

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

Superintendent's Conference Room

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
Patricia Wegmann, Director of Special
Education

Recorded by Cape Ann TV

- 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** – Dr. Safier congratulated the GHS Theatre Department for their production of “Into the Woods.” Mayor Theken thanked the DPW workers for ensuring that the production could go forward and thanked Dr. Safier for working with the city administration. Finally, Chairman Pope recognized the East Gloucester fifth graders for their performance of “The Tempest.”
- VI. **GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – Lukas Struppe updated the committee on the following events at GHS: Docksiders concert at the Shalin Liu Performance Center, lacrosse team win after six overtimes, first track meet of the season (both girls and boys won), spring break, and report cards. Lukas also noted that the Docksiders and the O’Maley Jazz Band will play a joint concert in the near future at O’Maley. The Docksiders will also be performing at the Arts Festival on May 14th, which may include some songs with the O’Maley band.
- VII. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. **Approval of Minutes**
 - 1. School Committee of March 9, 2016
 - 2. Personnel Subcommittee of March 14, 2016

3. Building & Finance Subcommittee of March 16, 2016
4. School Committee and Executive Session of March 23, 2016
5. Joint City Council and School Committee of March 24, 2016

B. Approval of Warrants – Cover Sheets

C. Approval of Transfers

D. Referrals

E. Out-of-State Field Trips

1. GHS DECA International Career Development Conference in Nashville, Tennessee from Saturday, April 23, 2016 to Wednesday, April 27, 2016
2. GHS to Canobie Lake in Salem, New Hampshire on Friday, May 27, 2016
3. Annual Grade 5 Trip to Nature’s Classroom, Camp Cody, Freedom, New Hampshire from Tuesday, May 31, 2016 to Friday, June 3, 2016

Chairman Pope removed Item A.5.

On a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Ms. Sweet, 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. Technology Integration Plan – Dr. Safier stated that in the fall of 2014, the Gloucester Education Foundation (GEF) offered funding to enhance the technology program at the high school. GEF also expressed a willingness to provide further funding in the future provided that the district came up with a comprehensive technology plan using professional consultants. Dr. Safier reported that that work began last May and was completed approximately six weeks ago. He reviewed the work done by the technology consultants.

Dr. Safier presented a slide show on the GHS Draft Technology Integration Plan, including agenda, background, needs assessment data and key areas, key characteristics of a 21st century high school, draft technology vision and mission statements, components of the plan, technology integration across the curriculum, objectives and supporting strategies, computer science strand, computer science classes, and STEM.

Dr. Safier stated that the next step will be a review by a committee in late April. He hopes to have direction from that committee in October that will act as the basis for further funding from GEF. There was a brief discussion about the make-up of the committee.

B. The Role of Assessments – Dr. Unobskey presented a slide show on “Evaluating Student Progress,” using specific examples to clarify what DIBELS measures, what it does not measure, what it provides, and next steps. He indicated that students’ overall comprehension scores are currently tracked through the GRADE assessment. He stated that the district is also looking at Curriculum Based Measures (CBMs) to determine how students are progressing. There was a discussion about whether parents receive information regarding assessment results and how they can help their child at home.

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

1. Accelerated Roof Repair for GHS Update – Dr. Safier stated that if the SOI is approved by the MSBA, it is unclear whether any of the work can be done this summer. It may be possible to work on one section of the roof this summer and complete the rest the following summer.
2. S.2203, An Act Enhancing Reform, Innovation and Success in Education

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 April 6, 2016 – Chairman Gross reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the following matters at its meeting on April 6, 2016:

- DPW School Facilities Proposed Budget
- Master Building Plan for Elementary Schools
- Review of Athletic Director’s Position
- FY17 Proposed Budget

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

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

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

To approve the FY17 budget in the amount of \$40,225,057 as presented at the public hearing on March 30, 2016.

Mr. Favazza expressed concern about the small budget requests for art and music supplies from the elementary principals. Mr. Lafleur reported that he reached out to the principals to find out why they requested what they did, and he has only heard back from one of them. Dr. Safier stated that as we work within the budget, we can look to see if there is some flexibility to enhance those funds. Chairman Pope noted that the budget is still a work in process.

- B. Program Subcommittee Meeting of April 7, 2016** – Chairperson Clancy reported that the Program Subcommittee discussed the GHS start time at its meeting on April 7, 2016. Chairman Pope reported on an MASC event that he attended regarding school start times. This matter was tabled until the next meeting.

The subcommittee also reviewed two policies at its meeting on April 7th.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to amend the Admission of Students to Elementary Schools Policy, File JF, as presented.

Dr. Safier reviewed the changes to the Elementary Attendance Policy – Grades 1-5, File JE. Ms. Teixeira noted that the policy indicates that schools may petition the court to have an adult fined under the statute. She believes the policy should also inform parents that schools may file a CRA for truancy, which requires an appearance before a judge and could result in more severe consequences. There was also a lengthy discussion about teachers providing advance assignments and/or accepting makeup work related to family vacations. The approval of this policy was tabled for further changes.

X. ACTION

A. Approval of Policies

1. Second Reading of Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to waive the actual reading of the Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures, File JKAA.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures, File JKAA, as presented.

2. Amendment of Admission of Students to Elementary Schools Policy, File JF – See Item IX.B.
3. Approval of Elementary Attendance Policy, Grades 1-5, File JE – Tabled. See Item IX.B.

B. Approval of Northshore Education Consortium’s Annual Report – Dr. Safier indicated that the document that needs to be approved is actually the Articles of Agreement. This matter was tabled until the next meeting.

C. Acceptance of Grants

1. Massachusetts DESE State – Competitive Grant in the amount of \$10,000.00
After discussion, on a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Teixeira, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the Massachusetts DESE State – Competitive Grant in the amount of \$10,000.00.

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

VOTED: 0 in favor, 7 opposed to reconsider the vote to accept the above-referenced Massachusetts DESE State – Competitive Grant. The motion failed.

2. 2015 Lowe’s Toolbox for Education Grant in the amount of \$4,000.00 to O’Maley Innovation Middle School – Mr. Lafleur reported that this is a grant for Backyard Growers, and Mr. Favazza disclosed that he is on the board of Backyard Growers.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 1 abstention (Mr. Favazza) to accept the 2015 Lowe’s Toolbox for Education Grant in the amount of \$4,000.00 to O’Maley Innovation Middle School.

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

VOTED: 0 in favor, 7 opposed to reconsider the vote to accept the above-referenced 2015 Lowe’s Toolbox for Education Grant. The motion failed.

D. FY17 Budget Proposal

1. To approve the FY17 Budget Proposal in the amount of \$40,225,057 as presented at the School Committee Public Hearing of March 30, 2016 – See Item IX.A.
2. To approve the FY17 Budget Proposal for submission to the Mayor and the City Council – After discussion, on a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

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

To approve the FY17 budget in the amount of \$40,225,057 for submission to the Mayor and the City Council.

- E. Athletic Director** – Ms. Teixeira made a motion, seconded by Ms. Sweet, to approve the job description for the Director of Athletics with supervisory certification. She then explained that when the Personnel Subcommittee discussed this matter on March 14th, they were relying on salary information that may not have been pertinent. Dr. Safier reviewed the new additions to the job description and indicated that the supervisory certification has been deleted. The motion was amended as follows:

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to amend the job description for the Director of Athletics to add the language presented by the superintendent.

There was a discussion about the need for a full-time athletic director, including the tasks that the current Athletic Director/PE teacher has not been able to do because of time constraints and the length of her work day. Mr. Gross believes that having a full-time athletic director will make a difference in the number of students choosing out of the district, and Ms. Sweet pointed out that there are many more sports teams in the district since Kim Patience took over the AD position.

Mr. Favazza believes adding positions in the athletic department is not the best use of funds, especially in light of the fact that we do not have a usable

track. Kathy Clancy pointed out that we have a state-of-the-art stadium that is heavily used by several sports teams and the community. She believes that enabling someone to focus completely on athletics to mirror that investment indicates that the district is serious about our athletic program. She also pointed out that the skills for a PE teacher and the skills for an athletic director are two different sets of skills. Chairman Pope noted that the district has a new facility at West Parish as well and that the high school track will be repaired.

On a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was

VOTED: 6 in favor, 1 opposed (Mr. Favazza) to approve the job description for the Director of Athletics as amended.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to instruct the Director of Finance and Operations to make the appropriate transfers to fund a full-time athletic director and an additional .4 PE teacher.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

- A. MSBA Project Update** – Chairman Pope indicated that there will be a building committee meeting tomorrow.
- B. Open House for Community at New West Parish Elementary School** – Chairman Pope reported that this matter will be discussed at the building committee meeting tomorrow. After discussion, it was the consensus of the School Committee to suggest holding an open house for the community on Sunday afternoon, August 28, 2016.
- C. Letter to Senator Tarr and Representative Ferrante Regarding Resolution for Full Funding of Foundation Budget Review Commission’s Recommendations** – FYI.
- D. Thank You Card to School Committee and Superintendent from GHS Theatre Students** – Mr. Favazza commented that it was sad for him to hear the theatre students asking to go forward with their production in a leaky auditorium instead of demanding an auditorium that doesn’t leak. He believes that attitude of acceptance speaks volumes about the thought process of our students and how they view their schools (i.e. we know you’re not going to fix it; just let us use it broken).

Mayor Theken stated that she took a tour of the auditorium and the students heard her talking to Mike Hale and the superintendent. She told them the auditorium was not safe, and all of the students understood that. The students explained that they couldn’t hold this particular production anywhere else, which is why they were asking to use the leaky auditorium. The students knew the city was working on the

problem, and Mayor Theken indicated she received thank you cards from parents and students.

Mayor Theken stated that the city and the School Department are working together to do the best for our children. We need to be positive about what we have and promote what we have. Dr. Safier added that there is a tremendous amount of resilience on the part of the theatre students and they were able to work through the issues. Having said that, we need to do everything we can to give them a higher sense of expectation.

Mr. Gross stated that the message he got from the students' request was that, "We know it can't be fixed. We just want the show to go on. We can work around it. We are tough enough. Let us do the show."

E. Letter to Senator Tarr from Superintendent Regarding Senate Bill #2203 – FYI.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor 0 opposed, to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of April 13, 2016 at 9:34 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*