

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

Amended School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 22, 2014
City Hall – Kyrouz Auditorium
7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Jonathan Pope, Chairman
Melissa Teixeira, Vice Chairperson
Kathy Clancy, Secretary
Tony Gross
Michelle Sweet
Jack O'Maley

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Assistant Superintendent
Hans Baumhauer, Director of Finance
and Operations
Erik Anderson, GHS Principal

Recorded by Cape Ann TV

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- I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Pope called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.
- II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**
- III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** – None.
- IV. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON** – None.
- V. RECOGNITIONS** – None.
- VI. GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – Jordan Westling and Casey introduced themselves and updated the committee on the following events at Gloucester High School: JROTC rifle drill; students accepted to North Shore Community College; students interviewed by Harvard, MIT and Yale; mid-terms; class dues; parking problems at school due to parking ban; and the “Rule of 90” (students who have a 90 or above in a class should be exempt from taking the final).
- VII. CONSENT AGENDA**
- A. Approval of Minutes**
1. School Committee Meeting of January 8, 2014
 2. Building & Finance Subcommittee Meeting of January 15, 2014
- B. Acceptance of Gift** – \$500.00 from Exxon Mobil Corporation and Sandy Bay Service Center to GHS
- C. Approval of Warrants** – Cover Sheets
- D. Approval of Transfers**

- E. Acceptance of GEF Grant** – \$7,992.80 to O’Maley Innovation Middle School for the upgrading and repair of theater equipment

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

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

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

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

- B. Advanced Placement/SAT Report** – First, Principal Erik Anderson reported that the “Rule of 90” has been officially reinstated at the high school. He then gave a presentation on MCAS performance, PSAT participants, SAT scores, and the average number of SAT and ACT test takers. He noted that his goal is to increase the number of test takers and to increase their performance. Mr. Anderson also reviewed the benefits of the AP program, current AP course offerings and enrollment, the number of test takers, scoring, 2013 AP Scholar Award recipients, and challenges to be addressed.

The following matters were discussed:

- Increasing awareness of the ACT and PSAT
- Guidance department’s role in increasing the number of test takers
- Career Awareness Day
- SAT prep courses
- John and Abigail Adams Scholarship

- A. Bay State Reading Institute – Overview** – Dr. Safier reviewed the BSRI Schools 2013 MCAS data report, including the key findings, improvement in school pedagogy, MCAS gains, closing of the proficiency gap, and progress towards goals. Reading coaches Peggy Brown (East Gloucester), Alexandria Osburn (Plum Cove), and Adrienne Ricci-Munn (West Parish) shared how BSRI has supported their schools, and Ed Moscovitch, Chairman and co-founder of BSRI, spoke about the BSRI model, including the challenges of making changes in the classroom, reciprocal teaching, and giving teachers and principals a sense of ownership.

(A 5-minute break was taken at this time.)

- C. Mid-Year District Improvement Plan** – Mr. Bach reviewed the evidence of effectiveness with respect to curriculum mapping and the progress towards meeting the ELA PPI and SGP. He stated that the energy that was going into development of a benchmark/common assessment system has been redirected to develop District-Determined Measures (DDMs).

Dr. Safier reviewed the evidence of effectiveness with respect to Professional Learning Communities and implementation of BSRI at all five elementary schools. He encouraged committee members to visit classrooms and sit in on data meetings.

Mr. Bach reported on the use of data to support and inform instruction, including analysis of common assessments. He stated that a DDM advisory team will be meeting soon to survey existing and potential DDMs and develop a plan that will be presented in May.

Finally, Dr. Safier reported on development of a professional culture, communications and public relations, implementation of Second Step in all five elementary schools, the updated special education policy manual, and improvement of academic performance of special education students.

There was a discussion about funding for the development of DDMs. Mr. Bach noted that the Race to the Top grant has been helpful but that it is ending this year. He is not aware of any additional funding for this purpose.

Dr. Safier noted that the regulations and our new contract agreement indicate that the DDMs will be determined by the superintendent. However, the way they measure impact on student achievement will be negotiated. He stated that the union has already indicated which ones they feel have an impact on working conditions. Dr. Safier noted that the process will be as inclusive as possible so that there is an investment on the part of the teachers.

D. Superintendent's Goals – Dr. Safier reviewed his goals for calendar year 2014.

On a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to accept the Superintendent's Goals.

E. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Safier updated the committee on the following matters:

1. School Choice – Kathy Clancy suggested publicizing all of the opportunities available at O'Maley and the high school, as well as offering tours for parents and students and printing testimonials in the local paper.
2. PARCC
3. Update on House Bill 524, An Act Raising the School Dropout Age

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

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to accept the Superintendent's Report.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Personnel Subcommittee of January 14, 2014 – No report necessary (mediation session).

B. Building & Finance Subcommittee of January 15, 2014 – Chairperson Clancy reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the food service lunch balance, the Sentinel Health Insurance overage, and unanticipated special education out-of-district expenses at its meeting on January 15, 2014.

After discussion, on a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was

VOTED: 5 in favor, 1 abstained (Ms. Teixeira) to authorize the CFO to transfer the amount of \$5,000.00 from the Central Office Contingency Fund to the appropriate account for the purpose of pursuing legal action for the collection of bad debt owed to the Food Service Department.

Ms. Teixeira noted that she abstained from this vote to avoid any potential conflict of interest that may arise from her employment at Gloucester District Court. She also explained the issue with the GIC and Sentinel Health Insurance.

After discussion, on a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to authorize the CFO to transfer the amount of \$92,000.00 from the Central Office Contingency Fund to the appropriate account to pay for the unanticipated Sentinel Health Insurance overage.

After discussion, on a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Teixeira, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to authorize the CFO to transfer the amount of \$68,000.00 from the Central Office Contingency Fund to the appropriate account to pay for unanticipated special education out-of-district expenses.

Dr. Safier reported that the \$68,000 covers the cost of a half year of expenses for two special education students who moved into the district this year and that we can expect double that cost plus the usual cost of living increase for next year.

Kathy Clancy stated that since we are asking for free cash, it is important to draw down the contingency fund so that the City Council knows that we have these unanticipated expenses. The free cash would backfill the contingency fund in the event other expenses arise in the spring.

X. ACTION

A. Approval of Transfers – See Item IX.B.

1. To approve a transfer of funds to pursue legal action for collection of bad debt owed to the Food Service Department
2. To approve a transfer of funds to pay unanticipated Sentinel Health Insurance overage
3. To approve a transfer of funds to pay unanticipated Special Education out-of-district expenses

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

- A. MSBA Project Update** – Dr. Safier reported that a pre-approval meeting was held at the MSBA on January 16th to look at the status of the agreements and documents to ensure everything is in place. The vote by the MSBA board to approve the West Parish project is set for January 29th.

Dr. Safier noted that the City Council Planning & Development Committee met today and approved the special permit application for a height variance. The application will go before the City Council on January 28th for a public hearing and vote. He stated that the CIAB will be reviewing the West Parish proposal on January 23rd.

Finally, Dr. Safier stated that on January 30th, a subcommittee of the School Building Committee will be conducting interviews for the Construction Manager at Risk. The next building committee meeting will be held on February 6, 2014 to discuss the schedule going forward, etc.

- B. Note from Chairperson Pope** – Chairperson Pope noted that the health insurance issue should be added to the joint City Council/School Committee meeting agenda.
- C. School Committee Directory and Subcommittee Assignments** – Kathy Clancy and Michelle Sweet will be added as liaisons to the Sick Bank. Ms. Teixeira will be added as liaison to the Special Education Parent Advisory Committee, and Kathy Clancy will be added as liaison to Information Technology and Youth Initiatives/Teen Mentoring. Finally, Ms. Sweet indicated that she will call Joan Whitney at the Health Department to find out about Healthy Lifestyles.
- D. Early Release Day** – Dr. Safier stated that GHS administration has requested that the early release day on January 28, 2014 be rescheduled to another date in light of midterms, etc.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to revise the 2013-2014 School Calendar to reflect a full day of school at the high school on January 28, 2014 and an early release day at the high school on a future date to be determined.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None. Chairman Pope noted that the committee is still waiting to hear back from the nurses.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT – On a motion by Ms. Sweet, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of January 22, 2014 at 9:59 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*