

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 27, 2019
District Office Conference Room
2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA
7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Jonathan Pope, Chairman
Kathy Clancy, Vice Chairperson
Tony Gross, Secretary
Melissa Teixeira Prince
Joel Favazza

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent
Gary Frisch, Director of Finance
and Operations
Patty Wegmann, Special Education
Director
Grant Harris, IT Director
James Cook, GHS Principal
Lynne Beattie, O'Maley Principal
Jodi Gennodie, Beeman Principal
Amy Pasquarello, EGS Principal
Tammy Morgan, Plum Cove Principal
Matt Fusco, Veterans Principal
Dr. Telena Imel, West Parish Principal
Ann-Marie Jordan, Preschool Director
Cody Marshall, Accounts and Budget
Specialist

Recorded by 1623 Studios

- 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** – Elizabeth Schuster and Jemima Grow updated the committee on the following events at GHS: boys' basketball tournament, sophomore event, junior event, ROTC Cadet Ball, blood drive, freshmen Chipotle fundraiser, and the NHS induction ceremony.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. School Committee of January 9, 2019
2. Special School Committee and Executive Session of January 14, 2019
3. Building & Finance Subcommittee of January 15, 2019
4. Building & Finance Subcommittee of January 16, 2019
5. Building & Finance Subcommittee of January 17, 2019

B. Approval of Warrants

C. Approval of Transfers

D. Referrals

E. Acceptance of Donation – \$2,000.00 from Gloucester Nor'easters' Board of Directors for Grade 5 Nature's Classroom Field Trip

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

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the Consent Agenda as noted.

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Presentation of the FY20 Draft Budget – Mr. Frisch presented a slide show on the FY20 draft budget as of today and reported that the draft budget totals \$43,372,214, an increase of \$1,433,317 (3.42%) over this year's approved budget. He discussed significant cost adjustments to the budget, including cost of living adjustments, a health insurance increase of \$398,438, step and lane increases of \$666,325, the loss of a grant, the new science curriculum, and technology.

Mr. Frisch reviewed out-of-district tuition costs over the last five years, which has increased by \$1 million over that time, as well as grant adjustments. He also reviewed additional staff requested by several of the principals totaling \$364,235, which is not included in the draft budget, and the principals discussed those requests.

Mr. Frisch reviewed the FY20 budget by department, noting that the Main Office budget contains the Food Service Director's salary and the GHS Vocational budget contains funds for repair of seven lifts in the auto shop (safety issue). He also noted that the Professional Development budget contains the new science curriculum.

Finally, Mr. Frisch reviewed salaries funded by grants and revolving accounts (i.e. not included in the operating budget) and capital needs, namely the GHS fieldhouse floor, a permanent home for the preschool, and relocation of the administrative staff.

The committee discussed the following matters:

- Health insurance plan rates
- Replacement of Chromebooks
- Installation of IP phones in every classroom for safety reasons
- Shared math coach
- GHS nurse no longer funded by grant

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

- C. 2019-2020 Draft District Improvement Plan** – Dr. Safier presented a slide show on the 2019-20 Draft District Improvement Plan, namely strategic objectives such as unification and coherence, meeting individual student needs, effective use of data, and professional culture and community. Mr. Bach and Dr. Safier spoke about increasing student engagement, curriculum review and revision, examination of preschool through Grade 8 literacy, special education, a tiered system of supports, Next Generation MCAS preparation, strengthening higher order thinking, technology, English Language Learners, institutional self-evaluation, MCAS goals, professional culture and community, and communication/public relations.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the 2019-20 District Improvement Plan.

- B. 2019-2020 Draft School Calendar** – Mr. Bach reviewed the draft calendar and noted that the elementary schools have more early release days than the other levels, at the request of the principals. In addition, he pointed out that since January 2nd falls on a Thursday, the winter break is proposed to be two weeks, also at the request of the principals. There was a discussion about the proposed half day on Good Friday and the two-week winter break.

Mr. Favazza made a motion, seconded by Kathy Clancy, to approve the 2019-2020 school calendar as presented. He then amended the motion as follows:

Amended Motion

On a motion by Mr. Favazza, seconded by Chairman Pope, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the 2019-2020 School Calendar as amended, eliminating the early release day on Good Friday, April 10, 2020.

Mr. Favazza then amended the motion again, as follows:

Amended Motion

After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Favazza, seconded by Ms. Teixeira Prince, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the 2019-2020 School Calendar as amended, eliminating the early release day on Good Friday, April 10, 2020, and revising the school reopening date after the holidays from January 6, 2020 to January 2, 2020.

Dr. Safier will contact the GTA president to let her know that the calendar has been amended.

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

1. Kickoff Meeting: Entry to GHS and O'Maley – Dr. Safier reviewed the discussions held at the kickoff meeting.
2. MCAS Updates
3. Gloucester Trust Funds

On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Chairman Pope, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the Superintendent's Report.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Building & Finance Subcommittee Meeting of February 20, 2019** – Mr. Gross reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the John Lowe Trust and online fundraising and gift policies at its meeting of February 20, 2019. The subcommittee also received a presentation on the FY20 draft budget at the meeting.

X. ACTION

- A. Acceptance of Grant from Gloucester Education Foundation** – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Teixeira Prince, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to accept a grant from the Gloucester Education Foundation in the amount of \$2,500.00 for Plum Cove Elementary School's Playwrights Program.

- B. Second Reading of School Choice Policy, File JFBB** – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Chairman Pope, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to waive the actual reading of the School Choice Policy, File JFBB.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the School Choice Policy, File JFBB, as presented.

- C. Adjustment to Salary of IT Operations Manager** – Mr. Harris explained that this adjustment will result in no increase to the budget.

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

VOTED: 4 in favor, 1 opposed (Mr. Favazza) to adjust the salary of the IT Operations Manager to \$75,478.52.

- D. Request Approval for Special Budgetary Transfer** – Chairman Pope explained the purpose of this budgetary request.

After discussion, on a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Chairman Pope, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to authorize the CFO to request from City Council a special budgetary transfer in the amount of \$349,549.00 for out-of-district expenses to be paid through the School Choice Program.

- E. Appropriation of Funds from Main Office Contingency Account** -- On a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Mr. Gross, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to authorize the CFO to appropriate \$889.44 from the Main Office contingency account to rectify a teacher's placement on the incorrect step in FY18.

- F. Request Approval for Authority to Pay FY18 Back Pay from FY19 Funds** – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Teixeira Prince, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to authorize the CFO to request authority from City Council to pay back pay to a teacher in the amount of \$889.44 from FY19 funds to rectify her placement on the incorrect step in FY18.

- G. Request Approval to Raise Preschool Revolving Fund Spending Limit** – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to authorize the CFO to request authority from City Council to raise the preschool revolving fund spending limit to \$150,000.00.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

- A. MSBA Project Update** – Chairman Pope reported that the educational leadership group developed some guidelines for the design of the new building and the working group amended those guidelines. He distributed a copy of the guidelines to the committee members and indicated that the School Committee will be voting on them at the next meeting. Chairman Pope also stated that there will be a presentation by Dore & Whittier at the next School Committee meeting.

Dr. Safier reported that the educational leadership group reviewed a spreadsheet listing all of the spaces that the school would require and the MSBA square footage permitted for those spaces. He also showed a basic sketch of the types of spaces that will be needed.

Finally, Chairman Pope reported that the building committee met with the Veterans PTO last week and the meeting was very well attended. He noted that many of the parents have not seen West Parish and indicated that he will try to arrange a tour.

- C. Review of Requests for Naming Facilities** – Chairman Pope reported that he has received a request to name the GHS weight room for Greg Swinson and the baseball field at O'Maley for Gerry O'Neil. Chairman Pope believes the last time this came up, the committee decided to form a subcommittee made up of the three chairs of the existing subcommittees to review the requests and investigate whether those facilities have already been named for someone else.
- B. Preschool Location** – Chairman Pope reported that Dore & Whittier sent work orders to the DPW to move forward with this project, and the DPW sent the work orders to Mr. Frisch for payment. Chairman Pope indicated that he spoke with Jim Destino about this, noting that there was no previous indication from the city that there would be a cost to the School Department for developing the plans. He also stated that he was under the impression that the plans were already being worked on. Chairman Pope reported that Mr. Destino proposed that the city pay the cost of studying the preschool location (\$35,000) and the School Department pay the cost of developing a plan to remediate the fieldhouse floor (\$10,000). Mr. Favazza expressed concern with meeting the deadline for the preschool, and there was a discussion about whether the project has been brought forward to the City Council.

- D. Fieldhouse Floor** – See Item XI.B.

After discussion, on a motion by Chairman Pope, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to authorize the CFO to appropriate \$10,000.00 from the Main Office contingency account to pay Dore & Whittier to develop a plan for remediation of the fieldhouse floor.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of February 27, 2019 at 10:15 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*