

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 14, 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 (7:13 p.m.)

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Dr. Arthur Unobskey, Asst. Superintendent
Tom Lafleur, CPA, Director of Finance
and Operations
Amy Pasquarello, East Gloucester Principal
Tammy Morgan, Plum Cove Principal
Matt Fusco, Veterans Principal
Dr. Telenia Imel, West Parish Principal
Debra Lucey, O'Maley Principal
Jeff Strong, O'Maley Asst. Principal
Jeff Destino, O'Maley Asst. Principal

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** – Andrea Tarantino, President of the Gloucester Teachers Association, thanked the committee for their time, patience and consideration of all teachers in the district in negotiating their contract. She noted that it has taken a lot of teamwork to get to this point and the GTA appreciates it.
- Susanne Altenburger distributed a report on an advanced naval technology exercise that took place in April and spoke in support of a green boatbuilding vocational program at GHS.
- IV. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON** – None.
- V. RECOGNITIONS** – Dr. Safier introduced Jodi Gennodie, the next principal of Beeman Memorial Elementary School, and spoke about her background, education and experience. Ms. Gennodie stated that she is very excited to be here and spoke about her work with BSRI and a state project in which she is involved.

Chairman Pope recognized the graduating seniors and those who collectively were awarded over \$250,000 in scholarships. Kathy Clancy recognized the generosity of the community in supporting our students with scholarships. She also recognized the O'Maley band and chorus for their wonderful production last week.

- VI. GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – Caroline Enos and Henry Hardy introduced themselves and updated the committee on finals, student council elections, and teacher retirements at Gloucester High School: .

(Mayor Theken joined the meeting at 7:13 p.m.)

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. School Committee Executive Session Minutes of March 1, 2017
2. School Committee Minutes of April 26, 2017
3. Personnel Subcommittee Minutes of May 2, 2017
4. Program Subcommittee Minutes of May 4, 2017
5. Personnel Subcommittee and Executive Session Minutes of May 8, 2017

B. Approval of Warrants – Cover Sheets

C. Approval of Transfers – May 15 to June 2, 2017

D. Referrals

E. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations

1. \$222.49 and \$307.11 from Hockmeyer Studios, Inc. to Veterans' Memorial Elementary School
2. \$414.54 from Ahold Financial Services "Stop & Shop New England" to Plum Cove Elementary School
3. Electric guitar from Tom Lafleur to the O'Maley Music Room
4. Computer monitor stand and two monitors from Tom Lafleur to the Information Technology Department

Kathy Clancy removed Item A.4 and Mr. Gross removed Item C from the Consent Agenda.

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.

Kathy Clancy made a slight change to the second paragraph of Section II.A. of the Program Subcommittee Minutes of May 4, 2017, and Mr. Gross discussed the budget transfers and prepayment of special education costs.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the Program Subcommittee Minutes of May 4, 2017, as amended.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the transfers from May 15, 2017 to June 2, 2017.

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- A. O'Maley Innovation School Plan Renewal** – Dr. Safier reviewed the major areas that characterize O'Maley as an innovation school, and Ms. Lucey, Mr. Destino and Mr. Strong reviewed the goals. Mr. Destino spoke about a potential collaboration with Salem State University students to do translation work, etc. for ELL students.

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

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Program Subcommittee Meeting of June 1, 2017** – Chairperson Clancy reported that the Program Subcommittee discussed the O'Maley Innovation Middle School Plan Renewal at its meeting of June 1, 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 O'Maley Innovation Middle School Plan Renewal.

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (Continued)

- B. Student Handbook Approvals for O'Maley and Elementary Schools** – Dr. Safier reviewed and the committee discussed the changes made to the handbooks. Dr. Safier expressed concern about the paragraph regarding cell phone searches and indicated that he has asked Attorney Stonberg to provide an opinion on that issue. Kathy Clancy suggested including a statement regarding cell phones in the elementary school handbooks and to consider including it in the

GHS handbook. It was the consensus of the committee to table the vote approving the handbooks until June 24th.

- C. **Professional Learning Communities and Contract Ratification** – Dr. Safier presented a slide show on PLCs and Time, including the ideas of ensuring that students learn, a culture of collaboration, and a focus on results.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS (Continued)

- B. **Building & Finance Subcommittee Meeting of June 8, 2017** – Chairman Gross reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the O’Maley Learning Commons glass project, the meal charge policy, and the FY18 budget at its meeting of June 8, 2017.

X. ACTION

- A. **First Reading of Meal Charge Policy, File EFD** – Mr. Gross reviewed the new USDA mandated policy and reported that it actually costs the district more money to provide an alternate meal to students who owe more than \$25.00.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to waive the actual reading of the Meal Charge policy, File EFD.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the first reading of the Meal Charge policy, File EFD.

- B. **Approval of Memorandum of Agreement Between the Gloucester School Committee and the Gloucester Teachers Association** – Chairman Pope recused himself from the discussion of this matter since his wife is a member of the GTA and turned the meeting over to Vice Chairperson Kathy Clancy.

Ms. Teixeira reviewed the highlights of the Memorandum of Agreement.

Mr. Favazza stated that the contract fails to adequately serve our students and the taxpayers who foot the bill for the contract. He does not begrudge the GTA that their task is to negotiate for their interests. However, the job of the School Committee is to negotiate for the interests of the students and the taxpayers. He noted that one of the items that the negotiations centered around was time for money, namely increasing the elementary school teacher work day to make it more equal to the middle and high school work day in exchange for a respectable salary increase. Looking at where both sides started, he pointed out that the

committee's original ask was 90 hours for the year and we are ending up with six hours.

With respect to the contracts of teachers in neighboring communities, Mr. Favazza pointed out that Ms. Teixeira repeatedly said to him and others that we have "no business" comparing ourselves to Manchester or Rockport, so we should not be using the numbers in those towns as justification for why we should automatically pay our teachers more.

Mr. Favazza made it clear that this negotiation was lengthy and, as far as he heard, headed for mediation. He voted to seek mediation and never voted to take that off the table. He stated that this deal was struck without a single School Committee member in the room. A meeting that was supposed to take place was accidentally not posted, and rather than cancel the meeting and repost it, a decision was made to send in the superintendent and the committee's attorney to strike this deal, which looks nothing like what the committee had been talking about for months.

Finally, Mr. Favazza stated that this being a three-year contract does two things: (1) it prohibits the School Committee from getting another bite at the apple for at least another two years, and (2) it sets a very bad precedent for how little the School Committee will expect in exchange for handing out a substantial raise. He indicated that the committee did not get what it needed for the district and he believes there was more work to be done.

Ms. Teixeira responded by saying she does not use the words "no business" and stated that it would not have been her intent to say we have no right to look at salaries in other districts. With respect to mediation, she acknowledged that the committee did vote to go to mediation and noted that it did have one mediation meeting at which the mediator clearly told the committee that the time they were looking for was extremely unreasonable for the amount of money that was on the table.

Ms. Teixeira took full responsibility for the meeting not being posted because she went on vacation and thought she had sent an email to Stephanie about it. However, she stated that she has been negotiating contracts for ten years and it is completely legal, reasonable and expected that an attorney can negotiate on behalf of the School Committee. She indicated that the committee took a vote for Attorney Stonberg to represent them and that is exactly what she did when the School Committee could not be there. In addition, everything with the exception of the time and salary had already been discussed and agreed upon by the full School Committee.

Mr. Gross discussed what the district is getting that is not outlined in the contract, stating that the teachers are the backbone of the district and their responsibilities have been dramatically increased. He believes the contract truly reflects a modest

increase for everything we ask the teachers to do that has been over and above what has been asked in previous years.

Ms. Sweet thanked the teachers for their dedication and the incredible work they are doing for our kids. She stated that we are now a Level 2 district because of our great quality teachers and she believes the contract is well-deserved.

Ms. Teixeira stated that she is very grateful and honored to be able to sit on the Personnel Subcommittee and work to settle contracts with the employees of the district so she can hear about the day-to-day activities that go on in the classrooms. She believes the committee got a reasonable amount of time and pointed out that a lot of teachers were already doing a lot of this work (staying after school and working at home). She is very happy that we have a three-year contract that is increasing their salaries.

Mayor Theken pointed out that teachers do extra work that nobody knows about and stated that she is going to support the contract. Kathy Clancy indicated that she believes kids will benefit from the teachers' extra time and stated that she is going to support the contract.

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

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

Ms. Teixeira – yes
Mayor Theken – yes
Kathy Clancy – yes
Mr. Favazza – no
Mr. Gross – yes
Chairman Pope – abstain
Ms. Sweet – yes

To approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the Gloucester School Committee and the Gloucester Teachers Association.

Vice Chairperson Clancy turned the meeting back over to Chairman Pope.

- C. **Approval of O'Maley Learning Commons Glass Project** – Mr. Gross reviewed the plan to put glass panels in the open sections of the O'Maley Learning Commons room and indicated that the project is being funded through a Cummings Foundation grant.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the O’Maley Learning Commons glass project.

- D. Approval of Budget Reductions** – Mr. Gross reviewed the budget reductions totaling \$250,313.00. He discussed the elimination of the GHS child study program due to the teacher’s retirement and a decrease in enrollment.

Mr. Favazza pointed out that School Committee stipends total \$30,000 and inquired whether committee members should sacrifice their stipends before making other cuts to the budget. Mr. Gross stated that that would be a personal choice and noted that the City Council just voted a raise for themselves.

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

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

Ms. Teixeira – yes
Mayor Theken – yes
Kathy Clancy – yes
Mr. Favazza – no
Mr. Gross – yes
Chairman Pope – yes
Ms. Sweet – yes

To approve the budget reductions in the amount of \$250,313.00 as presented.

- E. Approval of O’Maley Innovation Middle School Plan Renewal** – See IX.A.

- F. Acceptance of Increase of Title IIA Grant Allocation** – Dr. Unobskey explained the reason for the increase in the grant allocation.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept an increase of the Title IIA grant allocation by \$837.00 (from \$128,761.00 to \$129,598.00).

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

A. MSBA Project Updates

1. West Parish School – Chairman Pope reported that the West Parish building project came in \$1.6 million under budget.

2. GHS Roof – Chairman Pope reported that the bids for this project came in at \$1.7 million under the estimate. Dr. Safier indicated that there will be a preconstruction meeting at 9:30 tomorrow morning with the roofing company, the OPM and the designer to discuss the logistics. He noted that the field house roof will be done first and that most summer activities will not take place at the high school for safety reasons.
3. East Gloucester/Veterans School – Chairman Pope reported that four members of the School Committee are on the East Gloucester Building Committee. He expressed concern that a quorum of the School Committee would be attending building committee meetings and deliberating issues that would impact the full School Committee at some point. In light of this concern, he indicated that he contacted Mike Gilbert of MASC who said that it can be done as long as the other members of the School Committee are aware of the situation. Chairman Pope stated that he also talked to MSBA, who said that they do not have a problem with it, and the Attorney General’s Office, who also indicated that it is not a problem.

Ms. Sweet stated that she is not comfortable with having a quorum of the School Committee on the building committee. Mayor Theken indicated that she wanted more people from the community to be on the building committee but nobody came forward before the deadline. She also noted that she has a right to take someone off the building committee and replace them.

Ms. Teixeira noted her objection to the process and stated that she opposes having a quorum of the School Committee on the building committee because the School Committee will be deliberating on matters at the building committee level. She noted that if all four School Committee members vote the same way at the building committee level, there would be no point to bringing the matter before the School Committee for a vote. She does not believe it is fair to the other three School Committee members who are not able to deliberate at the building committee level and asked the mayor to reconsider. Mayor Theken stated that it is up to the chair to decide who should be on the building committee.

Mr. Favazza stated that a School Committee member who is on the building committee is not bound by his or her building committee vote. Ms. Teixeira requested that Chairman Pope get a legal opinion on whether a building committee member can change his or her vote when the School Committee deliberates on the issue.

B. Changes to Operating Protocols and Rules of Procedure – Tabled.

- C. Dr. Arthur Unobskey** – Kathy Clancy thanked Dr. Unobskey for embracing our students during his time in the district and wished him well in his new position, and Chairman Pope stated that it has been a pleasure working with him.
- D. Presentation to City Council** – Kathy Clancy distributed a flyer regarding a presentation to the City Council on June 20th on the topic of marijuana legalization.
- E. Massachusetts Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Task Force** – Ms. Teixeira reported that she has been asked to get a list of youth groups in Gloucester for the purpose of inviting them to a forum on this topic. Dr. Safier stated that he would be happy to help and noted that Healthy Gloucester Collaborative may have a list of local youth groups.

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

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

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

To enter into Executive Session at 9:41 p.m. for the purpose of negotiating the superintendent’s contract and to enter back into regular session for the purpose of adjournment only.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of June 14, 2017 at 10:24 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*