

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

District Office Conference Room

2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

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, CPA, Director of Finance
and Operations
James Cook, GHS 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** – Chairman Pope stated that the committee is in the middle of negotiations with all of the unions. He noted that cost of living is usually talked about as a percentage and the city and School Committee fall into the trap of using percentages to negotiate salaries, which results in inequity. He believes the city and School Committee should give this some consideration as we move forward.
- V. **RECOGNITIONS** – Kathy Clancy recognized the East Gloucester School fifth graders whose production of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* was delightful and perfectly performed. Chairman Pope recognized the O'Maley production of *Mulan*, which he thought was phenomenal. Mayor Theken recognized the work being done at O'Maley that was highlighted at the recent Evening of Excellence and stated that the Gloucester Daily Times should have been there to highlight some of the positive things happening in the schools. Mr. Gross reported that he attended the Open Meeting Law seminar at city hall last night.

Dr. Safier recognized the Chamber of Commerce for their efforts in putting together the College and Career Fair that took place at the high school last week. He also recognized the GHS administration, particularly Assistant Principal Maria Lysen, for applying for and receiving the Workforce Capital Skills Grant of over \$499,000 which will transform the work being done in the machine shop vocational program. Finally, he noted that the GHS Theater production of *Seussical* is coming up on April 6, 7 and 8. In addition, he reported that the following students were recognized at the Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild

celebration at Weston High School this past weekend: Danielle Bauke for her role as Viola, Jessyca Muniz for her natural stage presence, and Alexis Merritt for outstanding success in sound design.

VI. GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL – Jarrod Martin and Roy Kirwa updated the committee on the following events at Gloucester High School: tryouts for spring sports, NHS induction ceremony, tours for eighth grade students, blood drive, cheerleaders’ competition, new coaches, and the Endicott dual enrollment program climate change presentation.

V. RECOGNITIONS (Continued) – Liam McKay, Callahan White, Lily Aiello and Luke McElhiney, fifth grade students from East Gloucester School, performed two songs from their production of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Amended School Committee Minutes of January 25, 2017
2. School Committee and Executive Session Minutes of February 8, 2017
3. Building & Finance Subcommittee Minutes of February 15, 2017

B. Approval of Warrants – Cover Sheets

C. Approval of Transfers – February 15 to March 9, 2017

D. Referrals

E. Approval of GHS Scholarship – Enjoy Gloucester Foundation Scholarship in the amount of \$150.00

F. Acceptance of Donation – Donation from Wellspring House, Inc. to O’Maley Innovation Middle School

G. Approval of Out-of-State Field Trip Request – DECA Competition – Marketing Program International Career Conference, Wednesday, April 16 to Monday, May 1, 2017

Chairman Pope removed Item A.3 from the Consent Agenda.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the Consent Agenda as noted above.

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

A. Workforce Capital Skills Grant – Mr. Cook spoke about this grant, indicating that the focus of that grant is to upgrade the machine technology area of the high school.

He stated that the vision is to expand the machine shop to bring it into the 21st century, which will hopefully entice more students into the vocational program. He discussed the work that was put into applying for the grant, primarily by Assistant Principal Maria Lysen, and Dr. Safier noted that the new equipment must be purchased and installed by June 30th.

B. Graduation/Dropout Rates 2015-2016 – Mr. Cook presented a slide show on the graduation and dropout rates, indicating that the year-to-year dropout rate has remained consistent. He expressed the importance of putting all of the numbers into context, including the four- and five-year cohort graduation and dropout rates and the adjusted cohort rates. Other factors to be taken into account are the number of students still in school, those who were retained, those pursuing GEDs, etc. Mayor Theken reported that she has talked to students who had to drop out to go to work to support their families. Mr. Cook stated that the high school administration is focused on understanding the stories of those students in order to come up with approaches to address their particular situations, such as the BRYT program. The slide show also included common trends and work being done, and there was a discussion about the Student Support Team.

C. Draft 2017-2018 District Improvement Plan – Dr. Unobskey presented a slide show on the draft 2017-2018 District Improvement Plan, and the committee discussed the teaching of typing skills and responsiveness to parents.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the 2017-2018 District Improvement Plan, as presented.

(Dr. Unobskey left the meeting at 8:36 p.m.)

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

1. Public Comment Open on Proposed Changes to 2017 District and School Accountability
2. Proposed Amendments to Educator Evaluator System
3. Massachusetts Ranked Top State
4. ESSA's Limit on Alternate Assessments
5. GHS Theater Program
6. Calendar

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the Superintendent’s Report.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Program Subcommittee Meeting of March 6, 2017** – Kathy Clancy reported that the Program Subcommittee reviewed several policies and the status of the renewal of the O’Maley innovation plan at its meeting of March 6, 2017.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the revised policy entitled “Administering Medicines to Students,” File JLCD.

- B. Building & Finance Subcommittee Meeting of March 15, 2017** – Mr. Gross reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed year-to-date expenditures, student meal balances, meal prices, changes to the FY18 budget, and disposal of surplus vocational equipment at its meeting of March 15, 2017.

X. ACTION

- A. Approval of Revised Policy** – See Item IX.A.

B. Acceptance of Grants

1. Workforce Capital Skills Grant – After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the Workforce Capital Skills Grant in the amount of \$499,634.00 for the updating of the GHS machine technology program.

2. Gloucester Education Foundation Grant – After discussion, on a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept a grant from the Gloucester Education Foundation in the amount of \$126,200.00 for the O’Maley Music Suite renovation project.

Mr. Lafleur reported that Kevin Buckley is working on this project with the idea of combining it with the work at Plum Cove and the culinary room at GHS in order to get a better price.

3. Gloucester Education Foundation Grant – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept a grant from the Gloucester Education Foundation in the amount of \$2,700.00 for the GHS Theater Program.

- C. Declaration of Surplus: Machine Shop Equipment** – After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was

VOTED: 6 in favor, 1 present (Mayor Theken) to declare the outdated equipment in the GHS machine technology department surplus, as the equipment no longer serves a current or future educational purpose.

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

- G. Approval of Meal Price Increase for 2017-18 School Year** – Chairman Pope reviewed the Historical School Food Service Student Meal Prices, and there was a discussion about covering increased food and labor costs.

After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to raise meal prices for the 2017-2018 school year by \$0.10.

- D. Approval of Draft 2017-2018 School Calendar** – Ms. Teixeira made a motion, seconded by Ms. Sweet, to approve the 2017-18 School Calendar as presented. Chairman Pope noted that the calendar shows Good Friday, March 30, 2018, as a “no school” day and Dr. Safier indicated that it should be a full school day. The motion was amended as follows:

Amended Motion

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the 2017-18 School Calendar as amended, with a full day of school on Friday, March 30, 2018.

- H. Approval of FY18 Budget** – After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

Mayor Theken – present
Kathy Clancy – yes
Mr. Favazza – yes
Mr. Gross – yes
Chairman Pope – yes
Ms. Sweet – yes
Ms. Teixeira – yes

To approve a budget in the amount of \$41,288,895.00 to be published for the public hearing scheduled for April 5, 2017.

In response to a question from Mr. Favazza, Mr. Lafleur indicated that capital requests for the schools are not part of the operating budget. DPW Director Mike Hale comes to Building & Finance Subcommittee meetings at certain times to talk about the schools' capital needs. Mr. Lafleur reported that the process is a collaboration with the DPW and that Section 3 of the budget book was submitted to the DPW (GPS FY18 to FY22 Capital Requests).

E. Approval of Draft FY18 Budget – See Item X.H.

F. Waiver of Professional Staff Hiring Policy, File GCF – Dr. Safier reported that Principal Ellen Sibley will be retiring on October 27, 2017 and he intends to hire an interim principal with extensive experience to take over for the remainder of the school year in order to reduce costs (approximately \$32,000). In order to do so, he requires a waiver of this policy which calls for a representative screening committee.

Mr. Favazza expressed concern about using the interim principal position at Beeman as a placeholder and shortchanging the process in the event we need someone else to take over at Beeman. Kathy Clancy stated that given that Ms. Sibley will be here for most of October, it would be a duplicate cost to hire somebody else to start on July 1st. She also noted that the committee hired an interim superintendent several years ago to provide a transition from one superintendent to the next.

Ms. Teixeira stated that the committee is being asked to waive the policy so that the superintendent can hire an interim principal without a screening committee. She is confident that if it was a permanent position, a screening committee would be put in place. Mr. Gross noted that waiving the policy allows us to get a highly qualified interim candidate for the position and also allows for a very long period of time to find qualified candidates for the next school year.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to waive Professional Staff Hiring Policy, File GCF.

This policy was referred to the Personnel Subcommittee for review, specifically to consider exemption of interim positions.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

A. MSBA Project Updates

1. GHS Roof – Chairman Pope reported that the building committee voted on the bonding for the roof on Monday. Ms. Teixeira stated that she would like to

get information out to the community that the roof will be fixed this summer. Mayor Theken indicated that in the meantime, the DPW will continue to try to fix any issues with the roof until it is completely replaced this summer. Dr. Safier reported that although the total cost of the project is \$4.9 million, the cost to the city is \$2.8 million.

Mayor Theken stated that she believes in our school system and has been going to all of the school programs and she takes offense when people say she does not. Dr. Safier thanked her for her support.

2. East Gloucester School – Dr. Safier stated that the Eligibility Period for the East Gloucester School project begins on April 3rd and that the city has 270 days to complete the required tasks, including the formation of a building committee.

- B. Potential Building Sites for East Gloucester Project** – Mr. Favazza reported that Michelle Linsky has about 9.5 flat acres abutting Bomco, and Bomco has another two acres or so. Both properties are walkable to downtown and Gloucester Crossing and have deeded access to Blackburn Circle. He requested that these properties be added to the list of possible sites for the project.
- C. Elimination of Bus Fees** – Ms. Teixeira requested that this matter be referred to the Building & Finance Subcommittee to see if elimination of the fees would help alleviate traffic at schools.
- D. Promotional Videos** – Chairman Pope reported that he spoke with Maggie Rosa from the GEF about doing promotional videos for the schools and the GEF has since expressed a desire to support that project. At their suggestion, Chairman Pope has contacted Cory Curcuru and Lisa Smith, who are willing to work on it. John McElhiney is also willing to help with the project. Chairman Pope reported that there will be an application for a grant to the GEF for the promotional videos.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

Mayor Theken – yes
Kathy Clancy – yes
Mr. Favazza – yes
Mr. Gross – yes
Chairman Pope – yes
Ms. Sweet – yes
Ms. Teixeira – yes

To enter into Executive Session at 9:52 p.m. for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining, tentative agreements with food service and transportation workers, and to discuss the status of GTA

negotiations and to enter back into regular session to vote on the tentative agreements.

X. ACTION (Continued)

- I. Approval of Tentative Agreements between the Gloucester School Committee and Teamsters Local 42 Food Service Workers** – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the Tentative Agreements between the Gloucester School Committee and Teamsters Local 42 Food Service Workers, as presented.

- B. Approval of Tentative Agreements between the Gloucester School Committee and Teamsters Local 42 Transportation Workers** – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the Tentative Agreements between the Gloucester School Committee and Teamsters Local 42 Transportation Workers, as presented.

- XIII. ADJOURNMENT** – On a motion by Mr. Favazza, seconded by Ms. Teixeira, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of March 22, 2017 at 10:49 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*