

THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 29, 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 (8:00 p.m.)
Melissa Teixeira
Michelle Sweet

Administration Present

Dr. Richard Safier, Superintendent
Gregg Bach, Asst. Superintendent
Tom Lafleur, CPA, Director of Finance
and Operations

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** – Mr. Bach recognized GHS science teachers Eric Leigh and David Enos, who were honored by the MassBioEd Foundation as Champions for Biotechnology Education. Mr. Bach stated that biotechnology at GHS has developed over a number of years, noting that in 2009 GHS was selected by the MassBioEd Foundation as a BioTeach school and in 2013 was distinguished with a Joshua Boger Innovative School of the Year Award for STEM education, which came with a \$10,000 grant. In 2015, GHS was again selected as a BioTeach school by MassBioEd and in the spring of 2017 was awarded a \$100,000 Mass. Life Sciences Center Grant to establish a modern biotechnology classroom.

Mr. Bach read the following from the MassBioEd press release regarding the awards:

Dedicated educators, David and Eric are committed to providing students high quality, engaging and relevant life sciences curriculum that prepares them for the 21st century. They developed a Biotechnology class at Gloucester High School and continue to work towards their goal of building it into a full-year course and certificate program. They also recruit students into Gloucester Biotechnology Academy vocation program, which helps to illuminate biotechnology career pathways for high school graduates.

Mr. Bach went on to say that Eric and David describe their vision for the future of life sciences education at GHS to be one where more students get the opportunity to learn 21st

century science skills through hands-on lab activities. We equip and motivate an increasing number of students to pursue careers in a growing field. Teachers are better equipped to teach hands-on science with state-of-the-art equipment and strong professional development, and GHS becomes a regional magnet school through school choice for students who are interested in STEM.

Mr. Bach shared a brief video clip in which Governor Baker congratulated Mr. Enos and Mr. Leigh for being chosen as Educators of the Year and stated that what they are doing to bring more biotechnology education for the kids in Gloucester is truly terrific and exactly the sort of thing he hopes to see going forward.

Dr. Safier reported that Mr. Enos and Mr. Leigh also received a citation from the House of Representatives, and it was pointed out that this is the first time that someone outside of the industry, namely educators and schools, has actually received the award. Lastly, Dr. Safier stated that independent of the award that they have received, Mr. Enos and Mr. Leigh also worked on and received a grant in order to provide the necessary support for transforming the science department.

Kathy Clancy recognized Allison Cousins, Mary White, and the people who spoke at Career Night at O'Maley a couple of weeks ago.

Chairman Pope recognized the GHS Cheerleaders for winning the state championship and stated that they will be invited to the next meeting.

VI. GHS STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL – Samantha Gross and Henry Hardy introduced themselves and updated the committee on the following events at Gloucester High School: cheerleaders state championship, JROTC Ball, Thanksgiving football game, pep rally, winter sports, blood drive, and eighth graders playing on high school sports teams.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. School Committee of October 11, 2017
2. Building & Finance Subcommittee of October 18, 2017

B. Approval of Warrants – Cover Sheets

C. Approval of Transfers – October 3 to October 25, 2017

D. Referrals

E. Acceptance of Gifts

1. \$186.13 from Ohiopyle Prints, Inc. to the Gloucester Public Schools
2. \$100.00 from Jessica Gienow-Hecht and Heiko Hecht to Gloucester High School
3. \$1,508.31 from Hockmeyer Studios, Inc. to Gloucester High School

F. Acceptance of Scholarship – \$250.00 from the GHS Theatre Program Booster Organization

G. Approval of Out-of-State Field Trips

1. GHS Docksidiers to New York, New York from April 11 to April 14, 2018
2. GHS Foreign Language Department to Italy from April 11 to April 20, 2019

Chairman Pope removed Item G2 from the Consent Agenda.

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

VOTED: 4 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the Consent Agenda as noted above.

World Language teacher Celestino Basile spoke about the trip to Italy next April.

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

VOTED: 4 in favor, 0 opposed to approve the GHS Foreign Language Department trip to Italy from April 11 to April 20, 2019.

VIII. DELIBERATIONS ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

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

1. Preliminary Dropout Data
2. Coordinated Program Review
3. Next Steps for High School Field Tests in ELA and Mathematics
4. Loan Order for Feasibility Study for Combined EGS/Veterans’ Memorial Elementary School – Kathy Clancy suggested that each of the committee members reach out to their City Council liaison to answer any questions they may have. Dr. Safier reported that the Communication Subcommittee of the Building Committee met earlier today and discussed the development of talking points for those who wish to speak in favor of the motion, the development of FAQs regarding the project, and setting up a separate website for the project with a link to the GPS website.

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

VOTED: 4 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the Superintendent’s Report.

IX. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Building & Finance Subcommittee of November 15, 2017** – Kathy Clancy reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the West Parish traffic problem and the consolidation of O’Maley and GHS at its meeting of November 15, 2017.
- B. Building & Finance Subcommittee of November 27, 2017** -- Kathy Clancy reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the West Parish traffic issue again at its meeting of November 27, 2017.

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

VOTED: 4 in favor, 0 opposed to direct the Superintendent to waive the bus fees for students that live less than two miles from West Parish School where there are no continuous sidewalks, consistent with the Walkers and Riders policy, File EEAA.

Chairman Pope stated that this action would apply to students who are not currently taking the bus to encourage them to ride the bus in the hope of alleviating the traffic problem. There was a discussion about adding or adjusting bus stops for these students if they elect to take the bus. Ms. Teixeira indicated that this action was also taken to address the safety concern of kids walking to school in an area with no sidewalks.

Chairman Pope reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee also discussed making Concord Street one-way from the school entrance to Essex Avenue for a half hour in the afternoon, which would require hiring a crossing guard to put a blockade at the Concord Street/Essex Avenue intersection. This issue will be presented to the City Council Ordinance and Administration Committee on Monday night. The subcommittee also discussed the possibility of establishing a centralized location for parents to park and put their kids on the bus, possibly at Stage Fort Park.

Dr. Safier indicated that the principal prepared a draft letter to parents indicating the need for live pickup as opposed to illegal parking on Concord Street and Essex Avenue. He will be reviewing the letter and would like Chairman Pope to review it, as well, and the timing of sending the letter out will need to be decided. There was a discussion about the lack of enforcement of illegal parking. Ms. Teixeira requested that Chairman Pope look into the process of requesting the MSBA to reevaluate the design of the site.

Chairman Pope reported that the subcommittee discussed the truck route on Eastern Avenue at its meeting of November 27, 2017.

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

VOTED: 4 in favor, 0 opposed to authorize the Chair to write a letter to the City Council in support of reinstating the truck route on Eastern Avenue.

Finally, Kathy Clancy reported that the Building & Finance Subcommittee discussed the location of the preschool at its meeting of November 27, 2017. Chairman Pope noted that Kevin Buckley indicated that in order for the preschool to be located at the high school, a new building would need to be constructed next to the science wing, which would be in the FEMA flood zone. Ms. Teixeira expressed concern that the seriousness of the situation is not being addressed by the city. Dr. Safier stated that he informed the city administration that we need an answer for next year as soon as possible.

X. ACTION

A. Acceptance of Grants

1. Exxon Mobil Education Alliance Energy North, Inc. to GHS in the amount of \$500.00 – On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Ms. Sweet, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to accept a grant from Exxon Mobil Education Alliance Energy North, Inc. to GHS in the amount of \$500.00.

2. Gloucester Education Foundation Grants – On a motion by Ms. Sweet, seconded by Ms. Teixeira, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to accept the following grants from the Gloucester Education Foundation:

- (a) Additional funding in the amount of \$1,000.00 for the spring 2018 production of *Jungle Book* at East Gloucester Elementary School; and
- (b) \$2,225.00 for Biomechanics to Prevent Injury at Gloucester High School.

B. Recommendations from Building & Finance Subcommittee of November 27, 2017

1. Waiving of Bus Fees for West Parish Students – See IX.B.
2. Letter to City Council regarding Eastern Avenue Truck Route – See IX.B.

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER COMMUNICATION/OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

A. MSBA Project Updates

1. East Gloucester/Veterans School – Chairman Pope reported that site visits will be taking place next week and that city councilors have been invited.
2. West Parish – Chairman Pope stated that he will look into the process of getting some additional design work.

B. “Sidewalk” Money from the State – Chairman Pope reported that he and Councilor Nolan met with Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante regarding sidewalks on Essex Avenue. He indicated that the state gives the city Chapter 90 money for road, sidewalk and infrastructure repairs and the city administration prioritizes what the funds will be used for. He stated that the city’s priority for those funds is to rebuild the seawall at Lane’s Cove. Kathy Clancy suggested adding it to our capital plan so we do not lose sight of it.

C. Letter to Rockport School Committee Regarding Regionalization – Chairman Pope reported that this letter was drafted with the assistance of Mr. Bach.

On a motion by Kathy Clancy, seconded by Mr. Favazza, it was unanimously

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to authorize the Chair to edit and send out the letter to the Rockport School Committee Chair.

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

VOTED: 5 in favor, 0 opposed to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of November 29, 2017 at 8:18 p.m.

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

*Maria Puglisi
Recording Secretary*