

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 23, 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

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent
Tom Lafleur, CPA, Director of Finance
and Operations
Debra Lucey, O'Maley 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** – None.
- IV. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON** – None.
- V. **RECOGNITIONS** – Kathy Clancy thanked the DPW for all the work they have been doing at O'Maley (grounds, sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.). Chairman Pope thanked the Gloucester Education Foundation, Pathways, the YMCA, Art Haven, the Cape Ann Museum and the Sawyer Free Library for sponsoring the Countdown to Kindergarten earlier this evening, which he reported was very well attended. Finally, Ms. Teixeira thanked the city administration, City Council and DPW for funding school projects with funds that were initially earmarked for a city project which is no longer going forward.
- VI. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. **Approval of Minutes**
 - 1. School Committee Executive Session Minutes of June 1, 2017
 - 2. Special Building & Finance Subcommittee Minutes of June 8, 2017
 - 3. School Committee & Executive Session Minutes of June 14, 2017
 - 4. Building & Finance Subcommittee Minutes of June 21, 2017
 - 5. School Committee Minutes of June 28, 2017
 - B. **Approval of Warrants** – Cover Sheets

C. Approval of Transfers

D. Referrals

E. Acceptance of Gifts/Donations

1. \$252.61 from Hockmeyer Studios, Inc. to East Gloucester Elementary School
2. \$100.00 from Ellin Royds to the GHS Athletic Department

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the Consent Agenda as noted above.

VII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

- A. School and District Enrollment** – Dr. Safier reviewed the student counts per grade by ethnicity, totaling 2,899 students across the district. He also reviewed the breakdown of students who receive free or reduced lunch at each school, totaling 1,498 across the district. He noted that the official enrollment numbers will come out on October 1st.

Dr. Safier reviewed comparisons by grade and by school between last year and this year. Kathy Clancy requested information on factors impacting the drop in numbers from Grade 10 last year going into Grade 11 this year and Grade 11 last year going into Grade 12 this year. Dr. Safier indicated he will have that information at the next meeting. Ms. Teixeira noted that some of those students may have gone to Essex Tech.

Finally, Dr. Safier reported that there are currently 30 students choicing in and that we will have the choice out numbers on October 1st.

- B. Hiring Update** – Dr. Safier reported that there are 27 new teachers in the district:

GHS – Two math teachers, ELL teacher, .4 German teacher, science teacher, social studies teacher, special education teacher, adjustment counselor, school psychologist, and machine shop teacher

O’Maley – Sixth grade math/science teacher, eighth grade ELA teacher, art teacher, and math interventionist

Beeman – Two ELL teachers, special education teacher

Plum Cove – School psychologist and PE teacher

Veterans – Kindergarten teacher, special education teacher, and RTI interventionist

West Parish – Grade 2, 3 and 4 teachers and a special education teacher

Dr. Safier indicated that three positions will be opening up by the end of November, as well, namely a music teacher at the elementary schools, a carpentry teacher at the high school, and a third grade teacher.

Mr. Bach discussed the orientation meeting for new hires that was held this morning, indicating that they were very engaged and it was a pleasure working with them.

- C. Construction Projects** – Mr. Lafleur stated that the DPW has really stepped up this year and has done a phenomenal job getting the buildings ready to go. He presented a slide show on the summer building projects, including replacement of the high school roof, demolition of Room 1407 at GHS, construction of three specialist offices at Plum Cove, the O’Maley band room, and O’Maley Learning Commons seminar room. He also discussed the new food service equipment and the sidewalk at O’Maley. Ms. Sweet indicated that she would like to take a tour of Plum Cove and the O’Maley band room.
- D. Preschool and Central Administration Facilities Review** – Chairman Pope reported that the lease of the Blackburn Drive building expires on August 1, 2018 and that the city administration has asked the committee to look at alternative spaces for the preschool and central office. He stated that the city would like to put out an RFQ as soon as possible to hire someone to do an assessment of available spaces.

Dr. Safier presented a slide show on preliminary considerations of moving the preschool, including class size, space and classroom requirements, safe environment considerations, facilities, transportation issues, parking, and technology. This information will be provided to the city administration.

Mr. Favazza asked whether waivers are available to postpone meeting all of these requirements until we have a new school. Chairman Pope noted that a new school is not a guarantee and that preschool is not reimbursable by the MSBA. At \$450 per square foot, a preschool in a new building would cost the city \$4.5 million. There was a discussion about waivers, and Dr. Safier expressed concern that waivers would have a detrimental affect on the quality of the preschool program.

The committee discussed the possibility of the city purchasing the Blackburn Drive building, as well as the available space at the high school and O’Maley. Kathy Clancy expressed the importance of giving consideration for programming when looking at spaces at O’Maley and the high school. Chairman Pope agreed and indicated that any existing programs that are displaced would need to be relocated to better space than they have now.

Mr. Favazza brought up the idea of not having a preschool for the next few years and sending preschool children to other districts. Ms. Sweet stated that it is the committee’s responsibility to educate the children of Gloucester. Chairman Pope clarified that it is the committee’s obligation to be fiscally responsible and it is their legal duty to educate the children.

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

1. CVTE Letter of Finding and Voluntary Compliance Plan
2. Massachusetts Skills Capital Grant – Part 2
3. Extension of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant
4. District Attorney’s Trauma Screening Tool Initiative
5. Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA)

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the Superintendent’s Report.

VIII. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Building & Finance Subcommittee Meeting of August 23, 2017 – Chairman Gross reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed approval of the GHS machine shop wall building by the carpentry students and approval of the O’Maley BioLab alterations at its meeting of August 23, 2017.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the GHS machine shop wall building by the GHS carpentry students.

After discussion, on a motion by Mr. Gross, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the work being done in the lower level of the O’Maley Learning Commons.

IX. ACTION

A. Acceptance of Grants

1. \$42,527.60 from Gloucester Education Foundation

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept a grant from the Gloucester Education Foundation in the amount of \$42,527.60.

2. FY 2017-2018 Massachusetts 21st Century Community Learning Centers – Exemplary Programs Grant in the amount of \$140,250.00

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the FY 2017-2018 Massachusetts 21st Century Community Learning Centers – Exemplary Programs Grant in the amount of \$140,250.00.

B. Approval of GHS Machine Shop Wall Building by the GHS Carpentry Students
See Item VIII.A.

C. Approval of O’Maley BioLab Alterations, Lower Level – See Item VIII.A.

X. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

A. MSBA Project Updates

1. West Parish School – Still working on punch list items.
2. East Gloucester/Veterans School – Dr. Safier reported that the enrollment projection is due on October 2, 2018 and the maintenance and capital planning record is due on October 3rd.

B. Letter from Massachusetts DESE dated 6/23/17 – FYI.

C. Welcome Back Letters to Parents/Guardians and Staff – FYI.

D. GTA Grievance – Chairman Pope tentatively scheduled the grievance hearing for September 13, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. Ms. Teixeira requested that Attorney Naomi Stonberg be asked to attend to respond to the GTA’s presentation.

E. Substance Abuse Programs for Athletes –Ms. Teixeira reported that former GHS coach Paul Ingram recently spoke about a program that was held for GHS athletes about the consequences of substance abuse, which included a visit to the Middleton Jail. She also heard about a program at East Bridgewater High School where people come in and talk to athletes about how substance abuse has impacted their lives. Ms. Teixeira asked whether our athletes are exposed to any of these types of programs and, if not, whether it could be considered. Kathy Clancy suggested that parents be invited, as well.

F. Sexual Education Curriculum – Mr. Favazza requested a presentation on the sexual education curriculum in the various grades. This matter was referred to the Program Subcommittee.

G. Employee Handbook – This matter was referred to the Personnel Subcommittee for review.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of August 23, 2017 at 8:43 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*