

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES**

**Wednesday, October 9, 2013**

GCTV, Greenfield MA

Approved 12.4.2013

**Present:** Margaret Betts (MB) (arrived 8:08); Maryelen Calderwood (MC); Donna Gleason (DG); John Lunt (JL); William Martin (WM); Lily Richards (LR), student representative; Francina Wisnewski (FW). **Absent:** Daryl Essensa (DE).

**Also present:** Susan Hollins, Superintendent (SH) (arrived 8:01); Peter Smith, school attorney; Liz Gilman (LG), GPS Business Manager; Lane Kelly (LK), Greenfield Finance Director; other school staff, citizens, and the press.

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

With a quorum present (MC, DG, JL, WM, FW), Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. Chris Shores is audiorecording meeting.

### **II. Approval of minutes**

**JL moved to approve minutes of September 11, 2013. 2nd MC. Motion passed unanimously.**

**MC made a motion to move item "V. A. Student Representatives' Report" before Executive Session. JL 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **Student Representative's Report**

Lily Richards reported on GHS events, including Homecoming; senior nights for athletes; blood drive; NHS induction; new assistant principal, Mr. Gaffigan.

### **III. Executive Session**

**JL made a motion to go into executive session in conformance with MGL c 30A, §21, (2), to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel. MC 2nd. YES: MC, DG, JL, WM, FW. Motion passed unanimously.** Board went into executive session at 6:37 p.m. and returned to public session at 8:01 p.m.

### **IV. Public comment** None

### **V. Reports**

#### **A. Chair's Report**

WM noted new fingerprinting law, which SH has been working on implementing; announced Nov. 6-9 conference.

#### **B. Superintendent's Report**

SH reported:

- high school's new associate principal, Thomas Gaffigan
- highest enrollment since 2006-07
- shortage of substitute teachers
- has finalized budget for 2013-14
- met with administrators to prepare reports for School Cte on trends
- Sept. 27 professional development day reached every employee in school system
- National Walk to School Day today; 6 groups of parents/children walking

## C. Subcommittees

### 1. Contract, Finance & Budget Subcte

JL reported subcte has had productive negotiations mtgs on ELT and evaluations. Also discussed next year's budget, including budget reports, enrollment, staffing changes.

### 2. Policy, HR & Planning Subcte

FW reported on discussions of legal services, special education; supt. evaluation.

**MC made a motion to adopt the DESE model for superintendent evaluation. MB 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

### 3. Health, Safety, Security & Facilities Subcte

Subcte met with Kate Kyros, coordinator of Greenfield for Safe Schools, Smart Schools Coalition, and Siobhan Fitzgerald, school psychologist; Jeff Hansen, parent coordinator. Subcte will review SSSS Coalition's 5-yr plan, data collection.

SH has updated emergency procedures document. Revisions to be reviewed at next subcte mtg, including emergency shelter; phone system; procedures for crisis team; relationship with police, sheriff. Safety/emergency in-service (90-minute) being offered to staff; proposed webinar available to new staff members. Scheduling police walk-through of each building to assess safety and security.

**JL made a motion to direct Supt to work with police dept to review pick-up/drop-off procedures at GHS, specifically on Silver St, and report to Cte whether the schools and police feel that crossing guards are adequate or if a police officer should be present during those two times of day.** Discussion: drop-off is 7:15-7:45; pick-up is 2:00-2:30, focus on Kent and Silver Streets; consider concentrated police presence for short period of time; this motion concerns GHS, other schools to be reviewed later by subcte. **MC 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

Subcte reviewed Memorandum of Understanding btwn East Longmeadow Public Schools and Police Dept., provided by Atty. Smith, and discovered Greenfield has similar MOU from 2007. **MC made a motion to direct Atty. Smith to review Greenfield's current police MOU dated 2007. FW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion: role of Parent Coordinator position.

## VI. Business Topics

### A. Enrollment

WM showed graph of strong enrollment increase. SH reported Oct. 1 enrollment of 1,775.

City has created Housing Homeless Task Force to address increasing challenge, including 135+ students living in local hotel/motels. SH reported that Oct. 1, 33 homeless children enrolled in GPS; had increased to 40 homeless children by Oct 9. More homeless families in Mass. than expected and statewide facilities are full. Some Boston-area families being placed here. Short-term school transition is difficult on children.

Problems for school district:

- At high school, homeless students who leave often get counted as drop-outs.
- District is legally obligated to continue paying for special ed. services for registered students who've since moved away.
- Newton needs more staff to support homeless children.
- Transportation expenses

Mass. is a "right to shelter" state, which can create school district responsibilities for many years.

Discussion on overall enrollment: causes for increasing enrollment while Greenfield's population has not increased; whether enrollment increase helps or hurts schools; April/May School Cte will vote on participating in School Choice; need for enrollment analysis; not our goal to attract students from other districts, rather to create best education for Greenfield children.

### **B. Budget/Finance Review**

SH provided overview of "2013-2014 Voted School Committee Budget," reflecting \$559,493 reduction to meet city appropriation. More than 200 staff left/changed positions, necessitating many adjustments to budget. FY14 budget is approx. 5% above FY13 budget. "Adj." means full cost not in that line item, some paid for by grants (approx. \$3million). Request for next budget to list full cost; LG lacks staff to provide this information. SH offered to prepare list of grants, what they do, and \$ offset.

Discussion:

- State-required ELL training is paid for by state.
- Homeless children attend Newton because it's the closest school to motels. WM noted that Mohawk district has 33% vacancy.
- MC requested simplified report of Chapter 70 revenues/city's contribution to school district; WM will work with LG and LK to get \$ figures.

### **C. Superintendent Search Policy**

**MB moved to accept SH's letter of retirement. JL 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

**JL moved to direct chair to enter into negotiations with SH to find a mutual agreement regarding superintendent's offer to have an earlier end date to her contract. MC 2nd. Motion passed 4-0-1 (DG abstaining).**

WM praised SH's role in guiding Greenfield's return to a solid school system. "I don't know of anyone who could have done a better job."

**JL moved to table remaining items. MC 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **VII. Adjournment**

**JL moved to adjourn. MC 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Farber  
Recording Secretary