

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

East Gloucester Elementary School Auditorium

7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Jonathan Pope, Chairman
Kathy Clancy, Vice Chairperson
Joel Favazza, Secretary
Melissa Teixeira
Tony Gross
Michelle Sweet
Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Dr. Arthur Unobskey, Asst. Superintendent
Tom Lafleur, Director of Finance and
Operations
Shana Goldwyn, K-8 Literacy Coordinator
Amy Pasquarello, East Gloucester Principal

Recorded by Cape Ann TV

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Pope called the meeting to order at 7:01 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**
- V. **RECOGNITIONS** – None.
- VI. **GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – Lucas Struppe and another student updated the committee on the following events at GHS: midterms, Secret Pals, the talent show, and intramural volleyball. Dr. Safier inquired about trips the Docksiders have planned for this year. Lucas responded that there are no trips planned but they are having a coffeehouse at GHS on February 26th.
- VII. **CONSENT AGENDA** – Tabled.
 - A. **Approval of Minutes**
 - 1. School Committee of January 13, 2016
 - 2. Building & Finance Subcommittee of January 20, 2016
 - 3. Building & Finance Subcommittee of January 21, 2016
 - 4. Building & Finance Subcommittee of January 25, 2016
 - 5. Building & Finance Subcommittee of January 26, 2016
 - 6. School Committee and Executive Session of January 27, 2016
 - B. **Approval of Warrants** – Cover Sheets

C. Approval of Transfers

D. Referrals

E. Donation of Piano to East Gloucester Elementary School

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

- A. Presentation on Elementary School Facilities** – Dr. Safier presented a slide show containing information on each of the buildings, which is designed to open up some conversation from the public about wants and needs. The presentation included a description of each of the elementary school buildings, including the new West Parish School, MSBA enrollment projections, capacity versus enrollment, demographics, and conceptual options. Dr. Safier noted that there is a differential of 151 students between MSBA’s projections and actual enrollment. He also noted that an additional classroom has been added at the preschool to accommodate the influx of students.

Dr. Safier reviewed the options contained in Dore & Whittier’s report on the buildings, which is posted on the website under “Elementary Schools Facilities Study.” His presentation also included color-coded maps showing where students at each school reside. Chairman Pope pointed out that students at each school are scattered across the city, making our schools “community schools” as opposed to “neighborhood schools.”

Chairman Pope stated that the School Committee will be meeting at West Parish next month and then will invite the DPW and Dore & Whittier to a meeting in April to discuss the conditions of the schools. He discussed the background and role of the MSBA, as well as the possibility of submitting a Statement of Interest to the MSBA this year with respect to the elementary schools. He also discussed the difficulties with building on the current school sites.

Finally, Dr. Safier indicated that the School Committee is looking to hire a consultant to conduct an enrollment study in order to come up with more accurate enrollment projections. He noted that the district has received from the city clerk’s office a list of children born five years ago and has canvassed local daycare centers to determine the number of potential kindergarten students next year.

- B. Public Input on Elementary School Facilities** – In response to a question from the audience, there was a discussion about the possibility of building a new school on Swinson’s Field. Chairman Pope reviewed the MSBA process and the Plan for Effective Learning Communities (2-3 classes per grade). There was also a discussion about swing space that can be used while a new school is being built.

Martin DeVecchio stated that the staff at East Gloucester is incredible and that is what makes the school great. He believes that wherever their kids end up going to school, the staff will be there and will make it great. He pointed out that they don’t have an art room and that the heating system is ancient.

Bo Abrams talked about the support from the parents at East Gloucester and stated that the fact that they have an auditorium and can put on a play every year is special.

Erin McKay stated that part of the culture at East Gloucester is that they continue to push music and art and PE. Whether they merge with another school or remain a separate school, she hopes that the district continues to support art rooms, music rooms, gyms, auditoriums and libraries.

Muffy White stated that it is important to feel a sense of community and believes that whatever happens with East Gloucester will work out. She thinks a lot of the parents are open to improvement as long as they have the proper facilities.

(Mayor Theken left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.)

(A 10-minute break was taken at this time.)

C. District Improvement Plan Draft 2016-2017 – Dr. Unobskey and Shana Goldwyn presented a slide show on the draft District Improvement Plan for 2016-2017, including strategic objectives, strategic initiatives, and goals, strategies and action steps. Dr. Safier indicated that they will be meeting with the principals tomorrow to review the District Improvement Plan so that it can be used as a template for the principals' School Improvement Plans.

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

1. Statement of Interest – Dr. Safier stated that the City Council approved the Statement of Interest at their meeting last night.
2. Revised Science Standards
3. FY17 State Budget

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS – None.

X. ACTION

A. Acceptance of Grant – Exxon Mobil Education Alliance Program grant in the amount of \$500.00 to GHS – Tabled.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

A. MSBA Project Update – Chairman Pope reported that the building committee will be meeting at the West Parish site at 3:30 p.m. tomorrow and that there will be a walk-through at 4:00 p.m., followed by a School Committee meeting at 5:30 p.m.

B. Letter to School Committee regarding bringing back a girls hockey team at GHS – FYI

C. Letter from Superintendent to Senator Tarr and Representative Ferrante dated February 3, 2016 – FYI

XII. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*