

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: Wednesday, September 13, 2023**
Jon Zon Community Center, 35 Pleasant St., Greenfield MA

Present: Elizabeth Deneve (ED); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Kathryn Martini (KM); Amy Proietti (AP); Jean Wall (JW); Roxann Wedegartner (RW)

Absent: Glenn Johnson-Mussad (GJM); also Christine DeBarge, Superintendent

Also present: Karin Patenaude, Assistant Superintendent; Andy Paquette, TMS Business Manager; and citizens.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (ED, SE, KM, AP, JW, RW), Chair Proietti called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

SE moved to skip the executive session [on tonight's agenda]. KM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Approval of Minutes

KM moved to approve draft minutes of August 9, 2023. JW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Public Comment

Jesus Leyva, Greenfield, spoke about Mass. Senate Bill 303, which would increase state aid for Greenfield by \$1million over 5 years, urged School Committee to pass a resolution in support.

Stacey Sexton, Greenfield, suggested collaboration between students and School Committee on policies such as GHS cell phone policy; advocated for climate resilience in school buildings, including air conditioning.

IV. Student Representatives Report

S.T. and T.T. reported on GHS Student Council & club activities, sports. Students dismayed over continued requirement for cell phone pouches. Need for AC: difficult to learn in uncomfortably hot classrooms.

V. Budget Update

Andy Paquette, Business Manager, reported on start-of-school budget work including adjusting for personnel changes; meetings with city officials re: HR inefficiencies.

VI. Business

A. Second Reading and Vote on Policies KF & KF-R, "Community Use of School Facilities"

KM moved that we amend Policies KF & KF-R, "Community Use of School Facilities," as presented, on second reading. 2nd SE. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Donation of Dictionaries from Greenfield Elks #1296 for Grade 3 Students

KM moved to approve the donation of dictionaries from the Greenfield Elks Lodge #1296 for GPS Grade 3 students. JW 2nd.

AP noted that 400 dictionaries were donated, more than needed at GPS. AP will contact Mr. Jennison to adjust quantity for future years; suggestion to offer this year's extra dictionaries at elementary schools' Open House events.

Donation accepted with much appreciation to Elks Lodge for this tradition.

Motion passed unanimously.

C. Use of School Buildings as Shelters

Dr. DeBarge discussed use of schools as emergency shelters (e.g., during disruptive weather events) with Fire Chief Strahan, who is in charge of emergency management. Schools would probably be closed during such emergencies. Would involve many logistical details.

Discussion:

- Issue originated from housing task force re: need for shelters during very cold times.
- City's reserved use of Days Inn for emergencies now reduced to 2 rooms.
- Direct further questions to Chief Strahan.

VII. New Agenda Items

Reminder about including breaks during extra-long meetings.

VIII. Reports

A. Reports of the Administration

1. Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Karin Patenaude summarized recent work including staff PD, mentors for IAs, curriculum work within strategic planning, grants. *(Details in written report.)*

Discussion: Praise for K-4 Right to Read Project documentary.

2. Superintendent

Dr. DeBarge absent; refer to written report.

Discussion re: Schools' HVAC infrastructure for AC

- Begin planning now for potential capital budget requests.
- No subcommittee to work on AC solutions: Health & Safety Subcommittee was active during pandemic, now disbanded.
- Need for DESE School Building Authority to fund HVAC upgrades, not limit to only new buildings.

B. School Committee Reports

1. Chair (AP)

- a. School Committee Self-Evaluation: waiting for MASC response, will be on October agenda.
- b. Superintendent Evaluation Update to be presented at October meeting.
- c. Support for continued communication with state legislators and with neighboring districts. See handout, "A Sustainable Future for Rural Schools," from Rep. Blais & Sen. Comerford.

Discussion:

- Pursue legislative earmarks for GPS? City would support for infrastructure & energy efficiency projects, with caveat that some earmarks are approved but never funded.
- Good publicity for GPS school meals program and Director Greta Shwachman from Rep. McGovern.

2. Subcommittee Reports

a. Redistricting: Major decisions to be made by School Committee in October & November.

b. Policy: Continuing review of sections; close to finishing all policies; when policy manual completely updated, MASC will host GPS policies online.

c. Budget (SE)

- City spends more than minimum required for schools. MOU between GPS and City could clarify City's funding amounts.
- Capital requests on Subcommittee's agenda for October.
- KM requested more frequent reconciliation and monthly reports on health insurance spending for school employees.

IX. Adjournment

KM moved to adjourn. SE 2nd. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary

Meeting Materials

1. Agenda: September 13, 2023
2. Draft minutes: August 9, 2023
3. Student Report: September 13, 2023
4. Superintendent's Update, September 13, 2023
5. Assistant Superintendent Update, September 13, 2023
6. Financial Reports, September 6, 2023
7. Policies KF and KF-R, "Community Use of School Facilities"
8. Email from Neal Jennison, Greenfield Elks, to Dr. DeBarge, "Dictionary Project," Sept. 6, 2023
9. Email from Amy Proietti to Sen. Comerford, Rep. Whipps, Rep. Blais, "August Greenfield School Committee Meeting Response," September 7, 2023
10. "A Sustainable Future for Rural Schools, H.3567 & S.2388"