

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES: Wednesday, September 9, 2015  
GCTV Studios, 393 Main Street, Greenfield MA  
Approved 10.14.15**

**Present:** Margaret Betts (MB); Maryelen Calderwood (MC); Donna Gleason (DG); Jordana Harper, Superintendent (JH); William Martin (WM); Adrienne Nunez (AN); Francina Wisnewski (FW).

**Absent:** none

**Also present:** Tom Bevaqua, GEA President; John Lunt, Mass. Virtual Academy; Isaac Mass, Town Councilor; Atty. Peter Smith; citizens, and the press.

### **I. Call to Order**

With a quorum present (MB, MC, DG, WM, AN, FW), Chair Calderwood called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

### **II. Approval of Draft Minutes**

AN moved to approve draft minutes of May 13, 2015. 2nd FW. Motion passed unanimously.

AN moved to approve draft minutes of August 12, 2015. 2nd FW. Motion passed 6-0-1(MC abstain).

FW moved to amend agenda to place IV.A. Student Representatives Report before III. DG 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

### **IV. Reports**

#### **A. Student Representative Student Representatives Report**

Sarah O'Sullivan and Amy O'Sullivan, GHS Student Council members, reported on new high school building, start of school, clubs and activities.

#### **III. Public Comment**

Tom Bevaqua, GEA president, asked Cte. to pass resolution calling for moratorium on high stakes testing. Concerns re: effect on ELL and special-education students, on curriculum, teachers, schools. Presented petition from approx. 100 district staff supporting moratorium.

Isaac Mass, Town Councilor, asked for update on Federal Street School afterschool program.

John Lunt, Mass. Virtual Academy Board Member, offered to give district arts, music, science curriculum for afterschool program.

### **IV. Reports**

#### **B. Chairperson**

MC provided overview of start of school, including new teacher orientation, faculty convocation.

#### **C. Superintendent's Report**

JH's summarized written report:

- bus route improvements underway
- new high school
- Celebrating Safe & Healthy Youth
- Breakfast in the Classroom program
- Staffing update
- District-wide open house October 8
- Student enrollment, data reports

- Theme song for the year: “Something Big”
- Vision, Mission, Strategic Goals: Supt. requests comments from Cte members before October mtg; will be on October’s agenda for endorsement
- Grant proposal for Federal Street Afterschool Program was not funded. GHS’s program named exemplary, funded. Considering several options to continue Federal Street. Goal to start program late Sept. Federal St. program will be supported by fees (\$12-\$17/day, sliding scale). Virtual Academy’s offer. WM requested information on how many Greenfield students are taking Virtual Academy’s free courses.

## **D. Subcommittees**

### **1. Finance Committee**

DG reported on planning for upcoming budget. Members asked to review budget information, bring questions to October’s subcte mtg., plan for post-election transition.

### **2. Health & Safety & Facilities**

AN announced next mtg.

### **3. Policy**

FW reported that subcte has begun process for supt. evaluation, requesting guidance from MASC.

### **4. STAR (Strategic Task Force for Alignment and Reorganization)**

MB reported that the group will discuss curriculum alignment, MCAS scores and data.

## **V. Business Topics**

### **A. Appointment for Vacant School Committee Seat**

MC introduced Douglas Mayo, sole respondent to invitation to complete Jeff Comenitz’s term. **MB made a motion to appoint Douglas Mayo to fill Jeff Comenitz’s vacant seat until Dec. 31, 2015. FW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **B. Introduction of the New Title 1 Family and Community Liaison**

JH introduced Kia Burton. Job description included in packet.

### **C. MASC Annual Conference**

FW announced two-day conference in November. FW, AN will attend.

### **D. School Committee Resolution: Moratorium on High Stakes Testing**

**DG moved to adopt resolution calling for a moratorium on high-stakes standardized tests.**

**FW 2nd.** Discussion: District’s Race to the Top \$ requires testing. Alternatives? MAPP, etc. Testing will continue; data useful. Resolution concerns “high-stakes use,” calls on state, federal policymakers. Concerns re: tests’ discrimination (e.g., poverty). District staff supports.

MB called question. Motion to end debate passed unanimously.

**Motion passed 5-0-1 (WM abstain).**

### **E. November School Committee Meeting Reschedule Due to Veteran’s Day**

MC will propose via email November dates and 2nd mtg in October.

### **F. Davis Street Offices**

WM reported on need for heating system at Davis Street. Town will share cost. Temporary heating system will be relocated later (perhaps to Green River). Lane Kelly has initiated bid process. Similar to GHS construction, will involve project manager. Move planned for 2017 to GMS building.

Discussion:

MB: Past practice has been town pays for facilities; “radical change” for school budget to pay for heating of town-owned building.

GHS not allowed to house admin offices (building \$ restriction)

Request for breakdown of costs: \$500K for GMS plus \$200K for engineering, project management.

AN proposed using November’s Health, Safety, Facilities subcte mtg to discuss proposals.

### **G. Communication Relative to High School Building Committee Events**

GHS Open House (ribbon-cutting) October 24. Organized by School Building Cte, date set to allow all legally required to attend (MSBA).

### **VI. Executive Session**

MB motion to go into executive session for purposes of collective bargaining with union personnel involving settlement of grievances and pending litigation. Roll call vote: Yes: MB, MC, DG, WM, AN, FW. Motion passed unanimously. Moved into executive session at 8:24 p.m.

DG moved to return to public session. MB, AN 2nd. Yes: MB, MC, DG, WM, AN, FW. Motion passed unanimously. Public session resumed at 10:08 p.m.

### **VII. Adjournment**

AN moved to adjourn. 2nd WM. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 10:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Farber

Recording Secretary