

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 28, 2014

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Jonathan Pope, Chairman
Melissa Teixeira, Vice Chairperson
Kathy Clancy, Secretary
Michelle Sweet
Mayor Carolyn Kirk

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Assistant Superintendent
Hans Baumhauer, Director of Finance
and Operations
Patricia Wegmann, Director of Special
Education
Tammy Morgan, Plum Cove Principal
Carol Bratt, East Gloucester Principal
Ellen Sibley, Beeman Principal

Recorded by Cape Ann TV

-
- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Pope called the meeting to order at 7:03 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 graduation will be held at Newell Stadium on June 8th. He stated that high heels will not be allowed on the field and that soft-soled shoes must be worn. In addition, all appropriate measures will be taken with respect to the chairs so that the field is not damaged. After graduation, the students will march off the field and go to the practice field for the reception and picture-taking.
 - V. **RECOGNITIONS** – Dr. Safier reported that students from O'Maley will be going to the Museum of Science tomorrow night to attend the Math Alive! exhibit opening. He stated that the exhibit is designed to help students have fun with math by showing its connection to and influence on many things that they hold dear, such as sports, movies and games. Dr. Safier stated that O'Maley students were invited because of its innovation school status and its focus on the STEM subjects. The students will also see a showing of "Pandas" at the Omni Theater and have dinner at the museum.
 - VI. **GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – Cody Eaton introduced himself and updated the committee on the following events at Gloucester High School: Academic Recognition Night, Sunshine Fund entertainment night, DECA lemonade challenge fundraiser, course selection for eighth graders, exhibition night for clubs and sports teams, Paul Harris Award dinner, and spring sports (first place baseball team, third place tennis teams, undefeated boys

track team, fourth place girls track team, fourth place girls softball team, and fourth place lacrosse teams).

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. School Committee Executive Session of April 30, 2014
2. School Committee of May 14, 2014

B. Approval of Warrants – Cover Sheets

C. Approval of Transfers – Transfers from April 14, 2014 to May 8, 2014, as recommended by the Building & Finance Subcommittee on May 21, 2014.

D. Approval of Out-of-Country Field Trip Request – GHS Foreign Language Department trip to France and Italy during April vacation (Wednesday, April 15, 2015 to Friday, April 24, 2015)

E. Acceptance of Grant – C.A.S.IT.Inc. in the amount of \$6,500.00 to GHS Italian Program

Kathy Clancy asked if the trip to France and Italy is open to any student who wants to go. Ms. Basile stated that they usually do not take incoming freshmen but the trip is open to everyone.

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

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

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Special Education Mid-Cycle Coordinated Program Review – Patty Wegmann provided some background on the Coordinated Program Review, which takes place every six years. She stated that the full cycle took place in 2011, and the mid-cycle review began last summer with a self-assessment. In the spring, onsite verification took place and the DESE interviewed Ms. Wegmann and the president of the Special Education Parent Advisory Council.

Ms. Wegmann reviewed the DESE's Mid-Cycle Report and stated that of the ten criteria that were reviewed, nine were found to be implemented and one was partially implemented, namely Criterion #55, Special Education Facilities and Classrooms. She reported that some services at Veterans are being provided in an area that is partitioned off but does not have a door, which creates some distractions and privacy concerns. Mr. Fusco has already come up with a plan to rectify that situation, which will be submitted by the due date of June 13th. In the fall, DESE will conduct a follow-up visit to confirm that the issue has been corrected.

- B. Beeman Memorial, Plum Cove, and East Gloucester School Improvement Plans (SIPs)** – Principal Tammy Morgan reported that the principals are continuing their efforts to improve teaching and learning in the areas of ELA and math. They are also continuing to promote teacher collaboration as they look into best practices. She stated that with the help of BSRI funding and professional development, they have made great improvements in RTI. New initiatives include implementation of a new math program and a standards-based report card. Ms. Morgan thanked the administration for including teachers in the process of selecting the a math program.

Principal Ellen Sibley stated that the first two goals of the SIPs are shared by all five elementary schools, which reflects their commitment to working together with the district to have a shared vision. She indicated that the goals beyond the first two are unique to each of the individual schools.

Principal Carol Bratt reviewed Goal 3 of the East Gloucester School SIP, namely that students will engage in a monthly activity that addresses the whole child and cultivates team building and collaboration in a way that contributes to an overall school environment of enjoyment, creativity and positivity. She stated that the goal is to provide community, collaboration, and a thematic activity to foster a love of learning.

Principal Sibley reviewed Goal 3 of the Beeman SIP, namely to provide two trial enrichment activities, one during the day and one after school, to challenge and motivate students. She reported that 25 families participated in a trial Spanish class this spring. She also stated that the site council developed a survey to find out what kinds of enrichment programs families are interested in and to ask about the school community. So far, they have gotten back 20% of the responses and are in the process of compiling the data.

Principal Morgan reviewed Goal 3 of the Plum Cove SIP, namely to promote the use of meanings of word parts to improve reading, spelling, vocabulary and fluency using “The Magic of Morphology.” She described a growing classroom tree with leaves containing word parts and their meanings.

Kathy Clancy asked what percentage of parent emails the schools have. Mrs. Sibley stated that Beeman is increasing their effort to try to raise the percentage of family email addresses.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to accept the Beeman Memorial, Plum Cove, and East Gloucester Elementary School Improvement Plans.

- C. 2015 PARCC/MCAS Choice** – Chairman Pope stated that the district has the option of choosing whether to participate in PARCC or MCAS next year. Dr. Safier presented a Powerpoint on this subject and stated that the DESE has suggested that the district’s decision be made by June 30th, although we have until October 1st to confirm our choice.

Dr. Safier stated that the PARCC test will become operational as a pilot program in the spring of 2015. In the fall, DESE will vote whether or not to adopt PARCC and, if approved, it will be fully implemented in 2016. If PARCC is not approved, a 1-2 year revision of the MCAS can be expected in order to bring it closer to the Common Core Standards.

Dr. Safier stated that one of the reasons why he is recommending PARCC for next year is that the district can continue to provide feedback on the next generation assessment. In addition, there is a “hold harmless” provision, meaning that the 2015 results can improve a school or district’s standing with respect to accountability, but if there is a decline, that will not take place. In other words, a district or school can only improve its standing and not diminish it.

Dr. Safier stated that PARCC will provide both paper and online tests next year and presumably in the years to come. He expressed concern with the ability of elementary school students to type answers and navigate the test online. At present, he would recommend paper tests for the elementary schools and online testing for the middle and high school.

Dr. Safier reported that the PARCC exam would be administered for Grades 3 through 8 and that the district could also choose to administer some assessments in Grades 9 and 11. After careful deliberation and discussion with the principals, he recommended that the district go forward with the PARCC exam next year for Grades 3 through 8.

Mayor Kirk stated that before she would support acceleration of PARCC in the district, she would have to see more evidence that the students are protected, specifically ninth graders. Dr. Safier restated that the PARCC decision is for Grades 3 through 8 and that Grades 9 and 11 are optional. Tenth graders will still take the MCAS in 2015. Ms. Teixeira questioned whether students will be given the option to take the PARCC exam on paper if they are more comfortable with that option. There was a discussion about the communication to parents about the new test and the relative performance of their child.

This matter was continued to the next meeting for further discussion and action. Mayor Kirk noted that Paul McGeary will be Acting Mayor at the next School Committee meeting and will have authority to vote. She will ask him to confer with the superintendent ahead of time about this matter.

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

1. O’Maley at Opening of Math Alive! Exhibit at Museum of Science – See Item V.
2. DDM Implementation Plan

3. College Matriculation
4. COPsync – Dr. Safier reported that the cost of this program for the first year is \$120 per patrol car and \$2,400 per school. Subsequently, the cost per school is \$1,200. He noted that in speaking with Chief Campanello, they may be able to find a way to defer the first year's cost to get the program going.
5. Foundation Budget Review Commission – From MASC
6. Funding for Alternative Education – From MASC – Dr. Safier reported that the district will be purchasing a software program called Plato, which will give us the means of providing services for all students. He noted that it can also be used as a credit recovery program.
7. Substance Abuse Policy – Dr. Safier reported that the district's health curriculum currently covers the topic of substance abuse and prevention. He stated that the district will review the model policy that is developed by the task force and incorporate it into our curriculum going forward.

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

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

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Building & Finance Subcommittee Meeting of May 21, 2014 – Chairperson Clancy reported that the subcommittee discussed the following matters at its meeting on May 21, 2014:

- Food Service Update – Kathy Clancy requested that people spread the word about the importance of keeping current with their lunch fees.
- Facilities Open Work Order Report
- Transportation Software Program – Kathy Clancy made a motion, seconded by Chairman Pope, to approve the engagement of Versatrans to purchase their software, conditioned on the price presented at the time of the meeting. After discussion of the price and benefits of the program, the motion was amended as follows.

Amended Motion

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to approve the engagement of Versatrans to purchase their software at a cost of \$15,990.00.

Chairperson Clancy stated that issues related to the declaration of Fuller School as surplus were also discussed by the subcommittee on May 21, 2014.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to remove any conditions related to the School Committee's declaration of the Fuller School as surplus.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to notify the city administration that the Agreement by and between the City of Gloucester and the City of Gloucester School Committee dated December 19, 2012 regarding Fuller School has been fulfilled and is no longer in place.

Chairman Pope reminded the committee that the school budget presentation before the City Council Budget & Finance Committee is scheduled for June 2nd at 5:00 p.m.

X. ACTION

- A. Acceptance of Beeman Memorial, Plum Cove, and East Gloucester School Improvement Plans – See Item VIII.B.**
- B. Versatrans Transportation Software Program – See Item IX.A.**
- C. Fuller School Surplus – See Item IX.A.**
- D. Agreement Between City of Gloucester and City of Gloucester School Committee – See Item IX.A.**
- E. Request to Declare Undesired Furnishings from West Parish and Fuller Schools Surplus –** Mayor Kirk reported that the city is working with the West Parish movers to move all furnishings from the West Parish and Fuller Schools that are not being moved to St. Ann's, are not being put into storage, and are not needed by other schools in the district to a staging area at Fuller School to be donated to impoverished communities. As part of the procurement process, those furnishings need to be declared as surplus by the School Committee.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to declare as surplus those furnishings from West Parish and Fuller Schools not identified as needed by the School Department as of June 28, 2014.

Mayor Kirk noted that the children at West Parish will get a video from the children who receive the furnishings, which will provide closure to the West Parish students. Ms. Sweet noted that this is also a great lesson for the students.

Finally, there was a discussion about the seats in the Fuller School auditorium. Mayor Kirk indicated that the purchasing agent is looking into that matter.

- F. Request that the Superintendent Make a Determination as to the Value of the Furnishings Declared Surplus** – It was the consensus of the committee that no vote is necessary to make this request of the superintendent.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

- A. MSBA Project Update** – Dr. Safier updated the committee on the following matters with respect to the West Parish project:
- Coffee and tour of O'Maley for Grade 4 parents to talk about the fifth graders at O'Maley next year
 - Moving day and picnic at West Parish on June 21st
 - Packing and tagging of furnishings at West Parish on June 25-27
 - Meeting with new team at MSBA tomorrow
 - Feedback from MSBA on design development submissions
- B. Use of Newell Stadium Track** – Mayor Kirk reported that the track at Newell Stadium will be open to the public Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on weekends from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Visitors will be asked to sign in with the attendant, who will be enforcing the rules (no dogs, no skateboards, no strollers, etc.). She noted that the funding for this fiscal year (through June 30th) is coming from the GFAA. Chairman Pope, who is an officer of the GFAA, reported that they received a donation from the JJ Nicastro Foundation that was earmarked for maintenance of Newell Stadium. He stated that supervision is the best maintenance that can be done right now. Therefore, they transferred that donation to the city so that people could be hired as attendants.
- C. Consolidation of Ward 3 Polling Places at GHS** – Dr. Safier reported that the City Council voted last night to consolidate the Ward 3 precincts and hold all voting at the GHS field house. He noted that there are two voting days this year, on September 9th and November 4th, and asked the committee to consider closing schools on those two days. He also recommended that the district work with the police department to provide ample parking at the high school and that the district provide handicap access and organize the voting on both dates so that voting can be done while school is in session. He indicated that the issue of Ward 5 is still unresolved.

- D. Governance Workshop** – Chairman Pope stated that he would like to schedule a governance workshop in August and requested that the committee members provide him with any dates they are not available during that month.
- E. GEF Fundraiser** – Kathy Clancy reported that the Gloucester Education Foundation is holding a fundraising cruise on the Beauport Princess on July 27th.
- F. Culinary Arts Ribbon Cutting** – Chairman Pope reported that the GHS Culinary Arts Department is having a ribbon cutting ceremony on June 3rd at 3 p.m.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT – On a motion by Mayor Kirk, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of May 28, 2014 at 8:56 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*