

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 1, 2017

District Office Conference Room

2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

5:30 p.m.

Members Present

Jonathan Pope, Chairman
Kathy Clancy, Vice Chairperson
Melissa Teixeira
Tony Gross
Michelle Sweet
Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent (6:16)

Also Present

Michael Gilbert, MASC Field Director

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- I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Pope called the meeting to order at 5:57 p.m.
- II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG** – Waived.
- III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** – None.
- IV. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON** – Chairman Pope introduced MASC Field Director Mike Gilbert.

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

VI. DISCUSSION

- A. Workshop with Mike Gilbert** – Ms. Teixeira stated that she is very grateful for the opportunity to review the operating protocols again and expressed her disappointment and frustration that all committee members are not in attendance to discuss the protocols that would be in the best interests of all members.

1. Role of the School Committee – Chairman Pope referred to the document in the packet entitled “Areas of Responsibility,” which comes from the MASC Handbook.

Mr. Gross stated he would like to discuss the School Committee-Staff Communications policy, File BHC. The committee discussed the paragraph of the policy entitled “Visits to Schools.” Mayor Theken reported that she has seen School Committee members and city councilors in the schools and that the principals do not know why they are there. Mr. Gilbert indicated that School Committee members are not required to be CORI’d or sign in at the

office when visiting a school. However, he stated that there should be appropriate notice of a visit through the Superintendent’s office.

Ms. Teixeira expressed concern that a request by a School Committee member to visit a school may not be to see how great things are there but to make observations about a complaint he or she heard in the community. Mr. Gilbert indicated that the committee as a whole would have to discuss whether there was something worth investigating and take a vote on it. In other words, School Committee members cannot act independently in investigating a complaint. They should trust the administration to bring the committee information about what is going on in the schools.

Mr. Gilbert stated that committee members need to think about what may happen if they observe something in a school and a grievance then comes before the committee on the same issue, stating that the member would have to recuse him/herself because he/she was the one who pointed it out. He indicated that oftentimes, one member observing something may not give the committee the full story, stating that administrators will give the committee the full story and will usually make a recommendation that would benefit the district and the students.

There was a discussion about members visiting a school as a parent versus as a School Committee member and the possible disruption that could result from people visiting schools on testing days, when audits are being conducted, etc.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to amend the last paragraph of the School Committee-Staff Communications policy, File BHC, entitled “Visits to Schools” as follows:

“Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will inform the Superintendent of the purpose of such visits and with the Superintendent facilitate arrangements for visitations through the principals of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as “inspections” or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by committee members will be carried on only under committee authorization.”

3. School Committee Rules of Procedure – Mr. Gross stated that he would like to revise the Rules of Procedure to be consistent with the City Council’s Rules of Procedure and that oral communications be limited to topics not on the agenda. The committee discussed the policy entitled “Public Participation at School Committee Meetings,” File BEDH.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to amend the “School Committee – City of Gloucester Rules of Procedure 2015” by revising the title of the document to “School Committee – City of Gloucester Rules of Procedure 2017” and by revising the paragraph “*Oral Communications” to align with the policy entitled “Public Participation at School Committee Meetings,” File BEDH, as follows:

By deleting the sentence “For items that are on the agenda, members of the public may address the Committee with the permission of the Chair,” and replacing it with “Topics for discussion must be limited to those items not listed on the agenda for that evening. The School Committee Chair may, at his discretion, allow comment on items on the agenda.”

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the School Committee – City of Gloucester Rules of Procedure 2017 as amended.

2. School Committee Operating Protocols – The committee discussed the operating protocols.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to amend the “Gloucester School Committee Operating Protocols – August, 2012” by revising the title of the document to “Gloucester School Committee Operating Protocols – June 2017” and by adding a bullet at the end of the paragraph entitled “How We Communicate,” as follows:

“Members will come to meetings prepared. If a member has factual questions about an item on the agenda, he/she will submit those questions to the Chair prior to the meeting so that he/she can get an informed response.”

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Mayor Theken, it was unanimously

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

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

To enter into Executive Session at 6:51 p.m. for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations with the GTA and percentage increases to individual contracts and to enter back into regular session for the purpose of voting on same.

V. ACTION

B. Percentage Increases to Individual Contracts – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was

VOTED: 5 in favor, 1 present (Mayor Theken) to approve a 2% increase for all individual contracts.

A. Approval of GTA Contract Addendum – Tabled.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of June 1, 2017 at 7:12 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*