

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 11, 2013

City Hall – Kyrouz Auditorium

7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Jonathan Pope, Chairman
Val Gilman, Vice Chairperson
Kathy Clancy, Secretary
Melissa Teixeira
Roger Garberg (7:07 p.m.)
Tony Gross
Mayor Carolyn Kirk

Administration Present

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

Also Present

City Council President Jackie Hardy

Recorded by Cape Ann TV

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Pope called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools.
- II. **SALUTE TO THE FLAG AND MOMENT OF SILENCE**
- III. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** – None.
- IV. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON** – Chairman Pope recognized City Council President Jackie Hardy.
- V. **RECOGNITIONS** – Chairman Pope stated that the Newell Stadium project would not have been possible without the support of Mayor Kirk and her administration. He also thanked the City Council for their support of the project. Mrs. Gilman recognized Chairman Pope and Dick Wilson for their hard work on the project.

Kathy Clancy recognized the City Council for their long and thoughtful deliberation on their ballot question regarding the Fuller site and the respect that they show to the School Committee and Dr. Safier. She especially thanked Councilor Paul McGeary, who has attended many School Committee and West Parish building committee meetings.

(Mr. Garberg joined the meeting at 7:07 p.m.)

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

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. School Committee of August 28, 2013
2. Building & Finance Subcommittee of August 28, 2013
3. Personnel Subcommittee of September 4, 2013
4. Building & Finance Subcommittee of September 4, 2013
5. Program Subcommittee of September 6, 2013

B. Acceptance of Grants

1. Gloucester Education Foundation Grants:
 - a. Elementary Science Programs, After School Music Program, Arts Festival, Grade 5 Ballroom Dance, O'Maley After School Program, Drama, and Plum Cove Playwrights Grant in the amount of \$42,980
 - b. MIT Summer Science Program Stipends for chaperones in the amount of \$2,130.46
2. DESE Race to the Top Grant in the amount of \$203,011.00

C. Acceptance of Scholarship – American Legion Post 3 Scholarship Fund in the amount of \$50,000.00 to the Gloucester Scholarship Foundation

D. Out-of-State Field Trip Approval – O'Maley Innovation Middle School Grade 8 class trip to Washington, DC from Wednesday, April 2, 2014 to Saturday, April 5, 2014

E. Acceptance of Gift – To accept the gift of bookplates and a check in the amount of \$300.00 from Susanna Natti for the Robert Natti Story Corner to be given this year to the Plum Cove Elementary School

Mrs. Gilman removed items A3, A4 and A5 since the minutes have not yet been prepared. Chairman Pope recognized the gift of \$300.00 from the family of Robert Natti. Mrs. Gilman reported that the O'Maley class trip to Washington, DC seems to be very well organized and that there has been a lot of thought put into fundraising so that every child will be able to attend.

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

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

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. School Opening – Dr. Safier reported that the opening of school went very smoothly, and he reviewed information from the principals on activities going on in their

respective buildings, including co-teaching at Veterans. He noted that the only major issue has been the lack of air conditioning and ventilation at O'Maley and stated that an RFP has been sent out for that work.

- B. Civic Engagement Report (Constitution Day)** – Mr. Bach reported on Constitution Day activities in each of the schools.
- C. State of the Schools Scheduling** – Dr. Safier indicated that the appropriate time for this event would be sometime in November. After discussion, the State of the Schools was scheduled for Thursday, November 14, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the GHS library. Chairman Pope suggested that members reach out to community partners such as GEF to offer them the opportunity to distribute information at the event.
- D. Superintendent's Report** – Dr. Safier updated the committee on the following matters:
1. Preschool Update/Central Office – Dr. Safier reported that he is hoping to have an open house at the preschool on September 19 and that the Central Office will be moving to Blackburn Drive on October 4. He thanked Grant Harris and his crew for installing the necessary network and phone lines.
 2. Transportation – Dr. Safier reported that the relocation of the buses and the Transportation Department to O'Maley will take place on or about October 4th and that protocols have been established to ensure that there is no excessive idling and that the hairpin turn on Cherry Street is not used.
 3. Enrollment Update #2 – Mrs. Gilman requested that Dr. Safier send out surveys to families who withdraw from GPSD to determine the reasons for their withdrawal and where they are going. Dr. Safier noted that students who leave GPSD to enroll in the North Shore Technical High School are included in the withdrawal figures.
 4. PARCC Field Test – Dr. Safier reported that the field tests will be administered between March 24 and April 11, 2014 and stated that Grant Harris has indicated that the district can accommodate online testing. Dr. Safier stated that the students who take these field tests are eligible to take the MCAS, as well.
 5. Upcoming Calendar – Mrs. Gilman requested that Dr. Safier ensure that parents are aware of the availability of the YMCA after school program on September 20th, the early release day for the elementary schools.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor zero opposed, to accept the Superintendent's Report.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Personnel Subcommittee of September 4, 2013** – The Level IV grievance discussed by the Personnel Subcommittee on September 4, 2013 will be discussed in Executive Session.

- B. Building & Finance Subcommittee of September 4, 2013** – Chairperson Clancy reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the district’s draft five-year capital plan at its meeting on September 4, 2013. Dr. Safier indicated that he has not yet received the DPW’s Capital Improvement Plan and that he will invite Mike Hale to the next subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Baumhauer went through the draft Five-Year Capital Plan for FY15 to FY19. Kathy Clancy reviewed the Outdoor Classroom of the Future project at O’Maley, and Mr. Bach reviewed the major textbook and curriculum initiatives listed in the plan, noting that the word “textbook” includes digital textbooks, as well.

With respect to the tools and equipment listed for the GHS vocational program, Mrs. Gilman reminded the committee that the North Shore Technical High School (NSTHS) offered us some of their equipment when they move into their new school. Ms. Teixeira reported that NSTHS is in the process of identifying surplus equipment that will be available when the new school opens next year. The School Committee, of which she is a member, drafted a policy on how that equipment will be disbursed to the 17+ districts that originally purchased it. She indicated that she will present a list of requested equipment to the superintendent, who recognizes our district’s needs, but she does not yet know what equipment we will be receiving. She noted, however, that there is a substantial amount of machine shop equipment that will be available and that the GHS vocational program is the only one that has a machine shop. Therefore, she believes we will likely receive that equipment. Chairman Pope noted that the city will have no objection if items are removed from the Capital Improvement Plan later on if we receive them from another source.

Mrs. Gilman stated that her assumption was that if the iPad pilot program for sixth graders at O’Maley was successful, there would be a long-term plan to purchase them for all students at O’Maley. Dr. Safier indicated that the cost of funding a digital learning environment over the next 3-5 years for both the middle school and GHS is prohibitive. Mr. Bach noted that the reference in the capital plan to \$80,000 for netbooks, desktop replacements and tablets for the middle school includes a substantial amount for that build-out. In addition, the middle school will continue to build up funds from their ordinary budget to purchase lower-cost Chromebooks.

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

VOTED: 7 in favor zero opposed, to approve the Five-Year Capital Plan for FY15 through FY19 as presented.

Mayor Kirk reviewed the timing of the submission of capital improvement plans to the city and the role of the Capital Improvements Advisory Board. She indicated that the K-5 capital plan will require implementation over 20 years, with the most immediate needs placed on the five-year plan.

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

VI. Student Advisory Council – Jordan Westling (phonetic) and Autumn Zubricki introduced themselves and updated the School Committee on the following events at Gloucester High School: opening of school, Italian exchange students, Newell Stadium, teachers' concerns about meningitis, field trip to Chamber of Commerce, Docksiders cruise, new parking plan, changes in the peer mentoring program for ninth graders, freshmen orientation, and location of homerooms and lockers. Dr. Safier stated that he is glad to support them in their efforts to improve the peer mentoring program and freshmen orientation.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS (Continued)

C. Program Subcommittee of September 6, 2013 – Chairperson Gilman reported that the Program Subcommittee discussed time on learning and the Student and Staff Fundraising Policy at its meeting on September 6, 2013. Dr. Safier reported that after reviewing an accounting of actual time spent on learning in the elementary schools, he believes the district is in compliance with the DESE requirement. He noted that the success of the Breakfast in the Classroom program is dependent on ensuring that students are engaged in learning during that time, which will be monitored very closely. If it is found that that is not the case, he is prepared to discontinue the program. Dr. Safier indicated that there is a meeting scheduled for September 18 with Deputy Commissioner Jeff Wolfson to review the district's time on learning and ensure that we are meeting the requirements. Ms. Teixeira added that there is a need for volunteers to help with the program.

X. ACTION

A. Capital Improvement Plan – See Item IX.B.

B. Possible Referendum Question – Kathy Clancy reported that the City Council's referendum question will not include a school use option for the Fuller site. (See attached excerpt from September 10th City Council meeting.) However, she believes the committee needs to do a better job of getting the facts out to the public on the Fuller site. With respect to temporarily housing West Parish students at Fuller, the cost of upgrading that building to meet code could be much greater than other options, but it is still an option. Mr. Gross believes that there would need to be a major asbestos abatement before anything happens in the Fuller building.

Chairman Pope clarified that there is no longer an option of building a new school behind the existing West Parish School because the building committee submitted a preferred schematic design of building on the existing site. This was due to the costs associated with the presence of wetlands and clay, traffic considerations, and the loss of a playing field.

Mr. Gross expressed concern with respect to limiting a possible referendum question to one location since all of the schools are more than 50 years old. Mrs. Gilman noted that the committee is in the beginning stages of analyzing each building in terms of its educational capabilities and that it will not have the report on those buildings until the end of the year. Therefore, she recommended that the committee not exercise its right to add a question to the ballot at this time.

Mr. Gross made a motion, seconded by Ms. Teixeira, to put the following referendum question on the ballot: “Should we bring our aging schools into the 21st century to make them safe and reliable for our teachers, students and parents, and should we fund that through (a) overrides or (b) bonding with MSBA?” Mayor Kirk noted that the city does the bonding and there is the potential for MSBA reimbursement. Therefore, she requested that Mr. Gross amend his motion accordingly.

Dr. Safier reported that the MSBA will only entertain a statement of interest (SOI) after any other project in the community has been completed. Since the West Parish project will be completed sometime in late 2016/early 2017, we would not be eligible to submit an SOI for another project until that time, and then it will take at least a year for the SOI to be reviewed. Chairman Pope stated that there is no urgency to discuss the district’s next project, particularly until the committee receives the report from Dore & Whittier on the conditions of the other four elementary schools.

Amended Motion

Mr. Gross amended his motion as follows, seconded by Ms. Teixeira:

To put the following referendum question on the ballot: “Should we bring our aging schools into the 21st century to make them safe and reliable for our teachers, students and parents, and should we fund that through (a) overrides or (b) following Mass. School Building Authority process?”

After discussion, the committee

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

- Mrs. Gilman – no
- Mr. Gross – yes
- Mayor Kirk – no
- Chairman Pope – no
- Ms. Teixeira – no
- Kathy Clancy – no
- Mr. Garberg – no

The motion failed, 1 in favor (Mr. Gross), 6 opposed.

On a motion by Mrs. Gilman, seconded by Chairman Pope, it was unanimously

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

Mrs. Gilman – no
Mr. Gross – no
Mayor Kirk – no
Chairman Pope – no
Ms. Teixeira – no
Kathy Clancy – no
Mr. Garberg – no

Not to reconsider the vote to put a referendum question on the ballot.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/NEW BUSINESS

- A. MSBA Update** – Dr. Safier reported that a conference call was held on Tuesday with the MSBA, the OPM, the designer, and Jim Duggan with respect to the preferred schematic design. Matters discussed included vote language, billing, composition of the team, amendments to contracts, and a space summary. Dr. Safier indicated that, to date, there have been two submittals totaling \$177,865, of which \$85,854 has been paid to date for the feasibility study. He also stated that the enrollment figure has not been changed but that all of the spaces that we requested have been accepted. Chairman Pope expressed concern about the per pupil allotment for equipment and furniture since the enrollment number was not increased.

Dr. Safier reported that the MSBA will vote on the preferred schematic design on October 2nd, and the completed schematic design will be submitted on December 12, 2013. The official approval vote for the preferred schematic design will be in late January. At that point, the city has 120 days to approve funding for the project, which is eligible for a minimum of 48.27% reimbursement. He noted that more is expected since we will be asking that the design include environmental elements which can also be used for educational purposes.

- B. Process to Review and Vote the Final Version of the District Policy Manual** – Ms. Teixeira emphasized that the policies in the manual were updated simply to reflect current practice and regulations and that the intent of the policies was not changed. She suggested that the School Committee set up a workshop with Mike Gilbert present to answer questions. Mrs. Gilman suggested that the members provide advance notice to the superintendent on which policies they would like to go over to give Mr. Gilbert a heads up. Ms. Teixeira indicated that she does not expect that Mr. Gilbert will work with the committee further to change any of the policies.

The workshop was scheduled for Wednesday, October 30, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. Mrs. Gilman requested that Maria Puglisi provide members with the minutes of the ad hoc meetings for their review.

Ms. Teixeira referred the matter of making the policy manual a web-based application through MASC to the Building & Finance Subcommittee.

- C. Superintendent’s “My View” Column – Time on Learning**
- D. Superintendent’s Updated FY13/14 Goals**
- E. Appointment** – Chairman Pope reported that he has been asked by the administration to appoint someone from the School Committee to a commission that is going to be concerned with the rules and use of Newell Stadium, the Talbot Rink, the GHS fieldhouse, etc. He stated that he is appointing himself to that commission until the end of the year and noted that whoever becomes the chair on January 1st can appoint a new person at that time.
- F. Moving of Buses to O’Maley** – Jackie Hardy, speaking as councilor of Ward 4, thanked the superintendent and the chairman for meeting with her individually regarding concerns with the buses, specifically idling and use of the hairpin turn.
- G. School Committee Annual Agenda** – Mrs. Gilman noted that the annual agenda approved by the School Committee indicates that the GFAA and GEF were scheduled to make presentations at tonight’s meeting. Dr. Safier reported that the two groups were invited to make presentations this evening but that the Rosas and the executive director of GEF are out-of-state and that due to some concern about the length of tonight’s meeting, it was determined to invite the GFAA to the next meeting. Both groups will make presentations at the next School Committee meeting on September 25th.

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

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

Mrs. Gilman – yes
Mr. Gross – yes
Mayor Kirk – yes
Chairman Pope – yes
Ms. Teixeira – yes
Kathy Clancy – yes
Mr. Garberg – yes

To enter into Executive Session after a five-minute recess to discuss a Level IV grievance and contract negotiations with the nurses, GTA and GAEP and to enter back into regular session for the purpose of adjournment only.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT – On a motion by Chairman Pope, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of September 11, 2013 at 10:11 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*

