

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING  
MINUTES**

**Wednesday, April 30, 2014**

Greenfield Community College, Greenfield MA

Approved 05.14.14

**Present:** Margaret Betts (MB); Maryelen Calderwood (MC); Daryl Essensa (DE); Donna Gleason (DG); John Lunt (JL); William Martin (WM); Francina Wisnewski (FW). **Absent:** none. **Also present:** Glen Koocher, Mass. Association of School Committees; Susan Hollins, Supt.; Jordana Harper-Ewert, superintendent finalist; school staff, citizens, and the press.

**I. Call to Order**

With a quorum present (MB, MC, DE, DG, JL, WM, FW), Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Chris Shores of *Recorder* is audio-recording.

**II. Finalist Interview: Jordana Harper-Ewert**

Daryl Essensa introduced Jordana Harper-Ewert, candidate for superintendent.

A. Opening Remarks by Ms. Harper-Ewert

B. Questions from School Committee members:

- How comfortable and knowledgeable are you with the Extended Learning Program (ELT) and what criteria would you deem critical for continued participation in the \$800K state grant program?
- What is your educational philosophy and how do you see it working with the Greenfield Public Schools and the community?
- What would you do during the first 90 days of the job?
- Please offer a brief presentation relating to a School Choice agenda item due for Committee vote to decide to participate or not to participate.
- In your opinion, is it possible to dismiss a weak staff member? If so, have you done this, and what process did you use?
- Tell me an instance where you had to get something accomplished in an atmosphere of diminished resources, where you were unable to solve the problem with money.
- It's May, you are a new superintendent who has just been made aware of a \$1.9 million deficit, one to which the Town Council is resistant to apply a fix. To add to this, there is a June deadline for providing teachers pink slips, teachers who may not be able to be hired back because of a significant lack of finances. Can you tell me how you might handle this crisis?
- There are several areas where clear delineation of authority becomes more blurred than clear. For example, several areas touch both policy and administrative operations, and it may not be fully clear about where the school committee's responsibilities end and where the administration's begins. Give me some examples of how you have worked (in any capacity) with your school committees to resolve these potential conflicts.
- During your visit today, what did you learn about our district and how will that information influence your entry plan?
- Why do you want to leave your current job? How long would you envision being in Greenfield?

- In your understanding of zero-based budgeting, what would be the four priorities you would use to determine distribution of resources over several sites?
- If academic success is a function of good classroom teaching, or good instructional tools, or a good environment, or better curriculum, to what extent can you as a superintendent make a difference in each of these areas?
- Please give me your views on the inclusion/integration/least-restrictive model for Special Education.
- The practice of outsourcing services is more widespread these days. Some believe this practice saves money, other worry that the practice results in the loss of jobs or in the deskilling of the teaching profession and that furthers the belief that one ought to run schools like a business. Can you tell me where, within these parameters, your philosophy fits?

C. Closing Remarks from Ms. Harper-Ewert

### **III. Superintendent decision**

Thanks to DE, FW and the Search Cte.

**MB moved that Jordana Harper-Ewert be appointed as superintendent of the Greenfield Public Schools, effective July 1, 2014, subject to the acceptance of a mutually agreeable contract of employment approved by the candidate and the School Committee, and signed and executed by both parties. FW 2nd. Roll call: YES: WM, MB, FW, MC, JL, DG, DE. Motion passed unanimously.**

MC, MB to work on contract discussions.

### **IV Adjournment**

JL moved to adjourn. DG 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Farber  
Recording Secretary