

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 22, 2018

District Office Conference Room

2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA

7:00 p.m.

Members Present

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

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent
Gary Frisch, Director of Finance
and Operations
Bryan Lafata, Athletic Director
James Cook, GHS Principal

Recorded by 1623 Studios

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

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

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

To enter into Executive Session at 7:01 p.m. for the purpose of discussing ratification of the AFSCME B contract and district-wide negotiations and to come back into regular session thereafter.

(The meeting reconvened at 8:22 p.m.)

IV. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None.

V. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON – None.

VI. RECOGNITIONS – Chairman Pope recognized the local groups that supported the Countdown to Kindergarten this evening, including the Gloucester Education Foundation, Wellspring, Open Door, the YMCA, Backyard Growers and Pathways. Ms. Teixeira Prince recognized the cheerleaders who cleaned up around the city. Finally, Mr. Bach recognized the students who participated in the O’Maley summer camp performance.

VII. GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL – None present.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. School Committee Executive Session of June 13, 2018
2. Building & Finance Subcommittee of June 20, 2018
3. School Committee of June 20, 2018

B. Approval of Warrants

C. Approval of Transfers – June 1 to June 27, 2018

D. Referrals

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the Consent Agenda as noted.

IX. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

A. Scheduling for Fall Sports – Dr. Safier introduced the new athletic director, Bryan Lafata, who updated the committee on fall sports. He indicated that 250 students are registered in seven sports, which is slightly down from last year. He also reported that he has been in communication with the DPW regarding Newell Stadium and that they are working on obtaining portable bleachers for the September 7th football game. Mr. Lafata reported that the electricity for the bathrooms will be turned on tomorrow and that the football boosters are cleaning up the concession stand. Mayor Theken recognized Life Wear Technologies for donating safety equipment to the district, such as wristbands, etc.

B. School Opening/Enrollment Numbers – Dr. Safier reviewed the August 17th total enrollment numbers, current kindergarten registrations, and concerns about the need for another preschool classroom in January. Mr. Frisch discussed the funding of an additional preschool teacher and paraprofessional from a revolving fund. Mr. Favazza stated that based on the low enrollment numbers and the need for the modular units to come offline, he does not see why Beeman could not drop to two classes per grade and disperse the third class among the remaining schools. Chairman Pope stated that this matter would be something to consider for next year. There was a discussion about the size of the freshman class at GHS and the effect on class sizes.

- C. Back-to-School Readiness** – Dr. Safier discussed the new teachers joining the district. He also reported on his meeting with the DPW and the status of work done at the schools over the summer, noting that the front doors at both Beeman and Plum Cove are done. With respect to the air conditioning at O’Maley, Dr. Safier indicated that a \$200,000 chiller needs to be replaced and has been special ordered. However, it will not be fixed in time for opening day.
- D. City Council Action – West Parish Dismissal** – Chairman Pope reported that the City Council approved the committee’s request to prohibit left turns from Concord Street into West Parish and left turns from West Parish onto Concord Street for a half hour after school. Chairman Pope stated that he indicated to the City Council that the committee would be requesting help with enforcement from the police department. Dr. Safier reported on the letter he sent to West Parish families regarding the restrictions and giving school choice parents the option of having their children ride the bus and picking them up in the GHS or O’Maley parking lot.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to direct the Superintendent to send a letter to the police department on behalf of the School Committee requesting assistance with the enforcement of parking restrictions and left turn restrictions at West Parish School, as approved by the City Council.

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

1. Special Needs Summer Program
2. New Teacher Academy for Elementary Teachers – Mr. Bach spoke about this program.
3. Countdown to Kindergarten
4. Opening Day for Staff – Tuesday, September 4, 2018
5. Upcoming Open Houses
6. DESE Resources for School Committees

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the Superintendent’s Report.

X. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Building & Finance Subcommittee of August 15, 2018 – Mr. Gross reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the following matters at its meeting of August 15, 2018: ideas for increasing revenue for the Food Service Department, bus drivers' vacation time and its effect on their eligibility for the Gloucester Contributory Retirement System, and communicating with the City Council regarding space for the preschool, repairs to the GHS fieldhouse floor, and the aging modular units.

B. Personnel Subcommittee of August 15, 2018 – Ms. Teixeira Prince reported that the Personnel Subcommittee discussed creating a new administrative guidance position at the high school (Coordinator of School Counseling/Guidance Services) at its meeting of August 15, 2018. Mr. Cook discussed the responsibilities of the position.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the job description of the Coordinator of School Counseling/Guidance Services as presented.

XI. ACTION

A. Acceptance of Grants

1. 21st Century Learning Center Grant – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed, to accept the 21st Century Learning Center grant in the amount of \$140,250.00.

2. Early Childhood 262 Grant – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed, to accept the Early Childhood 262 Grant in the amount of \$24,953.00.

3. Special Education 240 Grant – After discussion, on a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed, to accept the Special Education 240 Grant in the amount of \$888,671.00.

B. Approval of Job Description for Administrative Guidance Position at GHS – See Item X.A.

XII. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

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

- B. Communication to City Council of Request for Space to House Preschool and Central Office** – On a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the letter from Chairman Pope to the Gloucester City Council requesting space to house the preschool and Central Office.

- C. Communication to City Council of Request for Repairs to Fieldhouse Floor at GHS** – On a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the letter from Chairman Pope to the Gloucester City Council requesting repairs to the fieldhouse floor at Gloucester High School.

- D. Communication to City Council of Request for New Modular Units** – On a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the letter from Chairman Pope to the Gloucester City Council requesting new modular units.

A. MSBA Project Update

1. East Gloucester School – Chairman Pope reported that at its last meeting, the building committee was introduced to the new Owner’s Project Manager, CBRE/Heery, and reviewed the process of developing a Request for Services (RFS) for a designer. He noted that the building committee voted to eliminate the Harrison Avenue site as a possibility. Dr. Safier reported that he received the final draft of the RFS from the OPM last night indicating that it will be submitted to MSBA this afternoon. Chairman Pope reviewed the process and timeline regarding selection of a designer and indicated that a designer should be on board by the middle of October.

- E. Custodian Schedules** – Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that she learned yesterday that the custodians’ schedules have changed and that, at times, food service workers are in the schools alone. She requested a report from the superintendent on when and why that change took place.

- F. Replacement of Modular Units** – Mr. Favazza requested a report on the cost savings of not replacing the modulars at Beeman versus closing Plum Cove School. Mr. Gross expressed the importance of first determining the educational impact of closing a school. This matter was referred to both the Program Subcommittee and the Building & Finance Subcommittee.

- G. Reallocation of Responsibilities of K-8 Literacy Coordinator** – Dr. Safier reported that the search committee was not able to find a viable candidate to replace the district’s K-8 Literacy Coordinator. He and Mr. Bach discussed the reallocation of her responsibilities and providing stipends to existing personnel for same. No committee action was required.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of August 22, 2018 at 9:54 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*