

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

City Hall – Kyrouz Auditorium

7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Val Gilman, Chairperson
Melissa Teixeira, Vice Chairperson
Kathleen Clancy, Secretary
Roger Garberg
Tony Gross

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Assistant Superintendent Shayne Trubisz
Asst. Supt. Brian Tarr (8:43 p.m. arrival)
CFO Tom Markham
Principal Gregg Bach
IT Operations Manager, Grant Harris
Jonathan Pope

Recorded by Cape Ann TV

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Gilman called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Chairperson Gilman stated the mission of the Gloucester Public Schools, thanked Cape Ann TV for covering the meeting, and recognized Shayne Trubisz, Gregg Bach, Jonathan Pope, Grant Harris and Tom Markham. She noted that Mayor Kirk will be late and that Michelle Sweet will not be attending the meeting.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

IV. COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON – Chairperson Gilman noted that she, Kathy Clancy, Mrs. Sweet, Ms. Teixeira and Jonathan Pope attended the GCACS meeting last night and heard Mark Keenan, executive director of the Mass. Charter Board Association, discuss with the board some of the concerns he had with the city-wide resolution. There was no action taken by the board. Chairperson Gilman also attended last night’s City Council meeting, where there was a discussion about the possible referendum question. They voted not to make a decision on the recommendation from the Planning & Development Committee until their September 27th meeting.

V. RECOGNITIONS – None

VI. STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL – The new Student Advisory Council members introduced themselves to the committee. Wyatt Ronan is a sophomore who runs indoor and outdoor track. Eleanor Keller is a senior and president of the student body. Ms. Keller updated the School Committee on events at Gloucester High School, including the pep rally,

spirit week, freshmen elections, and bake sales to raise funds for NEMSC. She also reported on the recent Italian exchange program, peer mentoring, and NHS and Interact Club fundraisers.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. School Committee Public Hearing Meeting of August 22, 2011
2. Special Joint City Council/School Committee Meeting of August 24, 2011
3. School Committee Meeting of August 24, 2011

B. Schedule of Future Meetings

Program Subcommittee – Friday, September 16, 2011 at 9:00 a.m.

Location: Superintendent's Conference Room

Agenda: Continuation of After School Policy Discussion/Next Step

Building & Finance Subcommittee – Wednesday, September 21, 2011 at 4:45 p.m.

Location: Superintendent's Conference Room

School Committee – Wednesday, September 28, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

Location: Kyrouz Auditorium – City Hall

C. Acceptance of Gift

To accept the gift of bookplates and check in the amount of \$300.00 from Susanna Natti for the Robert Natti Story Corner to be given this year to West Parish Elementary School.

D. Acceptance of Grants

To accept the following GEF grants:

1. \$40,500 to cover the first payment for the rollover programs
2. \$13,212 to purchase 12 REDCAT all-in-one systems for use in kindergarten classrooms (sound enhancement systems)
3. \$3,181 for the cost of providing chaperones for the Sea Initiative funded Summer Science Program
4. \$30,000 for the cost of the final year of salary support for the District Science, Technology & Engineering Specialist, formerly covered through the MIT/SEA Initiative Grant

5. \$64,060 for the cost of the second year of salary support for the District Elementary Math Coach, payable in two installments of \$32,030 each (September 2011 and January 2012)

Ms. Teixeira removed Item C, Acceptance of Gift, from the Consent Agenda, and Mr. Gross removed Items 2 and 3 from the Approval of Minutes.

It was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to approve the Consent Agenda as noted above.

It was then unanimously

VOTED: 4 in favor zero opposed (Mr. Gross abstained) to approve Items 2 and 3 of the Approval of Minutes noted above.

VIII. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

A. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Safier updated the School Committee on the following matters:

1. Status of the District Phone System – Dr. Safier asked that the committee make a formal request to the Mayor that the city provide funding for a new phone system, which would cost between \$150,000 and \$200,000. He indicated that this matter is critical and very time sensitive since the high school's only contact with the community right now is through two makeshift phones. Mr. Muniz is looking for a stop-gap measure in the meantime. Mr. Harris reported on the details of the phone system and what is needed. Chairperson Gilman suggested waiting until later in the meeting to make a motion on this issue, when the Mayor will most likely be there.
2. First Enrollment Figures – 2011-12 – There was a discussion of class sizes at the elementary schools. Kathy Clancy requested that future reports include out-of-district students.
3. Update on File Transfer Requests
4. City Council B&F Approval of Food Service Budget – Dr. Safier reported that the Food Service Budget was approved by the City Council last night. Chairperson Gilman noted that the City Council complimented the Food Service Department for being in the black. She thanked Tom Markham, Martha Jo Fleming, and their team for their work.

5. Innovation School – Dr. Safier reported that Principal Debra Lucey is going to canvas schools that have become Innovation Schools to find out what the process is, etc. She will also canvas her faculty about what is working for them, what they want to accomplish, and what the school should become. There was concern about whether a November 15th prospectus and a January 15th plan can be done in that time frame. Dr. Safier indicated that the next meeting of the steering committee is on September 28, 2011 and that they would like a School Committee member to be on that committee. Chairperson Gilman requested that if any of the School Committee members are interested, they should let her and Dr. Safier know. She also suggested inviting Bridget Rodriguez of the DESE to come to a School Committee meeting. Finally, Chairperson Gilman suggested asking the GEF to consider funding a stipend to get a qualified person to put the prospectus together.
6. Survey of Choice Out Families – A discussion was held on the process of distributing the survey and to whom it would be sent. Kathy Clancy clarified that the 230 students who have choiced out of the district did not all leave this past year.
7. Memorandum of Understanding, City of Gloucester and School Department – Emergency Shelter
8. Memorandum of Understanding with the Pathways Program
9. Health Audit – Ms. Teixeira would like to have a Personnel Subcommittee meeting at the end of the month to discuss this issue.

IX. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. **Program Subcommittee Report of September 9, 2011** – Chairman Garberg reported that the Program Subcommittee will be meeting again on September 16, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. to continue the discussion of the after school policy.

X. DISCUSSION

- A. **GFAA Rates and Athletic Fees for FY 2011-2012** – Jonathan Pope thanked the committee for inviting him to talk about the GFAA's support of student athletes. He reported that the board has budgeted \$45,000 for this school year to supplement students' and families' payment of athletic fees. The GFAA will give \$30 for every participation and will also make work days available for students to do community service work and be paid at a rate of about \$10/hour. Mr. Pope also reported on how the work days are advertised by the GFAA. Next year, the GFAA intends to move all of their donations into work scholarships. Ms. Teixeira and Dr. Safier thanked

Mr. Pope for everything the GFAA does. Finally, Mr. Pope reported on upcoming fundraisers for Newell Stadium and gave the email address of the GFAA for those who would like to make a donation.

- B. Literacy Program Update – Professional Development Completion in August and Successful Implementation for K-5 Students** – Dr. Trubisz commented on the Reading Street program adoption and the BSRI support at Beeman and Veterans Elementary Schools. There was a discussion about supporting teachers who are feeling overwhelmed by the programs. Gregg Bach stated that the use of enrichment release time for teachers is being explored and detailed other forms of support for teachers. He also stressed the importance of having reading coaches in each of the buildings. Mr. Bach indicated that there is a parent component to the reading program, as well as an online component, which will be rolled out soon. Dr. Safier thanked Dr. Trubisz and Mr. Bach for the work they have done.

Mr. Harris left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

- C. Update on Anti-Bullying Administration and Requirements** – Dr. Safier reported that the anti-bullying policy and plan have been posted on the website and will be contained in the student handbooks. Mr. Bach indicated that he is hoping to have the handbooks ready to hand out at the open houses. Dr. Safier stated that he is waiting for confirmation that hard copies of the policy must be distributed at O'Maley and the high school and signed by the students.

Dr. Trubisz left the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Brian Tarr joined the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

- D. Policy Development Subcommittee** – Ms. Teixeira indicated that Mike Gilbert has reported to her on the charges of this subcommittee. Dr. Safier stated that he is waiting for instructions from MASC to begin the deliberation process. Chairperson Gilman suggested that Ms. Teixeira chair this subcommittee and that the other members of the School Committee alternate as members, two at a time. There was a discussion of the process of updating the policy manual.
- E. Status of Agreement Between the City and School Regarding the Maintenance and Repair of School Buildings and Grounds** – Chairperson Gilman deferred this matter until the Mayor arrives at the meeting.

XI. ACTION

- A. Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy for Students and Employees**

After discussion, on a motion by Chairperson Gilman, seconded by Ms. Teixeira, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to waive the second reading of the Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy for Students and Employees of the Gloucester Public Schools.

After discussion, on a motion by Chairperson Gilman, seconded by Kathy Clancy, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to approve the second reading of the Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy for Students and Employees of the Gloucester Public Schools.

A discussion was held on whether employees should be required to sign the policy indicating that they have received it and the sanctions associated with violation of the policy by employees. Chairperson Gilman requested that these policies be posted on the website after they are put into effect.

- B. Finalization of Superintendent’s FY 2011-2012 Goals: Presentation of an Additional Goal on Performance Evaluation for Employees** – Dr. Safier reviewed his additional goal of ensuring that all evaluations are up-to-date for all units.

After discussion, on a motion by Chairperson Gilman, seconded by Ms. Teixeira, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to approve the Superintendent’s Goals 2011-12 as noted.

Chairperson Gilman requested that these goals be posted on the website.

- C. City Charter** – Mr. Gross reported on his meeting with the Charter Review Task Force last week and reviewed the revisions made to the School Committee section of the City Charter.

After discussion, on a motion by Chairperson Gilman, seconded by Ms. Teixeira, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to approve the changes noted in Document XI.C. for approval by the O&A Committee of the City Council.

Chairperson Gilman thanked Mr. Gross for all the work that he did.

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

VII. CONSENT AGENDA (Continued)

- C. **Acceptance of Gift** – Ms. Teixeira read the letter from Susanna Natti to Dr. Safier and thanked the Natti family for the gift.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to accept the gift of bookplates and check in the amount of \$300.00 from Susanna Natti for the Robert Natti Story Corner to be given this year to West Parish Elementary School.

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

XI. ACTION (Continued)

Kathy Clancy made a motion, seconded by Mr. Gross, to support the superintendent's request that the Mayor seek capital funding for the purchase of a new phone system. Tom Markham recommended removing the word "capital" from the motion. Kathy Clancy stated that she is concerned that the City Council will think they just added to our operating budget. She would like it to be clear that the nature of the funding is separate than funding additional teachers who help us deliver educational value.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to amend the original motion to remove the word "capital."

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

VOTED: 5 in favor zero opposed, to support the superintendent's request that the Mayor seek funding for the purchase of a new phone system.

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

X. DISCUSSION (Continued)

- E **Status of Agreement Between the City and School Regarding the Maintenance and Repair of School Buildings and Grounds** – Dr. Safier reviewed the memorandum he received from Mayor Kirk on September 9, 2011, which sets out the process recommended by her for the annual MOU evaluation. Kathy Clancy expressed concern that this communication was contained in a memorandum to Dr. Safier without a copy to any School Committee member. She stated that the MOU came before the School Committee and the City Council to iron out language

in the MOU and that to remove the School Committee from the process removes a significant part of their governing responsibilities. She would hate to continue the pattern of lack of communication on the important issues of the school buildings.

Ms. Teixeira stated that since Dr. Safier was part of the ad hoc committee, he can take the School Committee's recommendations to the table. Chairperson Gilman believes that the School Committee is an important part of this oversight process and that there needs to be an opportunity to provide committee feedback without putting the burden solely on Dr. Safier.

Mr. Gross believes that the School Committee has a responsibility to the citizens to be involved in this process and that the committee's feedback is necessary. Dr. Safier encouraged the B&F Subcommittee to have extra meetings in order to follow the process and assured the committee that nothing ultimately gets approved without their approval. He stated that the process outlined by the Mayor will allow him to establish a relationship with the DPW and will help to promote a more effective and efficient operation with facilities towards the school district.

Kathy Clancy stated that she feels in the dark about a lot of things and believes that we need a better system of communication. She stressed that she is not unhappy with the daily operations or the way facilities have been maintained. She clarified that she has trust in Mike Hale's professional ability but she needs more knowledge about what is going on.

Mr. Garberg stated that the committee owes it to the district to look very closely at the operational details of the MOU and is concerned about the pattern of limited communication. Chairperson Gilman requested that Dr. Safier invite the Mayor to the B&F meeting on September 21, 2011 to talk about this process.

XII. OTHER COMMUNICATION

A. FYI

1. September 9, 2011 My View from Dr. Safier
2. Email (9/11/11) from Chairperson Gilman
3. City Council Standing Committee Planning & Development Minutes of September 7, 2011
4. September 13, 2011 My View from Kathleen Clancy
5. Kathy Clancy reported that there is a meeting tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. with the DOE.

6. Ms. Teixeira stated that she believes we must have a Social Network Policy in place regarding Facebook, Twitter and the regulation of communications between employees and students. She believes that policy may require input from several different subcommittees. There was a discussion about a concussion policy, as well. Dr. Safier indicated that both policies are in the development stage.
7. Chairperson Gilman read the motion from last night's City Council meeting regarding the referendum question with respect to Fuller School. She asked the City Council to defer their vote on this issue until the School Committee has had a chance to discuss it further. A special School Committee meeting with a one-item agenda was scheduled for September 26, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss this matter and make a recommendation to the City Council.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

VOTED: By Roll Call Vote

Chairperson Gilman – yes
Ms. Teixeira – yes
Kathy Clancy – yes
Mr. Garberg – yes
Mr. Gross – yes

To enter into Executive Session at 10:15 p.m. to discuss strategy and status for all open contract negotiations with union employees and to enter back into regular session for the purpose of adjournment only.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTED: 4 in favor zero opposed, to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of September 14, 2011 at 10:45 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*