

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**March 11, 2010**

**6:00 p.m. Library, Greenfield High School**

Approved on May 13, 2010

**Present:** Chairperson Doris Doyle (DD); Committee Members: Maryelen Calderwood (MC), John Lunt (JL), Keith McCormic (KM), Marcia Day (MD), Dalton Athey (DA), Mayor William Martin (MM) who arrived at 7:21. **Also Present:** Superintendent Susan Hollins, School Attorney Peter Smith, Guest Presenter John Smolenski, administrators, and members of the press and public.

I. Call to Order: With a quorum present, Chair person Doyle called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes:

- **Motion by MD, MC 2<sup>nd</sup>: To approve minutes the minutes of February 3, 2010, as written.** Pass. Unanimous
- **Motion by MC, JL 2<sup>nd</sup>: To approve minutes of February 11, 2010, as written.** Pass, Unanimous
- **Motion by MC, JL 2<sup>nd</sup>: To approve minutes of February 10, 2010, as written.** Pass, Unanimous
- **Motion by MC, JL 2<sup>nd</sup> : To approve minutes of March 4, 2010, as written.** Pass. Unanimous

III. Reports:

- **Chair:**
  - DD mentioned that there is a tendency for all members to get caught up in the minutia instead of focusing on the major topic. She asked that everyone keep that in mind going forward.
  - Notified members that a number of architects will be making general presentations about building/renovating schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century at the next meeting, March 25<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will be held at a location TBD, other than GHS.
- **Superintendent:**
  - Business Manager will be starting Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup>
  - Predicts that we will end the year on budget
  - School enrollment numbers are stable
  - Lisa McGuinness and SH went to the Moldovan community the previous evening to discuss how Greenfield schools are organized; the meeting was interpreted.
  - Kindergarten registration is going well; parents are asked to register at their home school initially, and then choice requests will be processed.
  - This spring, the music program is planned to teach all grade 3 children to read music, using recorders
  - Administrators are looking at attendance, its impact on school progress, and protocol for intervening
  - HS received a grant for Advanced Placement math and science classes

MC asked SH about HR staffing; Superintendent said that we were understaffed in that area but she wanted to work out guidelines and staffing with the new business manager.

- **Committees**
  - Other: Innovation Schools (John Lunt) JL and SH attended a meeting on Innovation Schools in Worcester on March 10<sup>th</sup> and brought the committee up to speed on the process. Innovation Schools creates an option that allows schools to organize the

same way a charter schools does yet remains within the auspices of the school district. Essentially replaces an earlier idea of readiness schools, allows more local control, but also gives more autonomy to staff in areas of curriculum, staffing, etc. Innovation Schools come through the school committee for approval. Designed on the Boston pilot school model, Secretary Reville indicated that the first cohort of Innovation Schools were apt to receive grants. The superintendent clarified that GPS could have 3 or 4 for September (Grade 8, 4Cs, the middle school science, and virtual—committee-approved initiatives to date). The chairperson requested that every agenda have “innovation schools” from now on.

- Educational Collaborative (Maryelen Calderwood) had their first meeting where Franklin and Hampshire county representatives came together. Discussed bylaws. Franklin County wants more input. Next meeting in May.
- Policy (Marcia Day): Policy BGB (policy on policy adoption) is ready for the first Reading. Section A (Foundations), Section B (Governance) will be discussed at the next meeting March 21<sup>st</sup>. MD to provide information prior to that meeting.
- Negotiations (Dalton Athey). DA commented about the last meeting where GEA President implied that the SC did not respond to the union as regards teacher negotiations. DA wanted the public to know that there had been two responses to the union up to that point. JL pointed out the perhaps the GEA president many not have had full knowledge of the events.

#### IV. Presentation: John Smolenski, from *Mass Insight*

GHS was selected to participate in a math/science advanced placement (AP) course grant program. Based on the size of the school, the GPS grant would bring in approximately \$50K per year for three years with a matching requirement. John Smolenski and Donna Woodcock, GHS principal, presented the nuts and bolts of the program to the School Committee; three goals – 1. increase participation; 2. increase performance; and 3. increase college success. There was much discussion about the impact of AP classes on current and future achievement of students. Funds for the GPS AP grant are part of a 13.2 million block grant for Massachusetts having to do with American competitiveness. To participate, the grant needs signature of the superintendent, high school principal, and school committee chairperson. There was considerable discussion as to the first AP science course in environmental science and moving to AP biology or chemistry in the future. Extra lab time would be needed. There is a component for middle school students, should GPS be interested at a later time.

**MD moved; MC 2<sup>nd</sup>: To authorize the school committee chair to sign to accept the Advanced Placement Math Science Initiative grant on behalf of the committee.** Discussion: KM indicated that he would like an opportunity to evaluate the materials provided and vote at the next meeting. MC agreed; DA would like to see the associated budget; JL agreed that more information was needed.

**KM moved; MC 2<sup>nd</sup>: To table the motion for the next meeting.** Motion passed; Unanimous. It was decided to hold the meeting just for this vote 10 minutes before the 3/25/2010 presentations.

Chair person Doyle left the meeting at 8:00; turned meeting over to John Lunt, Vice Chair.

#### V. Business:

1 Budget for 2010-2011, based on the Superintendent’s Draft Budget of February 9<sup>th</sup>. The superintendent explained two adjustments—adding the recent transfer from the city of circuit breaker funding (last page) and adjusting paraprofessional lines to construct the \$45,000 line item for 2009-2010 insurance stipends.

- MC mentioned that Line #279 should read “MASC” and Line #250 should read “Homeless”.
- KM asked MM if the budget as proposed was sustainable....the short answer was yes.
- Going forward, KM suggested that business manager include budget impact statements with the warrants

- Mayor Martin mentioned possibly reducing utilities in the school system budget and having the city take over utilities and central maintenance, as is in the city charter. He acknowledged that the school system wants to keep its own custodial services.

**KM moved; MC 2<sup>nd</sup> : To approve the cost center totals and overall totals of the budget as presented by the Superintendent for the school committee budget for fiscal year 2011.**

**Discussion:** Much discussion re: the budget as it relates to its ability to meet the needs of the district; the Town's ability to fund it and the changing demographics of the community. DA suggested this was a status quo budget and said he is unable to support it as it stands. SH highlighted all of the new and returning programs that have been incorporated to demonstrate that the district was very dynamic and the budget was, in fact, robust regardless of the only slight increase over last year. DA said he'd like to add \$500,000. There are opportunities to add Innovation Schools and agriculture studies. MC also indicated that she could not support the budget; district is still understaffed and under performing, specifically in business and nursing areas. She mentioned that under funding and/or level funding has been a pattern that needs correcting; did point out that this was not a reflection on the Superintendent. MM: JL; MD and KM all spoke in favor of the budget. MM; MD JL and KM all pointed out that we can't just throw money at the budget without a plan and provided a few suggestions for consideration in the future. Supporters said the committee needs to build Greenfield if we are going to build the buildfet for the school, working with the mayor and city council as a team.

JL called the question: **Motion passes. 4:2 with DA and MC voting against.**

- 2 Future Goals: **JL motioned; MC 2<sup>nd</sup>: To table 'future goals' to the next meeting.** Passed. Unanimous
- 3 2010-2011 School Calendar; all spoke about how helpful the academic calendar was. DA recommended starting the MS and HS later in the day. KM questioned starting with a short week. MC said the short week was good for student adjustment. SH suggested doing a study of starting time and a change would require an agreement with the union.  
**Motion by JL; MC 2<sup>nd</sup>: To accept the 2010-2011 calendar as the academic calendar for the next school year.** Passes. Unanimous.
- 4 SBA Committee Decision (Mayor). MM reminded the committee that in order to proceed with the SBA HS renovation project, a SC member was needed for the SBA committee. KM volunteered; all agreed. Keith McCormic will be the school committee representative to the building committee.
- 5 Communication with GEA (Attorney Smith): PS generally mentioned the timing of offers and counter offers with the GEA. Suggested that SC consider entering into executive session at the next meeting (March 25<sup>th</sup>) for discussion. KM brought up GEA President's comments in public session at the last meeting and asked if this was fair or could negotiations take place in open session for both parties. Attorney Smith agreed the discussion in public shouldn't be one sided.  
**KM motioned; MM 2<sup>nd</sup> : To authorize the school attorney to contact the GEA and offer to have open negotiations.** Unanimous; motion passes.

PS also mentioned that he, Kathi Titus and staff were working on a SPED appeal (March 22 and 24) and they were prepared to move forward. DA expressed an interest in attending the proceedings. PS said he would check if that would be allowed.

There was also a short discussion about sending communiqués through email. PS recommended distributing via a central source aka the Superintendent's Office.

- 6 Requests for agenda items: Future goals; MS/HS start days; Innovation School impact statement; fundraising; Superintendent's Journal. No action as the chair is not present.

7 March and April meetings: March 25<sup>th</sup> meeting will have an action item before the architect firms' presentations and possible executive session after.

VI. Public Comment (none) Public session opened @ 9:40 p.m. The superintendent thanked Administrator Kathi Titus for the work of the civil rights audit (will be posted). Kathi Titus thanked the Superintendent and pointed out that it was worked on by "a ton" of folks and she would pass the kudos along. Public comment closed at 9:41 p.m.

VII. Other:

JL gave kudos to Marcia Day for her work on the committee's policies.

Question was asked: What happens if there is a disagreement among the members regarding any policy that cannot be worked out. PS suggested using the MASC for mediation and resolution. JL stated that he would refer this to the policy committee for documentation.

VIII. Non-public session, if needed (not necessary)

IX. **KM motioned; MD 2<sup>nd</sup> to adjourn. Unanimous; motion passes.**  
Tonight's meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Submitted by Audrey LaBonte  
Recording Secretary