

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 25, 2012
City Hall – Kyrouz Auditorium
7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Jonathan Pope, Chairman
Val Gilman, Vice Chairperson
Kathy Clancy, Secretary
Melissa Teixeira
Roger Garberg
Tony Gross
Mayor Carolyn Kirk

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Assistant Superintendent Brian Tarr
CFO Tom Markham
Ann-Marie Jordan, Health Coordinator
Dr. William Goodwin, GHS Principal
Mark Bedrosian, Dean of Academic Affairs
Ellen Clarke, Guidance Director
David DiPietro, AP Coordinator

Recorded by Cape Ann TV

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pope called the meeting to order at 7:05 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 – Chairman Pope welcomed Cape Ann TV and requested feedback from the community about whether they watch the meetings on television and whether the committee can be seen and heard. He also commented on the tremendous amount of work that the School Committee has on its agenda for the next few months, such as budget issues, the request to declare Fuller School surplus, and the possibility of building a new school in West Gloucester. In addition, Chairman Pope stated that the School Committee will try to make the agenda process more streamlined in the future.

V. RECOGNITIONS – Dr. Safier stated that Brian Tarr will be retiring from the assistant superintendent’s position. He reviewed his roles, committee work, and accomplishments in the district, as well as comments written about Mr. Tarr. Dr. Safier indicated that Mr. Tarr will continue working in the district as a consultant. He thanked him for his service, his consultation, his support, and for the care he has shown to GPS and to the City of Gloucester.

The members of the School Committee thanked Mr. Tarr for his work ethic, dependability, and conscientiousness and wished him happiness in his retirement. Mayor Kirk stated that the city is going to name something after him to recognize his dedication to the city over the past 33 years. Chairman Pope stated that Mr. Tarr’s father would be very proud of him, as the School Committee is, and presented him with a gift from Cape Ann Savings Bank.

Mr. Tarr stated that he is retiring knowing that the district is in good hands and expressed his thanks for the opportunity to work for the GPS for the last 33 years. He received a standing ovation from everyone at the meeting.

VI. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL – Eleanor Keller, Erin Jermyn and Trina Lafata introduced themselves and updated the School Committee on the following events at Gloucester High School: midterms, scholarships, Secret Pals, Polar Plunge, drama festival, hockey team, and the talent show on April 15 and 16. Ms. Keller thanked Dr. Safier and Mrs. Gilman in advance for speaking to the student council on Monday.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. School Committee Meeting of January 11, 2011
2. School Committee Executive Session Meeting of January 11, 2012 – Confidential

B. Schedule of Future Meetings

Personnel Subcommittee – Tuesday, January 24, 2012 at 4:45 p.m.

Location: Superintendent's Office

Program Subcommittee – Friday, February 3, 2012 at 9:45 a.m.

Location: Superintendent's Conference Room

School Committee – Wednesday, February 8, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

Location: City Hall – Kyrouz Auditorium

Building & Finance Subcommittee – Wednesday, February 15, 2012 at 4:45 p.m.

Location: Superintendent's Conference Room

C. Acceptance of Gift

To accept a gift in the amount of \$393.30 from the Target Take Charge of Education Program to GHS.

Mayor Kirk removed the Schedule of Future Meetings from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

On a motion by Chairman Pope, seconded by Mrs. Gilman, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor zero opposed, to approve the Consent Agenda as noted above.

The Schedule of Future Meetings was revised as follows:

Personnel Subcommittee – Tuesday, January 24, 2012 at 4:45 p.m.

Location: Superintendent’s Office

Ad Hoc Governance Subcommittee – Monday, February 6, 2012 at 6:30 p.m.

Location: Superintendent’s Conference Room

Program Subcommittee – Tuesday, February 7, 2012 at 8:30 a.m.

Location: Superintendent’s Conference Room

Joint City Council/School Committee – Tuesday, February 7, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

Location: West Parish School Auditorium

Agenda: Presentation by MassDevelopment

School Committee – Wednesday, February 8, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

Location: City Hall – Kyrouz Auditorium

Ad Hoc Policy Manual Subcommittee – Monday, February 13, 2012 at 5:30 p.m.

Location: Superintendent’s Conference Room

Building & Finance Subcommittee – Wednesday, February 15, 2012 at 4:45 p.m.

Location: Superintendent’s Conference Room

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

VOTED: 7 in favor zero opposed, to approve the Schedule of Future Meetings as revised.

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

X. DISCUSSION/ACTION

E. Head Injuries and Concussion Policy – 1st Reading – Mrs. Gilman noted that the Program Subcommittee did a careful first reading of the policy on Friday and made a few very minor changes. She stated that the policy was drafted using templates from MASC and MASS.

After discussion, on a motion by Mrs. Gilman, seconded by Mayor Kirk, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor zero opposed, to waive the first reading of the Head Injuries and Concussion Policy, File JJIF.

After discussion, on a motion by Mrs. Gilman, seconded by Ms. Teixeira, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor zero opposed, to approve the first reading of the Head Injuries and Concussion Policy, File JJIF.

Dr. Safier indicated the Department of Public Health requires submission of the policy by March 1st. Ann-Marie Jordan reviewed the collaborative process of drafting the policy and ensuring that the district is in compliance with it. She noted that nurse leader Cindy Juncker was instrumental in spearheading the creation of the policy. Ms. Jordan stated that the process outlined in the policy with respect to head injuries and concussions has been implemented since the beginning of the year.

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

- A. Report of SAT/AP Results** – Ellen Clarke gave a presentation on the Abigail and John Adams Scholarship, including statistics, eligibility guidelines, and schools where the scholarship can be used. She also reviewed PSAT statistics and SAT scores.

David DiPietro presented a slide show on current AP course offerings at the high school, scoring, enrollment, comparative results, benefits of the AP program, and 2011 AP Scholars. Mark Bedrosian reviewed higher education decisions reported by students.

Ms. Clarke also gave a presentation on “Family Connection from Naviance,” a web-based program that students and parents can use in making decisions about courses, college and careers that is linked to the GHS guidance office. She reviewed the components of the program and stated that it is used to keep important data on students and to send students’ applications and transcripts to colleges electronically. There was a discussion about training for parents and how parents find out about the program.

Finally, Mr. Bedrosian gave a presentation on graduation rates and what happens to students who do not graduate on time. Dr. Goodwin expressed his belief that the dropout rate would increase if the vocational program at the high school was closed.

Dr. Goodwin, Mr. Bedrosian, Ms. Clarke, Mr. DiPietro, and Ms. Jordan left the meeting at 8:33 p.m.

VIII. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

- A. Superintendent’s Report** – Dr. Safier updated the School Committee on the following matters:

- FYI 2013 State Education Budget Update – Mayor Kirk indicated that the legislative delegation will work to make sure that Gloucester’s Chapter 70 number is improved. She stated that the city’s budget will be established based on a level funding of Chapter 70 and UGGA.
- FY 2013 District Budget Update – Dr. Safier stated that there is a leadership team meeting tomorrow to continue fine-tuning the budget.
- K-12 Insight Survey of Parents/Guardians Re: Plan for Effective Learning Communities and Fuller School – Dr. Safier believes it is important that the School Department get a clear sense from parents and guardians to help in the investigation and examination of the issues.
- District Improvement Plan (DIP)/School Improvement Plans – Dr. Safier indicated that the focus of the plans will be on coherence, continuity, consistency, and a unified effort of what the leadership team considers to be the most important priorities regarding academics and what they feel is going to provide the highest leverage with respect to raising student achievement.
- Assistant Superintendent and Director of Special Education Positions – Dr. Safier reviewed the purpose of the search committees’ organizational meetings. He suggested that he conduct the final interview of the Director of Special Education and that the School Committee conduct the final interview of the Assistant Superintendent.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

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

- B. Program Subcommittee Report of January 20, 2012** – Chairperson Gilman reported that the Program Subcommittee discussed the educational merits of small versus larger schools and the history of the Plan for Effective Learning Communities at its January 20, 2012 meeting.

After discussion, on a motion by Mrs. Gilman, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor zero opposed, to proceed with engagement of K-12 Insight to survey parents/guardians and the school community.

Chairman Pope referred to the Program Subcommittee the negotiation with K12 Insight of the content of the survey.

Mrs. Gilman stated that based on feedback from members of the Program Subcommittee, they would like the meetings to be held on the second and fourth Fridays of the month so that the minutes will be available for the next School Committee meeting. Dr. Safier expressed concern about the meetings taking time away from his other responsibilities in the district. He strongly suggested and requested that the meetings take place at 4:45 p.m.

A. Building and Finance Subcommittee Report of January 18, 2012 – Chairperson Clancy reported that the Building and Finance Subcommittee discussed the following matters at its January 18, 2012 meeting:

- Community Innovation Challenge Grant – Dr. Safier stated that the next meeting with representatives from Pathways is on February 9th.
- Food Services Monthly Financial Report
- Online credit card payments for school lunch
- MSBA preliminary requirements for West Parish School project

C. Personnel Subcommittee Report of January 24, 2012 – Chairperson Teixeira reported that the Personnel Subcommittee discussed the salary for the Assistant Superintendent position at its January 24, 2012 meeting.

After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Chairman Pope, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor zero opposed, to set the salary range for the Assistant Superintendent between \$110,000 and \$120,000.

Chairman Pope referred to the Personnel Subcommittee the task of continuing this process for other positions that become available.

X. DISCUSSION/ACTION

B. Letter from Mayor Kirk of January 18, 2012 Requesting the School Committee to Declare Fuller School Surplus – Mayor Kirk stated that this letter is simply a formal request from the Mayor’s Office asking the School Committee to declare Fuller School surplus. She stated that she is anxious to see things move along but that the process and the time frame is completely up to the School Committee. She understands that this is a very big decision and that it needs to be undertaken with careful deliberation. Mr. Pope referred the letter to all subcommittees for their consideration.

C. FY 2013 Level Service Budget Update – See agenda item VIII.A.

- D. Review of the MSBA Preliminary Requirements for the West Parish School** – Mayor Kirk distributed the agenda that was taken up by the MSBA today and reviewed the context she provided to the board about why we did not go forward with the project in 2009. She assured the MSBA that the city is now ready to undertake the project, and they voted unanimously for Gloucester to move into the eligibility period. The next step is to form a building committee to be appointed by the mayor.

XI. OTHER COMMUNICATION

A. FYI

1. Letter from GAEP President, Jayne Morse, regarding commencing bargaining (referred to Personnel Subcommittee)
2. Letter of thanks from GEF to the District Office for holding a holiday auction donating \$416.00 to the GEF General Fund
3. Thank you card from Michelle Sweet

B. OTHER

1. Chairman Pope stated that concerns have been raised about how the School Committee agenda is formatted and posted. He distributed a proposed agenda format and referred it to the Ad Hoc Governance Subcommittee for their review.
2. Kathy Clancy referred to the Building & Finance Subcommittee a review of Schedule 19.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTED: 7 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of January 25, 2012 at 9:20 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*