

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 13, 2014

Superintendent's Conference Room – District Office

7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Jonathan Pope, Chairman
Melissa Teixeira, Vice Chairperson
Tony Gross
Michelle Sweet
Jack O'Maley
Paul McGeary, Acting Mayor

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 7:00 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** – Chairman Pope welcomed the members back from summer break.
- V. RECOGNITIONS** – Dr. Safier recognized the high school JROTC program for receiving one of eight nationwide designations as an Honor School, which is awarded to the top 10% of JROTC units. He also recognized Michael Munroe for placing second in the selection of top cadet for the last school year.
- VI. GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – None present.
- VII. CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. Approval of Minutes**
 - 1. Joint Building & Finance and Personnel Subcommittee and Executive Session (Confidential) of June 18, 2014
 - 2. Building & Finance Subcommittee of June 25, 2014
 - 3. School Committee of June 25, 2014
 - B. Approval of Warrants** – Cover Sheets

C. Acceptance of GEF Grants

1. \$29,700.00 in support of district programs
2. \$456.53 in support of the Countdown to Kindergarten event

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

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to approve the Consent Agenda as noted above.

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

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

A. MSBA Project Update – Kevin Buckley, Owner’s Project Manager, updated the committee on the following matters:

- Remodeling of former St. Ann’s building – The construction is done and the furniture is in place.
- Two modular units at Beeman – The units arrived a little over a week ago and are scheduled to be finished by August 22nd, but this date may slide a day or two. If that is the case, the company will work over the weekend and Wakefield Movers will move the furniture in on August 25th.
- Demolition of West Parish – Demolition should be done and regrading started by mid-September. A ribbon-cutting ceremony is tentatively scheduled for September 9th. Construction of the new building will take about 18 months and will continue through the winter. Mr. Buckley reminded the public that there is no access to the site, including the playgrounds.
- Reporting to MSBA – The 60% documentation has been submitted to the MSBA and the 90% documents will be submitted at the end of October.

Dr. Safier reported that the fifth grade rooms at O’Maley are ready and the furniture has been delivered. He also noted that the City Council approved the ordinances requested by the committee to address transportation issues at the former St. Ann’s building. Dr. Safier indicated that parents are being told to pick up their children at O’Maley in the afternoon to minimize traffic and disruption in the neighborhood and stated that there will be staff at O’Maley to assist with this process. Finally, there will be an open house at the former St. Ann’s building on August 28th.

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

A. Preliminary Attendance Review of Class Sizes – Dr. Safier reviewed the Enrollment Report as of August 8, 2014, which shows very reasonable class sizes. Mr. Gross pointed out that there are only 12 students listed in Grade 12. Mr. Bach stated that the normal rollover in mid-July probably has not been done yet. Therefore, the numbers on

the report should be up one grade. He will provide a revised report as soon as it is available.

B. Chapter 222 Review and Policy Compliance with New Discipline Law –

Dr. Safier reported that the new law went into effect on July 1, 2014 and relates to offenses that can lead to suspension or expulsion (excluding those related to drugs, assault or weapons, which are addressed by a separate policy). The School Committee will need to take into account the following policy considerations:

- Provision of academic services for all students (e.g. Plato software program)
- Increased reporting to DESE
- Notification criteria
- Ensuring attendance policy is consistent with new law
- Exit interviews and parent notification for students who are leaving school permanently

Dr. Safier presented a slide show entitled “Chapter 222 Summary,” including key definitions and takeaways, goals of the new law, notice requirements, principal hearings and meetings, additional rights and requirements, data collection and reporting, etc. He noted that changes will need to be made to student handbooks in accordance with the new law.

This matter was referred to the Program Subcommittee for review. Ms. Teixeira requested that a report be provided to the subcommittee on last year’s disciplinary actions.

A. Preliminary Attendance Review of Class Sizes (Continued) – Mr. Bach provided a revised Enrollment Report that he received by email, which does not include the preschool. He stated that since the numbers were just rolled last night, the principals will need to make changes if they have granted school choice requests.

C. Review of Bullying Policy, File JICFB, Section 1.1 Regarding Need for Amendment – Dr. Safier stated that Chapter 71 was modified this summer and he briefly reviewed those changes. He indicated that the School Committee will need to review its policy to take those revisions into account. Finally, he indicated that the DESE’s model intervention plan was also modified and stated that the administration will modify its intervention plan, as well. This matter was referred to the Program Subcommittee for review.

D. Elementary Writing Committee Progress Update – Mr. Bach updated the committee on the work that has been done by the Elementary Writing Committee to create a coordinated, systematic approach across the five elementary schools.

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

1. School Opening
2. Pre-School Year Report on the Schools – With respect to the standards-based report card, Mr. Gross expressed concern with the lack of standards in science and social science. Mr. Bach indicated that the leadership team made a conscious decision to focus this year on math and literacy, which have solid Common Core standards in place. The science and social science standards will be phased in next year. He noted that this year’s report card contains no less reporting in those two subjects than last year’s.
3. Employing 2014-2015 PARCC Student Growth Percentiles – In light of the new guidance provided by the DESE regarding teachers being held harmless, Dr. Safier reported that he recommended to the teachers’ union that the decision regarding PARCC be revisited and requested that the School Committee reconsider its decision, as well. The final decision must be made by October 1st.
4. Countdown to Kindergarten
5. 1:1 Chromebook Initiative
6. Leadership Retreat
7. New Teacher Orientation

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

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to accept the Superintendent’s Report.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS – None

X. ACTION

- A. Approval of AFSCME-B Contract** – Ms. Teixeira reviewed the Tentative Agreements reached with AFSCME-B, which were previously approved by the committee in Executive Session on June 11, 2014. She reported that the group subsequently ratified the Tentative Agreements.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor zero opposed, to approve the Tentative Agreements between the Gloucester School Committee and Council #93, Local #687, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO B Group, from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015, as presented.

Mr. Baumhauer reported that the cost of the 2% COLA for this group is \$4,907.00, which was included in the FY15 budget.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

- B. Walker Partnerships Report on Elementary Special Education Services** – Dr. Safier indicated that we should have the final report by October, at which time a presentation will be made to the School Committee.
- C. New School Resource Officer** – Ms. Teixeira requested that the new School Resource Officer be invited to a School Committee meeting to introduce himself. Dr. Safier indicated that he received some recommendations from Chief Campanello regarding safety and security, one of which involves looking at the new safety program called “ALICE” and another of which involves the “COPsync” real-time threat alert system.
- D. Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policies** – Mr. Bach reported that the acceptable use policy has been substantially rewritten for technology and requested that it be referred to the Program Subcommittee for review.
- E. Recycling of Textiles** – Chairman Pope reported that he was contacted by Kathryn Larsen of Bay State Textiles regarding a textile recycling rebate program. He indicated that the Beverly school district received \$7,000 from the program last year that they distributed to their PTOs. It was the consensus of the committee that Chairman Pope and Mr. Baumhauer meet with Ms. Larsen to learn more about the program.

Finally, Mr. O’Maley stated that as a new member of the committee, he was misled by the Gloucester Daily Times. He is very impressed with the committee and school administration and is looking forward to a great year.

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

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

- Acting Mayor McGearry – yes
- Mr. O’Maley – yes
- Chairman Pope – yes
- Ms. Sweet – yes
- Ms. Teixeira – yes
- Mr. Gross – yes

To enter into Executive Session at 8:50 p.m. for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations and a potential Level IV GAEP grievance 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: 5 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of August 13, 2014 at 9:16 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*