

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 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
Michelle Sweet
Joel Favazza (7:04 p.m.)
Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent
Patty Wegmann, Special Education
Director

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** – Chairman Pope stated that the public hearing on the budget will be held on April 3, 2019 and that the budget includes many additional requests of principals and department heads. He indicated that the budget is probably in excess of what the city will provide and requested that community members attend the public hearing to show their support for what is needed for the district.
- V. **RECOGNITIONS** – Chairman Pope reported on the “Wax Museum” event at Veterans, which he indicated was very well done. Kathy Clancy reported that the Power of Play event was well attended and thanked the people who volunteered.

(Mr. Favazza joined the meeting at 7:04 p.m.)

Dr. Safier reported on the College and Career Fair and the O’Maley Evening of Excellence, and Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that she attended the climate change presentation by GHS students, which was excellent. Mayor Theken indicated that all three performances of *Mary Poppins* at O’Maley were wonderful and reminded everyone that East Gloucester School will be presenting *Alice in Wonderland* later this week. Mr. Favazza reported on the Veterans’ School performance of *Seussical* and recognized Hugo Burnham for his assistance with lighting and sound.

VI. GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL – Elizabeth Schuster, Jemima Grow and Caroline Muniz updated the committee on the following events at GHS: NHS induction ceremony, spring sports, baseball fundraiser, and the production of *Mama Mia*.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Program Subcommittee of February 7, 2019
2. Personnel Subcommittee of February 11, 2019
3. School Committee of February 13, 2019

B. Approval of Warrants

C. Approval of Transfers – February 2019

D. Referrals

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

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

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

A. Review of Health/Wellness Procedures – Chairman Pope referred to a letter from members of the Wellness Committee regarding the GHS school store (see attached) and stated that the Wellness Policy prohibits the sale of snacks during breakfast or lunch. He noted that last year the School Committee waived the “Fundraising” section of the Wellness Policy for the remainder of the 2017-18 school year and that the sale of snacks during lunch was supposed to be prohibited for this school year. He noted that after the students asked for permission to open the store again in the fall, the School Committee directed the Superintendent to negotiate a compromise for this year. However, what is happening now is in contradiction to the Wellness Policy.

Jemima Grow reported that the school store is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for the last 15 minutes of the lunch periods. She stated that they would like to be open longer because the store was not open at all for the first semester. However, she indicated that they appreciate the compromise and that they would like to continue operating the store until the end of the school year because their expensive events are coming up and all students should be able to attend. She reported that they are charging the lowest amount possible for the senior event and they know several students who cannot afford to attend. They are also somewhat worried about the price of prom tickets.

Kathy Clancy, the School Committee’s representative on the Wellness Committee, reported that she attended a Wellness Committee meeting and that she was the

dissenting opinion on that section of the Wellness Policy because she does not believe the snacks the school store is selling are inconsistent with the policy. She also believes there are other benefits to students running the store and hopes the students are thinking of selling things other than food. She believes the Wellness Policy is stricter than it needs to be if we are only considering the wellness of our students.

Kathy Clancy made a motion, seconded by Ms. Sweet, to amend the “Fundraising” section of the Wellness Policy to read, “No fundraising activities or school store sales involving food will occur during the breakfast period. School store sales involving food may occur during the last 15 minutes of the lunch periods but not more than two days a week.”

Mr. Favazza stated that he would prefer that the store be open during the entire lunch period because it concerns more than just the issues covered by the Wellness Policy. He believes that a lot of life lessons are learned by running the store. Kathy Clancy stated that the Wellness Committee wants to encourage kids to get a lunch before they are able to get a snack from the school store.

Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that she wants to support students and their wellbeing and noted that the Wellness Committee consists of many experts who did research and made recommendations that the School Committee adopted. She does not want to disrespect the hard work of the Wellness Committee but wants to help the kids raise money. She stated that the district is not inconsistent with or stricter than other schools and asked why the students have to sell food to raise money, especially since that competes with our food service program. She indicated that she does not have enough information to make a decision tonight and wants to hear more from the Wellness Committee.

Mr. Favazza stated that the Wellness Committee looked at this issue from a health and nutrition standpoint only, so he does not believe there is any disrespect to that committee. He indicated that to focus only on the recommendations of the Wellness Committee ignores the other benefits of the school store. He believes there are a lot of students who do not eat on days when the store is not open because they do not want something from the cafeteria.

Ms. Grow stated that their intention is that the snacks sold in the school store are a supplement to lunch and not a replacement for lunch. She indicated that they did try other “typical” fundraisers, like bake sales and restaurant nights, and they did not add up to the amount that previous classes made from the store (close to \$10,000). She noted that the store is also a good way to interact with the whole student body.

Mr. Gross pointed out that there are no students on the Wellness Committee and stated that the School Committee needs to keep in mind that the school store is in direct competition with the food service program.

When asked by Mr. Gross how much they anticipate raising this year with the school store open three days a week for the last 15 minutes of the lunch periods, Elizabeth

Schuster reported that they are probably going to make just enough to cover the costs of the senior banquet, senior picnic and prom, with nothing left over. Ms. Grow gave examples of the snacks sold in the store.

Mayor Theken commented that we are forcing high school students to be young adults but treating them as if they cannot make their own decisions about nutrition. She does not believe it is fair to shut down the store eight weeks before school is over and indicated that she would like to hear from a nutritionist on the Wellness Committee.

Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that she thinks it would be very beneficial for the students to attend a Wellness Committee meeting. She suggested allowing the students to continue running the school store as they are now and that a Wellness Committee meeting be scheduled to discuss nutrition and how the school store competes with the food service program. In the meantime, she would like to discuss the topic of creating a fund to help students who cannot afford to attend school functions.

Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that she would like the Wellness Committee to have a discussion with the School Committee. Kathy Clancy reported that the Wellness Committee was told that the School Committee would be considering the Wellness Policy and that they should participate in the discussion. She indicated that they have chosen not to attend the meeting and sent a letter instead.

Chairman Pope confirmed that the students were told at the end of last year that they would not be able to operate the store this year. He suggested that the committee vote to institute for the remainder of this year the compromise of having the store open three days a week for the last 15 minutes of the lunch periods. He also suggested that the Wellness Committee, the School Committee and the students meet before the end of this school year to make a decision about next year.

Finally, Ms. Grow reported that the same handful of students attends their fundraising events and that the school store is the best way to reach all students. Ms. Schuster stated that raising class dues would not be affordable for many families.

Kathy Clancy withdrew her previous motion and made the following motion.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to amend the “Fundraising” section of the Wellness Policy to state that school store sales involving food may occur during the last 15 minutes of lunch periods but not more than three days a week for the school year ending June 2019.

Kathy Clancy stated that the School Committee will find a time for the Wellness Committee and the students to meet.

B. Review of Annual School Committee Calendar – The committee and Dr. Safier discussed the time period for the District Improvement Plan and School Improvement Plans and the timing of the Superintendent’s goals in relation to the school year and School Committee elections. Ms. Teixeira Prince suggested getting some guidance from MASC on this matter. It was the consensus of the committee to add the following items to the annual calendar:

- November – setting budgetary goals
- January – review of School Committee Operating Protocols and Rules of Procedure
- May – discussion of what the committee wants to review in the coming year
- January – status of safety drills

C. Superintendent’s Report – Dr. Safier updated the committee on the following matters:

1. Dating Violence Prevention Assembly
2. O’Maley Evening of Excellence
3. A Brief Comparison of the School Department, 2006-07 through 2018-19

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. Building & Finance Subcommittee Meeting of March 20, 2019 – Mr. Gross reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the following matters at its meeting of March 20, 2019:

- Food Service budget proposal
- Breakfast after the Bell program
- Increase in preschool tuition
- Special education stabilization fund
- Projected increase in health insurance
- FY18 course reimbursement

X. ACTION

A. Acceptance of Grants

1. DESE Special Education 240 Grant – An increase of \$5,978.00 – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept an increase in the DESE Special Education 240 Grant in the amount of \$5,978.00, bringing the total to \$894,649.00.

2. DESE Early Childhood 262 Grant – An increase of \$73.00 – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept an increase in the DESE Early Childhood 262 Grant in the amount of \$73.00, bringing the total to \$25,026.00.

3. ECLC Grant – Phase II – Mr. Bach discussed the purpose of the grant.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the ECLC Grant in the amount of \$25,000.00.

4. DESE FY19 Title I Grant – An increase of \$814.00 – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept an increase in the DESE FY19 Title I Grant in the amount of \$814.00, bringing the total to \$580,667.00.

5. DESE Title Iia Grant – An increase of \$922.00 – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept an increase in the DESE Title Iia Grant in the amount of \$922.00, bringing the total to \$121,731.00.

6. Gloucester Education Foundation Grant – After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, 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 \$2,500.00 for the Veterans' Memorial Elementary School spring theater production.

- B. Approval Out-of-State Field Trip** – Ms. Teixeira Prince made a motion, seconded by Kathy Clancy, to approve the GHS out-of-state field trip to the DECA International Career Development Conference in Orlando, Florida from Friday, April 26 to Tuesday, May 1, 2019. Mr. Favazza questioned whether an adult chaperone would be traveling to Florida with the student. Mr. Bach stated that he will clarify whether the teacher is flying with the student. This matter was tabled.

- C. Increase in Preschool Tuition** – Chairman Pope reported that Ann-Marie Jordan requested that the preschool tuition be raised. He stated that the current rate is \$2,200 per year for the half day program and \$4,400 for full day program and \$5.00 per day for the Lunch Bunch program. Dr. Safier reported that the tuition money goes towards things like test assessment tools, speech and language therapy, screening materials, a sound field for students who are hard of hearing, and furniture and equipment. The role model students are the only students who are charged tuition, and accommodations are made for students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. Mr. Gross reviewed tuition comparisons with other districts.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to increase the preschool tuition from \$2,200.00 to \$2,400.00 per year for the half-day program and from \$4,400.00 to \$4,800.00 for the full-day program and to increase the fee for the Lunch Bunch program from \$5.00 to \$6.50 per day, effective with the 2019-2020 school year.

- D. Reimbursement of Coursework** – After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to authorize the CFO to request approval from City Council to pay \$1,227.00 to a teacher for FY18 coursework with FY19 funds.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

- A. MSBA Project Update** – Chairman Pope reported that there was a presentation by Dore & Whittier to the City Council at last night's meeting, which was well received. He indicated that the project timeline has been delayed due to title complications, which should be resolved by April 15th.
- B. Preschool Location** – Ms. Teixeira Prince reported that the City Council approved \$35,000 for Dore & Whittier to conduct a study.
- C. Fieldhouse Floor** – Chairman Pope stated that he believes Dore & Whittier has made a submission to the city and that the city is exploring how to fund the project. Mr. Favazza indicated that the Capital Improvement Advisory Board met yesterday and that Mr. Destino stated that this is a priority item.
- D. Advisory Committees for Vocational Program** – Ms. Teixeira Prince requested a report from the Superintendent at a future meeting on this matter.
- E. Payments by Coaches** – Mr. Favazza reported that he was advised that the track and field coach fronted money to get the team to the Nationals, since fundraising for that

purpose fell short. He inquired whether there are other coaches that are owed money due to fundraising shortfalls.

- F. GHS School Store** – Parent Tim Wood reported that he spent 2-1/2 hours in Costco picking out food for the school store, going over every nutritional label in a huge binder. He stated that the students are very cognizant of what they are selling. He indicated that, in his opinion, there would have to be a significant effect on food service sales to make a change to the school store.

- XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION** – On a motion by Mayor Theken, seconded by Ms. Teixeira Prince, it was unanimously

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

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

To enter into Executive Session at 9:14 p.m. for the purpose of discussing ongoing negotiations with several bargaining units and to enter back into regular session only to adjourn.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of March 27, 2019 at 9:46 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*