

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 25, 2014

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Jonathan Pope, Chairman
Kathy Clancy, Secretary
Tony Gross
Michelle Sweet
Jack O'Maley

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Assistant Superintendent
Hans Baumhauer, Director of Finance
and Operations

Recorded by Cape Ann TV

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Pope called the meeting to order at 7:02 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 noted that this is the last meeting of the school year. He thanked the administration for their hard work which resulted in a very successful year. He specifically cited the co-teaching at Veterans, the new West Parish School, and the new evaluation system.
- V. **RECOGNITIONS** – Kathy Clancy recognized the O'Maley eighth grade graduates.
- VI. **GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – None present.
- VII. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. **Approval of Minutes**
 - 1. School Committee and Executive Session (Confidential) of June 11, 2014
 - 2. Building & Finance Subcommittee of June 18, 2014
 - B. **Approval of Warrants** – Cover Sheets
 - C. **Acceptance of DESE Grants**
 - D. **Approval of Transfers** – May 20, 2014 to June 16, 2014

On a motion by Kathy Clancy, 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. End-of-Year Literacy Benchmark Report** – Gregg Bach presented the end-of-year K-5 Assessment Data Report, including a description of the DIBELS and GRADE measures, results, reports by school, trends and challenges. He pointed out that the GRADE assessment was shifted from September to December and indicated that that should result in less of a gap in scores between the fall and spring assessments. Mr. Bach also mentioned that a number of teachers took the initiative and worked very hard this year to survey their colleagues to define interventions and core programs.
- B. Superintendent’s Mid-Cycle Evaluation Update** – Chairman Pope noted that the purpose of the mid-cycle evaluation is to review the superintendent’s goals to determine whether any adjustments need to be made to them. Dr. Safier reviewed his goals for the calendar year 2014, and Mr. Bach updated the committee on professional development with respect to the 1:1 technology initiative, including the use of online summer study groups. With respect to the West Parish swing space at St. Ann’s, Dr. Safier indicated that the work at St. Ann’s should be done by early to mid-August at the latest, at which time parents will be invited to tour the school. Lastly, with respect to the professional practice goal, Dr. Safier indicated that it has been challenging to conduct two walkthroughs a week. Chairman Pope requested that Dr. Safier compile a list of walkthroughs conducted since the beginning of the year which can then be averaged. The goal can then be adjusted if necessary.
- C. Superintendent’s Report** – Dr. Safier updated the committee on the following matters:
1. PARCC/MCAS Choice in 2015
 2. Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan – Ms. Sweet requested that the new bullying prevention plan be shared with the Program Subcommittee.
 3. Student Discipline – Dr. Safier indicated that the district has budgeted for a software program called Plato which can be used as an online means for addressing the needs of students who are not in school because of discipline issues (e.g. suspension). He noted that the software can also be used as a credit recovery program.
 4. June Leadership Retreat
 5. Machinery from North Shore Regional Vocational
 6. Public Relations Committee – Kathy Clancy reported that a group of parents reached out to her in response to negative press about the GPSD, indicating their desire to play an active part in publicizing the great experiences their children are having and increasing opportunities for parent engagement in the schools. Mr. Gross applauded the enthusiasm of these parents but noted the

importance of having guidelines for the committee. Dr. Safier described the committee as a “think tank” and indicated that any plans developed by the group must be approved by him and the principal of the school that is the subject of the plan.

7. Gloucester U Summer Program – Dr. Safier reported that a similar grant that has supported the Gloucester U program has been approved for O’Maley. Mr. Bach thanked Tina Raimo of the GEF who was instrumental in writing the grant proposal.

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

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

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Joint Building & Finance and Personnel Subcommittee Report of June 18, 2014**
Chairman Pope reviewed the changes made to the Superintendent’s contract at the joint meeting on June 18, 2014.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to approve the Contract Between the Gloucester School Committee and Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent of Schools, as presented.

The members of the committee praised Dr. Safier for the work he has done in the district, and Dr. Safier thanked the committee for the opportunity to continue his work.

Kathy Clancy reported that the City Council voted in favor of the gas conversion at Beeman as well as window replacement and a new boiler at O’Maley at their meeting last night.

Kathy Clancy reported that the Budget & Finance Subcommittee discussed the following matters at the joint meeting on June 18, 2014:

- FY15 Budget – Kathy Clancy stated that while this budget reflects less than what was requested and requires the use of special education contingency funds, it does not require any cuts to programs or services. She believes the committee communicated to the city that this situation is a one-time solution.

Chairman Pope reiterated that the \$1 million increase that was received from the city did not even cover the 2% COLA and other contractual obligations offered to staff. He also expressed concern with the fact that \$560,000 was put into the budget that was not included in the base. He indicated that he

suggested to the City Council that next year's school budget be discussed sooner rather than later.

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

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

Mr. O'Maley – yes
Chairman Pope – yes
Ms. Sweet – yes
Kathy Clancy – yes
Mr. Gross – yes

To approve a school budget for FY15 in the amount of \$38,038,748.00.

- Invoice for Retired Teachers' Health Insurance –Mr. Baumhauer explained that after the move to the GIC, the city took over paying for the retired teachers' health insurance, which was formerly a cherry sheet assessment. He noted that there was supposed to be a cherry sheet adjustment to the revenues coming from the state; however, the adjustment did not cover the total cost of the retired teachers' health insurance for the month of June. Mr. Baumhauer reported that this expense has been budgeted at the full amount for FY15 and he is confident that this situation will not happen again.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to acknowledge that the School Department has paid an unusual expense of \$176,794.75 to aid the city in paying for the retired teachers' health insurance.

- Outstanding Food Service Debt – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to authorize the Director of Finance & Operations to transfer \$5,000.00 from the FY15 Main Office contingency fund to the appropriate account for the purpose of recovering outstanding food service debt.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to authorize the Director of Finance & Operations to transfer \$13,000.00 from the Main Office contingency fund to the appropriate account for the purpose of settlement of a grievance.

X. ACTION

- A. Approval of FY15 School Budget** – See Item IX.A.
- B. Approval of Contract Between Gloucester School Committee and Dr. Richard Safier, as amended** – See Item IX.A.
- C. Approval of 2014-2015 Handbooks** – Dr. Safier reviewed the language added to the O’Maley handbook regarding teen dating violence, which he indicated is the only major change to the handbooks.

After discussion, on a motion by Chairman Pope, seconded by Mr. O’Maley, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to approve the 2014-2015 school handbooks as presented.

Kathy Clancy requested that the current Meal Payment and Use of Tobacco policies be included in the handbooks, and Mr. Gross requested that the policy regarding behavior on school buses be added to the O’Maley handbook.

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

- H. User Fees for Athletics and Transportation** – After discussion, on a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, that the user fees for athletics and transportation remain the same for the school year 2014-2015 as they were last year.

Chairman Pope stated that the GFAA anticipates making a contribution before the beginning of the school year to reduce athletic fees even further.

- D. Reconsideration of Adoption of PARCC as a Replacement for MCAS** – Chairman Pope reported that the reconsideration of this motion is based on the receipt of additional information from the DESE that is contrary to what the members believed at the time of the vote, namely that teachers will be responsible for students’ grades in the evaluation process.

Dr. Safier reported that there have been extensive conversations with the union with respect to minimizing any impact that next year’s PARCC scores would have on the evaluation system. However, there was still reluctance by the GTA to go forward with PARCC next year.

Kathy Clancy expressed disappointment with the teachers’ unwillingness because she believes our students would benefit from taking the PARCC early since it is likely to be adopted by the state in the near future. However, she respects our teachers and would hate for them to be penalized in any way. She pointed out that there are many

other assessments that evaluators could look at to see if there is a consistent message and PARCC would be just another data point.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to rescind the School Committee's vote to adopt the PARCC pilot program for Grades 3 through 8 for the 2014-2015 school year and to retain MCAS as the state accountability measure.

E. Acknowledgment of Payment of an Unusual Expense – See Item IX.A.

F. Recovery of Outstanding Food Service Debt – See Item IX.A.

G. Settlement of a Grievance – See Item IX.A.

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:

- Interior drawings of new building
- Invoices submitted by W.T. Rich for work at St. Ann's
- Preparation for demolition of West Parish
- Groundbreaking ceremony prior to new foundation being installed at West Parish

Chairman Pope requested that the new drawings of the exterior of the building be posted on the website. Kathy Clancy noted that there will also be a picture of the new building at the job site.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION – None.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of June 25, 2014 at 9:10 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*