

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, January 6, 2021
Greenfield MA**

Note: This meeting was held fully remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, §20.

Present: Katie Caron (KC) (joined 6:03); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Jordana Harper (JH); Susan Hollins (SH) (joined 6:07); Glenn Johnson-Mussad (GJ); Amy Proietti (AP); Roxann Wedegartner (RW); Jean Wall (JW)

Absent: None

Also present: Atty. Russell Dupere; Lynn Dole, GMS Principal; other school staff, citizens, and the press.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (SE, GJ, AP, RW, JW), Chair Proietti called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

JW made a motion to move the School Committee Reorganization and approval of legal counsel retainer ahead of Public Comment. RW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

III. School Committee Reorganization, Election of Officers

- Election of Chair
Superintendent Harper opened nominations for School Committee Chair.
KC nominated Amy Proietti for Chair. JW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

AP resumed leadership of the meeting.

- Election of Vice-Chair
JW nominated Susan Eckstrom as Vice-Chair. GJ 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.
- Election of Secretary
KC nominated Glenn Johnson-Mussad as Secretary. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

School Committee subcommittees to continue under current assignments. In keeping with prior practice, members are asked to request changes to Subcommittee assignments to Chair before Friday, Jan. 8.

VI. Approval of Retainer for New School Committee Legal Counsel

SE made a motion to approve the retainer at the rate of \$1,800/month for Dupere Law Offices to serve as legal counsel for the Greenfield School Committee. RW 2nd.

Atty. Dupere introduced himself and law firm specializing in school law and labor relations. Retainer cost is set, stable for the year.

Discussion:

- Transfer of GPS cases from office of the late Atty. Peter Smith
- Level of detail provided in monthly bills
- Reminder to share School Committee's attorney policy with Atty. Dupere
- Retainer is for \$1,800/month (flat rate)

- Special education services are not included in retainer; would be \$200/hour for special education services (cf. \$190/hour for Atty. Smith)
- Collaborative for Educational Services also offers legal services for special education needs.
- Recommendation for Dr. Dickinson, Director of Pupil Services, to meet with Atty. Duprere to discuss GPS needs
- Noted that retainer can be cancelled with 30 days' notice

Motion passed unanimously.

II. Public Comment

Garrett O'Brien, Greenfield, IA at GHS, requested continuation of Phase 1 and delay of in-person Phase 2, citing increase in COVID infection rates.

Melissa West, Greenfield, expressed concerns re: motor vehicles at Federal Street School playground.

AP reminded all that public comment is allowed only in connection to items on the agenda; and to email School Committee about other issues. GJ suggested changing the policy on public comment. AP to put on next week's agenda.

IV. Update & Discussion of Remote Learning

Rachel Cummings, Remote Learning Specialist, presented highlights of technology-enhanced learning and learning platforms; will submit slide deck. "We're rocking it."

Supt. Harper reported:

- Need for additional financial support (especially hardware) and technology tools
- Technology skills and transformation of teaching will continue beyond pandemic
- Student assessment continues through technology
- Described ways schools are building community
- Desire to return to in-person as soon as safe to do so

Reminder of School Committee's prior vote at Dec. 17 meeting: to resume Phase 2 in-person learning no sooner than January 11 with the understanding that a further extension may be needed.

Katie Caron reported on data and discussion by Labor Management Safety & Health Committee. Reminder that to return 39 students at 6 schools to in-person schools will require 3 days' prior notice.

Winter athletics will be on agenda for regular January 13 meeting.

Lack of current data: Board of Health meets tomorrow. DESE has not issued data this week.

SE moved to return students back to in-person learning on January 12. AP 2nd.

Discussion:

- Noted that motion made for purpose to allow discussion.
- Motion allows required 3-day notice.
- No action means remote learning continues.
- Need for current data.
- Acknowledge hardship for families of special-needs children
- Should set date be longer-term? e.g., return on Jan. 25

- If it's okay for sports to happen, should in-person student learning begin? Skills & drills start Jan. 11.
- Health guarantees are impossible; parents do have choice.
- Motion is for Remote+ phase for 39 students.

Motion withdrawn.

GJ moved that we resume phase 2 in-person learning no sooner than January 19, with the understanding that a further extension may be needed. SE 2nd.

Discussion: Current data look good, desire to get students back to in-person.

Motion withdrawn.

GJ moved that we resume phase 2 in-person learning on January 19, with the understanding that a further extension may be needed. AP 2nd.

Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, JW, RW. Abstain – AP. Motion passed 6-0-1.

V. Budget Discussion (FY21 & 22)

RW moved to table budget discussion for FY 21 and 21 until next meeting. JW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

Request for next week's agenda to begin with budget discussion.

VII. Executive Session - MGL c 30A, §21, (2) & (3): (2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; (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.

GJ moved to enter Executive Session. RW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

No intent to return to public session. JW moved to close public session. GJ 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Public meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary

Meeting Materials

1. Winter Sports Update, Mike Kuchieski
2. Retainer Agreement by and between the Greenfield Public Schools and the Dupere Law Offices
3. Remote Learning Specialist update
4. Remote Learning Update