

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 12, 2018
District Office Conference Room
2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA
7:00 p.m.

Members Present

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
Dr. Telenia Imel, West Parish Principal

Recorded by 1623 Studios

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – Vice Chairperson Clancy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools. She noted that Chairman Pope is absent due to the death of his mother.

- II. **SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

- III. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** – None.

- IV. **COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON** – None.

- V. **RECOGNITIONS** – Dr. Safier read an email he received on September 6th from a parent whose child attends East Gloucester School thanking and commending school secretary Cathy Doe for her kindness, compassion, professionalism and empathy towards her son when he was having a rough start to his day. Vice Chairperson Clancy commended the DPW for their work over the summer getting the schools ready for opening day.

- VI. **GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL** – Caroline Muniz and Delaney Benchhoff introduced themselves and asked why the student snack shop is not part of the GHS culture anymore. Ms. Benchhoff stated that the snack shop generated about \$100 every day, which is about \$18,000 per year that they are losing out on now. That money had been used for prom, semi, senior banquet, graduation, and the class gift. Ms. Muniz stated that the cost of those events is going to be greater for students now that the snack shop is closed, and Ms. Benchhoff stated that they want everyone to be able to afford to go to the events. She indicated that they only have so much time and ability to do fundraising.

Ms. Benchhoff also stated that the new vending machine does not really work and has less healthy food than they had in the snack shop. She also noted that an additional lunch lady has to spend her time helping students with the vending machine.

Vice Chairperson Clancy stated that the committee dealt with this issue last year, and Ms. Teixeira Prince stated that by giving students advance notice last year, the committee hoped they could come up with some other fundraising ideas. She suggested referring the matter back to the Building & Finance Subcommittee to see if there are any further considerations to be discussed. She also recommended that Student Advisory Council members attend School Committee and subcommittee meetings to understand the big picture and hear how the committee comes to their decisions.

Mr. Gross pointed out that the snack shop competes with the district's Food Service Department, which is in a huge deficit that needs to be made up from the budget (and therefore taking money away from classrooms). He stated that if there are problems with the vending machine or if the food is not adequate, those issues should be reported to the committee.

Ms. Benchoff stated that if they are not able to have the snack shop open every day, they would propose to have it open on holidays and special events (approximately 30 days a year). Dr. Safier indicated that this should be discussed with Mr. Cook, Mr. Frisch and Food Service Director Martha Jo Fleming. Ms. Teixeira Prince suggested that the students meet with Mr. Cook and Dr. Safier first and then it can be brought to the committee.

Elizabeth Schuster joined the meeting and introduced herself. The students reported on the following events at the high school: Student Council freshmen elections, sports teams, and the pep rally and homecoming game on October 5th.

Finally, Dr. Safier reported that he and Mr. Cook are discussing a Student Government Day to be held in the spring.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. School Committee of June 27, 2018
2. Building & Finance Subcommittee of August 8, 2018

B. Approval of Warrants

C. Approval of Transfers

D. Referrals

E. Acceptance of Gifts

1. \$1,833.40 from the West Parish PTO and \$35.00 from Susan B. Field for the replacement of cafeteria trays with new trays made of biodegradable materials

Dr. Imel spoke about this fundraising project and the West Parish Green Team.

2. \$350.00 and bookplates from Susanna Natti

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

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

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

- A. GEF Annual Presentation** – Executive Director Tina Raimo reported on some of the programs the Gloucester Education Foundation funded over the past year, noting that the best program ideas came from the GPS staff. Some of those programs include the teen mental health first aid program at the high school, a sail aboard the *Ardelle*, a climate change program and presentation, expansion of 3D printers at the high school, the use of touchscreen Chromebooks at East Gloucester, a new audio system for the Docksiders, a new sound system for the O’Maley auditorium, support for music therapy at the high school, a Tower Garden at the GAP program, iPads for the O’Maley theater teacher, and the summer STEAM Camp at Beeman.

Ms. Raimo indicated that GEF has also approved grants for a new printmaking studio and a software upgrade for the Robotics program at the high school and noted that Applied Materials will be putting together backpacks with school supplies for the elementary schools. She reported that other GEF-funded programs are ongoing, such as the after school music programs and the elementary theater programs.

Ms. Raimo expressed her gratefulness for the collaboration with the district and for the incredible generosity of the community. She reminded the committee that the GEF annual celebration will take place on October 19th from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the North Shore Arts Association. The committee members thanked Ms. Raimo and the GEF for everything they do for the district, and Mr. Bach stated that Ms. Raimo has been an incredible collaborator and grant writer.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept a donation of backpacks and school supplies from Applied Materials to the elementary schools.

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

1. School Opening Reports
2. Calendar of Open Houses
3. Updated Health-Related Plans

4. 9/11 Recognition and Moment of Silence
5. GHS NEASC Update
6. Purchasing and Cash Procedures Update – Mr. Frisch discussed the student activity accounts.
7. ENSATS Partnership – Dr. Safier discussed the Construction Craft Laborer Program.
8. Model MOU for School Resources Officers
9. MassHealth School-Based Medicaid Program Expansion Update
10. Request for Waiver from Limit on Alternate Assessments

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

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

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Program Subcommittee of August 23, 2018** – Vice Chairperson Clancy reported that the Program Subcommittee discussed the vocational program at its meeting of August 23, 2018. Dr. Safier discussed the Safety Survey Checklist that he, Mr. Frisch and Mr. Cook drafted reflecting corrections that need to be made to the program.
- B. Program Subcommittee of September 6, 2018** – Vice Chairperson Clancy reported that the Program Subcommittee discussed audio and video monitoring on school buses at its meeting of September 6, 2018. Dr. Safier reviewed the discussion held at the subcommittee meeting and noted that both types of recordings are legal. He also reviewed the specifics of the cameras, including their locations on the buses, settings, how and when the footage would be accessed and by whom. Finally, he indicated that he and IT Director Grant Harris will be putting together a draft policy.

Vice Chairperson Clancy made a motion, seconded by Ms. Sweet, to approve the use of audio and video recording equipment on school buses. Mr. Favazza stated that he will not vote in favor of audio recording, and Mr. Gross asked if the committee could hear what the audio recording sounds like before voting on it. Ms. Sweet noted that there is no expectation of privacy on a public school bus and she believes it will help deter bullying. Ms. Teixeira requested that the motion be tabled

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to amend the motion to remove the reference to audio recording equipment.

Amended Motion

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the use of video recording equipment on school buses.

Finally, Vice Chairperson Clancy reported that the Program Subcommittee discussed an amendment to the elementary handbooks regarding recess.

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the new language to the elementary handbooks which states, “Loss of privileges, e.g. recess (for student safety only).”

X. ACTION

A. Acceptance of Grants

1. Gloucester Education Foundation Grant – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, 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 \$1,200.00 (\$700.00 for hydroponics studies at O’Maley and \$500.00 for the West Parish project to replace cafeteria trays with new trays made of biodegradable materials).

2. DESE Grants – Mr. Bach distributed and reviewed a summary of the grants.

- a. Title I Grant – On a motion by Ms. Sweet, seconded by Mr. Gross, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed, to accept the Title I grant in the amount of \$579,853.00.

- b. Title IIa Grant in the amount of \$120,809.00
- c. Title III Grant in the amount of \$24,103.00
- d. Title IV Grant in the amount of \$39,783.00

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

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the above-referenced Title IIa, Title III and Title IV grants.

- B. Approval of AFSCME B Contract** – Ms. Teixeira Prince noted that this agreement was already approved in Executive Session.

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

VOTED: 4 in favor, 1 opposed (Mr. Favazza), 1 abstained (Mayor Theken) to approve the Agreement between the Gloucester School Committee and Council #93, Local #687 American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2020.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

A. MSBA Project Update

1. East Gloucester School – Dr. Safier reported that the Request for Services for a designer is out on the street and will be out for three weeks. He indicated that the designer selection panel will be meeting in Boston on October 16th and that we will hopefully have a designer under contract shortly thereafter.

- B. Letter to Chief John McCarthy from Chairperson Pope** – Dr. Safier reported that temporary signs have been put up at West Parish and there has been a police presence there every day except for last Thursday.

- C. Regionalization with Rockport** – Vice Chairperson Clancy reported that the chairman of the Rockport School Committee responded to Chairman Pope that they would like to have a study of the three districts (Gloucester, Rockport and Manchester-Essex).

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

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

Ms. Sweet – yes
Ms. Teixeira Prince – yes
Mayor Theken – yes
Vice Chairperson Clancy – yes
Mr. Favazza – yes
Mr. Gross – yes

To enter into Executive Session at 8:50 p.m. for the purpose of discussing litigation involving non-renewal of a teacher and to enter back into regular session for the purpose of adjournment only.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT – On a motion by Ms. Teixeira Prince, seconded by Mr. Gross, it was unanimously

VOTED: 6 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of September 12, 2018 at 9:02 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*