

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: Wednesday, July 13, 2016**
GCTV Studios, 393 Main Street, Greenfield MA
Approved 08.10.2016

Present: Jordana Harper, Superintendent (JH); Susan Hollins (SH); William Martin (WM); Adrienne Nunez (AN); Nathaniel Tripp (NT); Francia Wisnewski (FW).

Absent: Timothy Farrell (TF); Cameron Ward (CW).

Also present: Howard Barber (HB), GPS Business Manager; Beth Pratt, Assistant Supt.; Madison Walker, Food Services Director; other school staff, citizens.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (SH, WM, AN, NT, FW), Vice-Chair Wisnewski opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

II. Approval of Draft Minutes

AN moved to approve draft minutes of June 8, and June 15, 2016. 2nd WM. SH: Request to attach policies to minutes. **Motion passed.**

III. Public Comment

Madison Walker, Food Services Director, announced pilot partnership between GPS's summer meals program and Greenfield Farmers Market. Free lunch provided Saturdays at Farmers Market. KidsFest July 15. Supt Harper praised Walker's service on Massachusetts' Farm-to-School Leadership Team.

IV. Reports

A. Vice-Chair

Congratulations to Member Nathan Tripp on new baby

B. Superintendent

JH provided overview of summer work: planning, professional development, hiring, budget to complete FY16 and prepare for FY17, and prepare for start of new school year.

- Enrollment projection report: strong enrollment in early summer
 - WM requested number of students by grade, class size for grades 5-12
 - JH: Class size larger than in neighboring districts
 - SH: State class-size averages include specialists. Focus on actual classroom size.
- Green initiatives

C. Subcommittees

1. Policy & Curriculum

SH looks for direction at August's School Cte mtgs on next Policy focus.

Subcte has almost completed governance and financial policies; negotiations policies given to Negotiations Subcte; starting review of Section A, including non-discrimination; beginning review of policies re: students, instruction, support services, to prepare for new two administrators; continue work on handbook and facilities from prior Subcte.

WM recommended review of policies related to new state mandates re: restraints, crisis intervention, student activity accounts, restrooms.

JH: Beth Pratt, Assistant Supt., and Dianne Ellis, Director of Students Services, have begun orientation to district, new positions.

2. Health, Safety & Facilities

FW presented draft agreement between GPS and Greenfield Police Dept.

- Wide input to create draft.
- Shared cost: GPS pays approx. half cost of School Resource Officer (SRO).
- Ideally, two SROs; budget reality allows one. Grants to fund?
- Role of SRO more social worker than police.
- JH: “very comfortable” with draft agreement; thanks to public, parents, human rights commission for input; “least force necessary at all times”; commitment to restorative justice program; verbal de-escalation; work with children as children.

Goal: Communications person on staff to provide proactive, quick responses, even better communication with families and community.

V. Business

A. MASC/MASS Joint Conference 2016

JH shared info about 2016 conference. FW, AN attended last year. AN will seek clarification from HB on PD funding.

B. Announcement of Open School Committee Seat as of August 1, 2016

FW’s last meeting; thanked community and fellow members.

Policy BBBE Unexpired Term Fulfillment, adopted by School Cte in March 2016. SH reviewed the process: public announcement of opening; any interested voter to contact Chair.

SH moved to put ad in Greenfield Recorder announcing opening and deadline date. WM 2nd.

Discussion: Also consider article, LTE, JH’s radio program. JH to work with Chair Farrell to set deadline, outreach, and to review letters of interest. **Motion passed 3-1** (no: AN).

Many thanks to FW for exemplary service and leadership.

C. Vote on Proposed Amendment to FY17 School Committee Budget

JH provided overview of modified budget:

- conforms to Town Council’s reduced budget \$17,930,000; additional cut in governor’s budget for kindergarten
- preserves 2015-16 level of staffing; recalls 6 teachers laid off; adds GHS school adjustment counselor; maintains class sizes; modest salary increase; preserves arts, enrichment
- format: clear accounting, transparency

SH moved to approve the Superintendent’s draft revised 2016-17 budget in the amount of \$17,930,000, with any internal adjustments voted during discussion, if any. WM 2nd.

AN reviewed minutes of Budget Subcommittee mtg on 7/11 (q.v.).

Subcte supportive of revised budget, though not consensus.

Discussion:

- SH supports budget: maintains full special education services; adds GHS adjustment counselor; keeps AP courses, arts, technology. Replacing large bus. Need to track transportation use. GHS clubs/advisors, fee-free sports funded. Requested \$30K reduction in administrative staffing to

fund pilot programs, volunteer coordinator, elementary library materials, website, composting/conversation.

- WM requested revenue forecast. HB: Full forecast will take more time. \$67K additional Chap. 70 funding.
- JH: Choice-in students doubled since 2013-14. Choice-out remains steady. Choice-in funds used for technology, staffing.
- \$90K sick leave buy-back cf. actual liability. HB: “reasonable” amount, can’t predict actual amount.
- No new quarterly payments expected
- HB: \$1.2 million circuit-breaker totally expended for FY17 (\$7K over). No free cash for town from state.
- HB: Expects additional \$200-300K need by Sept-Oct for out-of-district placements. WM requested monthly report of out-of-district costs to Town Council.
- JH: Exploring funding math/reading intervention support teacher at GHS through Title I.
- JH: Will remove “Policy” tab on website, replace with “School Committee” to increase visibility of School Cte.
- NT, AN, FW support revised budget.
- WM noted \$145K increase in central office, including \$12K stipend. School Cte PD paid by school dept.
- SH: Supports central office staff; questions need for \$45K full-time transportation coordinator. Explained that GPS pays 100% special ed costs of choice-out students, so even if number of choice-outs decreases, choice-out costs may increase. Clarified that \$17,930,000 budget includes no grant funds.
- HB: Bus is “capital improvement,” not in this budget.
- SH supports part-time volunteer coordinator. WM supports: Research on improving troubled school districts identified 2 main factors, educational foundation (WM started in 2010), volunteer program.
- WM: School dept. = \$34 million. Town’s cost for buildings, utilities, health care, pensions.
- FW acknowledged PTO’s fund-raising.
- JH: Must balance suggestions, limited town funding. Budget reflects principals’ priorities within site-based management. Volunteer coordinator not identified as priority. Title I funds family outreach coordinator.

Motion passed unanimously. [Note: No adjustments were made during discussion.]

WM moved to encourage the Superintendent to coordinate a curriculum that involves a civics program and a volunteer program, as funds allow, and to notify the School Cte as to progress by September. SH 2nd. Discussion: Motion intends volunteers coming into schools, not students volunteering out in community. SH: Civics might include diversity, student engagement, problem-solving. **Motion passed unanimously.**

E. Collaborative for Educational Services “Proud of Western Mass Public Schools” campaign

JH described CES campaign responding to upcoming charter-school vote: “Proud of Western Mass. Public Schools.” WM: Collaborative, as non-profit, may not intervene in referendum question. JH: Goal is to increase awareness of quality of public schools. SH: Charter schools are public schools.

F. August School Committee Meetings

School Cte to have additional working session on goals; special meeting information to come from Chair Farrell.

VI. Other Business

A. Final FY16 Budget Report

HB: Closed fiscal year with all funds used, encumbered, obligated. Fewer encumbrances cf. prior years. \$1.2 million salary encumbrances.

VII. Executive Session - MGL c 30A, §21, (2): To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and (3): To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares

SH made a motion to go into executive session [to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining]. WM 2nd. Roll call vote – Yes: SH, WM, AN, NT, FW. Motion passed unanimously. Moved into executive session at 8:31 p.m.

NT moved to return to public session. AN 2nd. Roll call vote – Yes: SH, WM, AN, NT, FW. Motion passed unanimously. Public session resumed at 9:47 p.m.

VIII. Adjournment

SH moved to adjourn. AN 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary