

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES: Thursday, October 12, 2016
GCTV Studios, 393 Main Street, Greenfield MA**

Present: Don Alexander (DA); Timothy Farrell (TF); Beth Pratt, Assistant Superintendent (JH); Susan Hollins (SH); William Martin (WM); Adrienne Nunez (AN); Nathaniel Tripp (NT); Cameron Ward (CW) **Absent:** none

Also present: Howard Barber, GPS Business Manager

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (DA, TF, SH, WM, AN, NT, CW), Chair Farrell opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

II. Approval of Draft Minutes

AN moved to approve draft minutes of Sept. 22 and Sept. 14, 2016. Corrections to 9/14: Policy Cte report: "...process for reviewing policies from initiation of the policy topic to the final posted, voted change." V.A. MOU: "shall become effective upon completed execution...." **Motion passed unanimously.**

III. Public Comment

none

IV. Reports

A. GHS Student Report – NHS induction, Key Club sports clinics, Student Council lock-in with area schools; fall sports.

B. Superintendent Report

Beth Pratt, Assistant Superintendent, reported on behalf of Supt. Harper, on parenting leave.

- Central Office has moved out of Davis Street to GMS/Federal Street. Special thanks to Alan Schmidt, Facilities Director; Carol Holzberg, Technology Director; Tammy Cook, Secretary, Supt. office.
- MCAS/PARCC data released end of Sept. Principals, school personnel reviewing. GPS remains at Level 2. (Federal Street, Four Corners are Level 1). Mass. has ended PARCC; MCAS 2.0 for spring 2017.
- Meeting with principals, visiting classrooms
- Attending Unit C and A negotiation meetings

School Cte to schedule special mtg to review test results, strategic plan. Chair Farrell to arrange.

C. Subcommittees

1. Personnel Subcommittee:

NT moved to inform the Superintendent of Greenfield Public Schools that we will enter negotiations regarding a successor contract of employment. WM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Budget, Finance & Negotiations Subcommittee: AN reported on:

- School Cte met for MASC "Budget 101" training
- Subcte held organizational mtg. Oct. 3. Year 3 of strategic plan. Major budget topics: Unit C negotiations; staffing ratio assessment; facilities

- Math & Science Academy move to GMS. Green River becomes elementary school. Would involve redistricting, could reduce transportation costs. Mayor Martin recommending pilot transportation program with city.
- Negotiations with Unit C going very well

Discussion: Balance need for redistricting with need for stability. Request for specific numbers on transportation savings, other fiscal impacts of MSA move.

3. Finance Report: Howard Barber, Business Manager, reviewed year-to-date budget reports.

Discussion:

- After budget was finalized, staff reassigned to different schools, so some individual school's salary lines show greater or less than 100% encumbered; all schools add up to 100%.
- GPS in Year 4 of transportation contract through Franklin County district collaboration. School Cte. to review contract options Nov. 2017.
- City-School meetings to prioritize reviewing budget
- Request for report to show separate cost center for custodial/maintenance
- Request for report to see last year's actual expense
- Overspending concerns:
 - Substitute teachers; \$162 budgeted; \$158K left; last year spent over \$200.
 - Out-of-district tuition: Currently \$370K overspent, projecting \$1million more than what's in budget. 54 students placed out-of-district. Explore creating special education in-district programs.

4. Policy Subcommittee

SH reported that Subcte. working on policies re: facilities (payment by public to use), food allergies, family engagement, wellness, field trips. Meeting twice/month.

V. Business

A. Capital Improvement Plan Update

Business Manager Barber outlined current fiscal year's projects: asphalt paving; photocopier upgrades, technology initiatives, multi-year plan for asbestos removal.

Discussion:

- Wifi at elementary schools: Newton installed last spring, fully funded by state grant. DESE technology grant to support wifi installation at Four Corners and Federal Street; seeking additional grants for remaining \$23K cost.
- Recommend master list/inventory of capital improvements, years work was done and next repair anticipated, through Central Maintenance. Health, Safety & Facilities Subcte to invite Alan Schmidt for facilities review. Reminder that discussion of security systems to be done in non-public session.

B. Vote on Charter School Resolution

AN motion to adopt the resolution presented to the School Committee regarding charter schools. NT 2nd.

WHEREAS free public schools available to all students regardless of income, ability, need, or English language proficiency are foundational to our democracy; and

WHEREAS, all of our students deserve high-quality public schools that teach the whole child, providing enrichment and addressing social and emotional needs in addition to core academic subjects; and

WHEREAS local accountability for our public schools is necessary to ensure that schools are responsive to the needs of their communities; and

WHEREAS Greenfield is losing over \$1 million to Commonwealth charter schools, and public school districts across the state are losing more than \$450 million this year alone, a loss of funds that is undermining the ability of districts to provide all students with the educational services to which they are entitled; and

WHEREAS Commonwealth charter schools are often approved over the objections of a majority of community residents and their elected officials and are not accountable to local elected officials once they are approved; and

WHEREAS Commonwealth charter schools often fail to serve the same proportion of special needs students, low income students and English language learners as the districts from which they receive students and often use high suspension rates to drive out students they don't want to serve; and

WHEREAS the Commonwealth charter school system is creating separate and unequal opportunities for success; and

WHEREAS lifting the cap on charter schools would greatly worsen the problems listed above and lead to a costly and divisive two-track school system;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Greenfield School Committee opposes lifting the cap on Commonwealth charter schools.

Discussion:

School Cte voted Nov. 2015 in favor of a moratorium on charter schools.

Not an attack on local charter schools and families.

Concern re: accuracy of parts of resolution

Desire to change state funding of all schools (e.g., mid-level bureaucracies)

Urge legislature to refine law to protect rural regions; encourage small charter schools (20 students); prohibit schools from sending busses into neighboring districts to transport choice-out students.

AN moved to amend the motion to read "The GSC opposes lifting the cap on Commonwealth charter schools." WM 2nd. Motion to amend passed unanimously.

Amended motion passed unanimously.

C. Policies for First Readings

SH provided first readings of these policies:

- DJ: Purchasing
- DJA-Purchasing Authority
- DJE-Bidding Requirements
- DJG-Vendor Relations
- DK -Payment Procedure

D. Policies for Second Reading & Vote

DGA -Authorized Signatures

WM moved to accept DGA Authorized Signatures, as written. AN 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

DKC -Expense Reimbursement

WM moved to accept DKC Expense Reimbursement, as written. NT 2nd.

Friendly amendment to para. 4, last sentence: "...are recommended for an annual travel allowance for interschool travel so anticipated...." **Motion passed unanimously.**

DJB -Capital Improvement Plan

WM moved to accept DJB, Capital Improvement Plan, as written. SH 2nd.

Friendly amendment to para. 2, first sentence, to read: Annually, the Committee begins the district's CIP process by reviewing the city's current Capital Improvement Plan for the school department.

Motion passed unanimously.

IV. Other Business

A. Budget Reports

SH moved to request the Business Manager's monthly reports add a column of last fiscal year's final annual expenditures in each cost center. AN 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Planning & Construction Committee

WM reported that the town's Planning & Construction Committee is preparing an analysis of all buildings (needs, completed repairs, etc.), to be released late November.

C. Upcoming agenda items

Working Session: Request to add to agenda discussion of strategic plan
November (regular meeting): Update on Four Corners Discovery School

V. Executive Session

AN made a motion to enter into executive session for the reason MGL c 30A, §21, (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. WM 2nd. Roll call vote – Yes: DA, TF, SH, WM, AN, NT, CW. Moved into executive session at 8:42 p.m.

__ moved to return to public session. __ 2nd. Roll call vote – Yes: DA, TF, SH, WM, AN, NT, CW. Motion passed unanimously. Public session resumed at __ p.m.

VI. Adjournment

__ moved to adjourn. __ 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at __ p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary