approval of One-Day Liquor Licenses Request by the Cape Ann Symphony for their Fuller School Performances** – Elizabeth Frere Jones of the Cape Ann Symphony requested the School Committee's endorsement to obtain one-day beer and wine licenses on certain dates.

After discussion, on a motion by Chairperson Gilman, seconded by Mr. Garberg, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to authorize one-day liquor licenses for the Cape Ann Symphony on the following dates:

Saturday, September 24, 2011
Saturday, November 26, 2011
Sunday, November 27, 2011
Sunday, March 25, 2012
Saturday, May 12, 2012
Saturday, July 21, 2012 at GHS Auditorium

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

IV. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON – Chairperson Gilman commented that it is a bittersweet night because, beginning on Monday, a fabulous new superintendent is taking over the school district, and the committee is very much looking forward to that. However, tonight is Dr. Connelly’s last night as a full member of the School Committee team. Chairperson Gilman stated that it has been a wonderful year working with him and that he has been a great leader and mentor. She presented Dr. Connelly with a group photo of the School Committee receiving their award at the conference in Hyannis last summer.

V. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL – None present.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. School Committee Meeting of April 13, 2011
2. School Committee Executive Session Meeting of April 13, 2011 – **Confidential – To be released**
3. School Committee Meeting of April 27, 2011
4. School Committee Executive Session Meeting of April 27, 2011 – **Confidential – To be released**
5. Joint City Council Budget & Finance Committee and School Committee Building & Finance Sub-Committee of February 17, 2011

B. Schedule of Future Meetings

Program Subcommittee – Friday, May 13, 2011 at 9:45 a.m.

Location: Superintendent’s Conference Room

Agenda: To be announced

Building & Finance Sub-Committee – Wednesday, May 18, 2011 at 4:45 p.m.

Location: Superintendent’s Conference Room

Agenda: To be announced

School Committee – Wednesday, May 25, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

Location: Kyrouz Auditorium – City Hall

Agenda: To be announced

C. Acceptance of DESE Grants

1. To accept the Academic Support Services – Summer Program grant in the amount of \$16,290
2. To accept an increase of \$2,152 in the ARRA-Title I grant

Kathy Clancy removed Item A5 from the Consent Agenda, and Mr. Garberg removed the Program Subcommittee Meeting from the Schedule of Future Meetings for further discussion.

It was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to approve the Consent Agenda as noted above.

Note: Chairperson Gilman noted that Mayor Kirk is traveling at a mayor's conference and will not be at the meeting tonight.

VII. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

A. Review of School Improvement Plans for 2011/2012

1. Beeman Memorial Elementary School – Principal Ellen Sibley requested that the School Committee take a “field trip” with her and presented a slide show entitled “Beeman School Data Work.” Ms. Teixeira thanked her for her presentation and stated that Mrs. Sibley is an extraordinary principal. There was a discussion of DIBELS standards and scores and concerns expressed by the site base council.

Principal Sibley also reviewed a slide presentation on the Beeman School SIP, including their mission statement, 2010/2011 accomplishments, 2011/2012 goals, and MCAS scores. A discussion was held on the Investigations program and participation in the after-school programs. Chairperson Gilman thanked Principal Sibley for her presentation.

Note: Chairperson Gilman welcomed Assistant Superintendent Shayne Trubisz.

2. O'Maley Middle School – Principal Debra Lucey acknowledged the O'Maley site base council members, including teacher Leslie Sellers, who worked very hard on the school improvement plan. She then reviewed a slide presentation on the O'Maley SIP, including a summary of ELA and math goals, 2010-2011 initiatives, and goals for 2011-2012. Mrs. Sweet thanked Principal Lucey for everything she has done at O'Maley. There was a discussion of the need to focus more on math. School Committee member Melissa Teixeira suggested that the district considers introducing a program “Rachel's Challenge,” which focuses on kindness. Ms. Sellers spoke about the curriculum, culture and morale at O'Maley and complimented the leadership team there. She also thanked the School Committee and Dr. Connelly and welcomed Dr Safier. Chairperson Gilman thanked Ms. Sellers for her comments.

Dr. Trubisz stated that the Investigations program is not a problematic program but that there is a need to supplement it. She also stated that we need coaches to continue to provide professional development.

Note: Principals Ellen Sibley, Debra Lucey and Jean Perry left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

At this time, the Agenda was taken out of order.

VIII. RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Connelly recognized GHS JROTC national champion, Sienneca Service, and read an article from the Gloucester Daily Times about the national championships in Florida last week. He noted that the entire Gloucester team placed fourth in the unarmed competition and eleventh in the armed team competition. Dr. Connelly congratulated the entire JROTC team and stated that he is very proud of Ms. Service. He suggested that the School Committee invite the entire team to an upcoming School Committee meeting to be recognized in front of the committee.

Mrs. Sweet recognized the GHS Business Management class for designing and selling aluminum water bottles. She indicated that all proceeds will go to a scholarship for a business management graduate this year.

Chairperson Gilman recognized the GEF for their wonderful job in leading the arts festival. She stated that she had the privilege of kicking it off with Mayor Kirk and received a proclamation from the mayor which proclaims May 7th to be “Gloucester Public Schools Art Festival Day.” Chairperson Gilman noted that a large number of faculty and administration were in attendance at the art festival. Kathy Clancy expressed amazement at the talent of the chorus that performed with the Docksidiers, as well as the talent of high school students in the talent show. Mr. Garberg was impressed with the chorus’ performance and the display of children’s art in the museums. He also recognized Jane Cunningham for the amazing work she did putting the arts festival together.

Chairperson Gilman also recognized a collaborative effort by Lisa Smith at Cape Ann TV, who is leading an after-school program to teach teenagers how to interview, film and edit videos. Chairperson Gilman and GHS athlete/scholar A.J. Mizzoni had the opportunity to be interviewed by junior, Patrice Kelly, about the Gloucester Pride program’s adult code of conduct. She expressed appreciation that so many groups in Gloucester are working together for the benefit of our youth.

VII. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES (Continued)

B. Superintendent’s Report – Interim Superintendent Dr. Connelly updated the School Committee on the following matters:

- MSBA Green Repair Roof Project Update
- Personnel Update for 2011/2012

- 2010/2011 School Budget End-of-Year Projection – Dr. Connelly reviewed the year-end projection and additional anticipated charges, resulting in an adjusted year-end unspent balance of \$193,207, which does not include the \$75,000 contribution from the rink. Dr. Connelly stressed the importance of having the Scott Foresman reading materials in all five elementary schools in September. He recommended earmarking \$144,000 of the unspent balance for this purpose and transferring \$56,000 from the unemployment line item to cover the full cost of the materials. Chairperson Gilman agreed that it is absolutely imperative that we hold onto this important literacy program.

A discussion was held on delaying payment of \$12,000 in delinquent accounts until funds are available. Kathy Clancy stated that she is not sure that the School Department's good faith efforts to contribute to snow and ice costs are being reciprocated on the city side. Therefore, she recommended that the School Committee continue fighting for the \$75,000 contribution from the rink. Mr. Garberg agreed, stating that he expects the city to honor that commitment.

Note: Dr. Trubisz left the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

- Restoration List for FY 2012 School Budget if additional money becomes available
- Upcoming Visits to Elementary Schools by Dr. Safier
- Final Comments

IX. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Personnel Sub-Committee Report of March 10, 2011** – Chairperson Teixeira reported that the Personnel Subcommittee discussed the following matters:

- Procedures for employees requesting time off
- Job description and qualifications of GAEP employees
- Health insurance audit – Mr. Markham reported on the recent health insurance audits performed in Haverhill and Wakefield. He believes our audit can be conducted in-house to save money, since our district has fewer employees. He spoke about the process and timing of conducting such an audit.

Ms. Teixeira made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Sweet, that the School District move forward with an in-house health insurance audit. Kathy Clancy expressed concern about the timing of the audit. After discussion, Chairperson Gilman recommended tabling this matter until the next School Committee meeting on May 25, 2011, to allow the full committee to review the minutes of the Personnel Subcommittee meeting and to post it on the agenda. Ms. Teixeira withdrew her motion.

X. DISCUSSION

A. FY 2011 Year End Budget Projection Update – See Agenda Item VII.B.

B. Preparation for City Council Budget and Finance Committee Meeting of May 12, 2011 – Dr. Connelly reminded the committee that the Draft 3 budget calls for less than a 1 percent increase in this year's budget and is very responsible to the city's fiscal needs. He noted that because of staff reductions that have already taken place, the total salary increase in the FY12 budget is only \$3,604 over this year's budget, and non-salary expenses reflect a \$144,000 decrease. However, there is a gap of \$628,000 from what the mayor's budget recommends.

Dr. Connelly suggested that tomorrow night, the School Committee may want to talk more about this gap. He also indicated that he has strong thoughts on what should and should not happen. For example, one of the mayor's suggestions is to remove the \$150,000 salary reserve account for next year's salary negotiations. Dr. Connelly is concerned that if the School Committee does not have any money to negotiate with next year, the ability to bargain effectively will be dependent on getting money from free cash. He also recommended against under-budgeting the unemployment line item in light of the number of layoffs that have taken place this year.

Dr. Connelly stated that it is important to point these issues out to the City Council tomorrow night to make them realize that closing the gap of \$628,000 is not an easy task. He will also note to the City Council that the School Department is trying hard to keep salaries competitive so we can retain the teachers we want in Gloucester. Kathy Clancy would also like Dr. Connelly to emphasize our educational goals and the dedication of our staff, and Mrs. Sweet would like him to stress that we want to keep our students in the Gloucester Public Schools.

Ms. Teixeira reminded the committee that all eight contracts will be up for negotiation next year. She stated that it will be next to impossible to negotiate if all we have is the possibility of free cash and indicated that she will not support removing money from the salary reserve account line item.

Chairperson Gilman stated that she was interviewed by Steven Fletcher about the difference between wages and benefits for school staff and city staff (\$1 million and \$644,000 respectively). She pointed out the difference in the number of employees the city has as opposed to the schools.

Chairperson Gilman read the following from the Mayor's FY12 Budget Transmittal for the City Council Review. The mayor's proposed city budget includes approximately \$644,000 in wages and benefits. The administration, unlike the School Department, has not budgeted for any contracts that have not settled in FY11 or for future contract negotiations." Chairperson Gilman stated that the School Committee has to bargain in good faith and put something in our budget because we do not have the flexibility to find free cash for contract negotiations.

Chairperson Gilman would like to also mention the importance of highlighting the educational needs for the \$200,000 for the Scott Foresman reading program textbooks at tomorrow night's meeting. She would also like to present a wish list of items identified by Dr. Connelly's staff that would make the greatest positive impact on teaching and learning (restoration items). Dr. Connelly noted that some of the restoration items on the list come from the recent CPR audit.

- C. City Charter Update** – Mr. Gross updated the School Committee on the review of the City Charter.

After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Mrs. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to establish an ad hoc committee to review Section 4 of the City Charter and make recommendations.

The School Committee agreed that Mr. Gross will chair the ad hoc committee and that Ms. Teixeira and Chairperson Gilman will serve on the committee. Chairperson Gilman thanked Mr. Gross for serving on the City Council ad hoc committee.

XI. ACTION

- B. School Committee Access to Information Right Under City Charter** – Chairperson Gilman reviewed Sections 4-10(b) and (d) of the City Charter with respect to requesting city staff to appear before the School Committee. Unlike last month's denied requests of city staff from school committee meeting attendance, she reported that Mayor Kirk assured her that she would not have any conflicts that would prohibit Mike Hale and Suzanne Egan's attendance at the May 18th B&F subcommittee meeting. Chairperson Gilman recommended using the City Charter proactively, as required, in order to ensure that the Superintendent can focus on teaching and learning and not be distracted by administrative issues that should be handled in school committee meetings. Her drafted motion to invoke the terms of the city charter was not necessary.
- C. Policy File: KF-E – Recommended Rate Changes, Effective 2011-2012** – Dr. Connelly reviewed existing policy KF regarding rental charges for school facilities and equipment and the GPS Building Use Rates chart. He indicated that the B&F Subcommittee had discussed reducing the charges for custodians last fall. However, that matter was not brought forward to the full committee, and the old rates are still being charged. Ms. Teixeira stated that B&F was waiting for further information on whether the School Committee can set custodial rates for custodians who are now employees of the city. Mr. Gross pointed out that, under the City Charter, the DPW cannot set fees. The fees must be approved by the School Committee or the City Council. Dr. Connelly recommended that this issue be revisited at the upcoming B&F meeting on May 18, 2011 and stated that he will let the GFAA know that this matter will be on the agenda in the event they would like to attend.

- D. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement Between the Gloucester Association of Educational Paraprofessionals and the Gloucester School Committee – To be discussed in Executive Session.**

XII. OTHER COMMUNICATION

A. For Your Information

1. Email (4/27/11) from Kathleen Clancy regarding House Amendment #456
2. Memo (5/10/11) from Mayor Kirk regarding FY12 Budget Transmittal

Chairperson Gilman reminded committee members that the governance meeting will be held on Saturday, May 21, 2011 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Fuller School. She also reminded them that she had sent out a survey of topics they felt were most important to discuss and requested that the surveys be returned by this weekend so she and Dr. Safier can come up with the final agenda on Monday.

B. Further Discussion

1. Approval of Minutes of the Joint City Council Budget & Finance Committee and School Committee Building & Finance Subcommittee of February 17, 2011 – Kathy Clancy reviewed the amendments to be made to these minutes.

On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Teixeira, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to approve the minutes of the Joint City Council Budget & Finance Committee and School Committee Building & Finance Subcommittee of February 17, 2011, including the amendments made by Kathy Clancy and Ms. Teixeira.

2. Scheduling of Program Subcommittee meeting on Friday, May 13, 2011 at 9:45 a.m. – Mr. Garberg expressed concern about whether this meeting was posted. Chairperson Gilman stated that she is sure it was posted at City Hall. Dr. Connelly will check with Stephanie Delisi tomorrow morning, and Ms. Teixeira will check the police station.

Ms. Teixeira requested that Program Subcommittee review the voc ed program and receive a report from the current Director of Vocation on improvements that have been made since he has come aboard. She also believes an audit of the voc ed program took place and would like Program Subcommittee to report on that audit. Program Subcommittee Chairperson Garberg indicated that the voc ed program is on the agenda for June.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Mr. Gross, it was unanimously

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Gilman – yes

Ms. Teixeira – yes

Kathy Clancy – yes

Mr. Garberg – yes

Mrs. Sweet – yes

Mr. Gross – yes

To enter into Executive Session at 10:25 p.m. for the purpose of discussing contractual negotiations with union personnel and to enter back into regular session for the purpose of adjournment only.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Mrs. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of May 11, 2011 at 11:00 p.m.

All reference documents and reports are filed in the Superintendent's office.

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*