

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**School Committee**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, February 19, 2026 | Called to Order: 6:43 PM | Adjourned: 10:21 PM

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<b>Location</b>	Jon Zon Senior Center / Hybrid (Zoom)	<b>Recording</b>	GCTV / YouTube
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**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Member	Role	Attendance
Sexton	Chair	Present (in person)
Childs	Vice Chair	Present (in person)
Diteman	Member	Present (via Zoom)
Goodwin	Member	Present (in person)
Webb	Secretary	Present (in person)
de Neeve	Member	Present (in person)
Desorgher	Mayor	Present (in person)

**Quorum:** All 7 members present. Quorum confirmed.

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Sexton called the meeting to order at 6:43 PM on Thursday, February 19, 2026. The meeting was recorded by Greenfield Community Television (GCTV). No other persons indicated they were recording.

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**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comment was opened. Members of the public were allotted three minutes to speak and were required to state their name and address. Zoom attendees were invited to add their names to the chat to join the speaker queue.

No members of the public came forward. Public comment was closed.

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**3. OPEN MEETING LAW PRESENTATION**

**Presenter:** Liz Lafond, Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC)

Ms. Lafond delivered a training presentation on the Open Meeting Law (OML). This session fulfilled the committee's 2022 OML violation resolution requirement. Key topics covered:

### Core Requirements

- The OML requires advance notice, a full posted agenda, and open deliberations unless one of 10 executive session exceptions applies.
- Public access — in person and/or virtual — must be maintained. If technology fails, allow ~20–30 minutes to restore before rescheduling. Greenfield was commended for following this rule at the previous meeting.
- All meetings of subcommittees (which are public bodies) require minutes, and subcommittee charges must be established by vote of the full board.

### Quorum & Communications

- A "deliberation" includes any oral, written, or electronic communication on public business among a quorum of the body — even unintentionally (e.g., a chain of one-on-one conversations).
- Housekeeping emails (scheduling, document distribution) are permitted; sharing opinions on pending agenda items is not. Best practice: never "Reply All."

### Public Participation

- Public comment is not legally required but is strongly recommended. The public may not address the committee without the Chair's permission.
- Committees may set reasonable rules for comment but cannot enforce them. The only prohibited content is threats of violence.
- Members must caution speakers who identify students by name (privacy rights). Time used for the caution should be added back to the speaker's allotted time.
- The committee discussed moving from requiring an address to requesting name and affiliation for public commenters.

### Executive Session

- Executive sessions must be opened in public first. Minutes and roll call votes are required. Candidate names in superintendent searches may be kept confidential at the semi-finalist stage.

### Social Media & Devices

- Members retain free speech rights but should "proceed with caution" (AG's language). Posting a position on a matter before the board where a quorum of colleagues follow you could constitute an OML violation.
- Text messages sent during meetings about matters under the committee's purview may be subject to public records requests.

- If a member receives relevant information by email during a meeting, best practice is to share it immediately with all members.

## **Violations & Resources**

- OML complaints go first to the public body for resolution, then to the AG's Office. Knowing violations can result in monetary penalties.
  - School committees are the only elected public body in Massachusetts legally required to receive training on their roles and responsibilities.
  - Resources: AG's OML Guide, MASC Quick Motion Guide, and the AG's monthly Open Government newsletter.
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## **4. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

Student representatives were unable to attend. Superintendent Joyal delivered the report on their behalf:

- Library Club is co-hosting a book-to-movie event on Friday, February 27th (after February vacation) in collaboration with the Mosaic Club, honoring Black History Month and Women's History Month. The film Hidden Figures will be shown. Doors open at 5:30 PM for pizza and popcorn; movie begins at 6:00 PM. Open to the community.
  - Digital Wellness: Health A and B classes at the high school visited the library for a week of digital citizenship lessons, including discussions of digital footprints and online visibility.
  - Trivia Team (Schools Match Wits): The final episode has been filmed and will air in mid-to-late April. Results are under embargo.
  - A dodgeball tournament is being planned for April. Community teams are welcome to participate.
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## **5. REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION**

### **Business Manager Report**

The Business Manager and Assistant Superintendent were not present due to the rescheduled meeting. Superintendent Joyal provided a brief summary:

- The submitted business report shows the local budget tracking normally with no cause for alarm.
- A FY25 year-end recap is included in meeting materials.
- Members were advised to direct detailed questions to Business Manager Andy directly, or to hold them for the next meeting.
- Information regarding school revolving accounts forwarded from the city was noted. Members were encouraged to review materials and bring questions to the next meeting. Steve Nembirkow, city Finance Director, was present online.

## Assistant Superintendent / Superintendent Report

- Professional Development: The last full PD day was January 30th. Educators participated in grade-banded sessions aligned to district priorities and all participated in restorative practice learning.
- Grants Update: The district is exploring a High Dosage Early Literacy Tutoring grant focused on foundational reading skills (phonological awareness, phonics, decoding) for early grades.
- Early College Planning Grant: The district has received a \$25,000 grant in partnership with Greenfield Community College to assess readiness, identify opportunities, and plan pathways for students to access advanced coursework and college-level learning.
- Winter Carnival: The Title One program sponsored the Mad Science Fire and Ice Show on Saturday, February 7th at the Greenfield Middle School auditorium.
- February Vacation Academy: Nearly 40 students attended Discovery School during vacation week (an increase from the prior year). Programming ran 8:00 AM–1:00 PM, offering both enrichment and remediation opportunities from all district schools. One more day remaining.
- Rock and Readathon: Greenfield Middle School held a rocking chair reading event in their front hallway in honor of Black History Month, featuring books by Black authors.
- School Facilities Tour: A tour of all six school buildings was conducted earlier in the day, attended by four school committee members, three city council members, and others. Long-term facilities planning items were identified (e.g., external window repainting needed to prevent wood rot).
- Enrollment: 1,343 students as of February 1, 2026 (down two from the prior month).
- Member Goodwin thanked the custodial staff for the excellent condition of the buildings during the tour.

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## 6. CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were presented for the consent agenda:

- A. Approval of meeting minutes — February 11, 2026 (January 14th minutes were not yet available and were removed from the consent agenda)
- B. Vote to approve the Greenfield High School Spanish Class field trip to New York City on March 25th
- C. First read of revised Policy JNDB — Empowered Digital Use (revisions pertain to AI) — REMOVED from consent agenda for separate discussion

<b>MOTION</b>	Approve consent agenda items A and B (February 11 minutes and NYC field trip), excluding January 14 minutes
<b>Moved by</b>	Member de Neeve
<b>Seconded by</b>	Vice Chair Childs
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Yes   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED unanimously</b>

## Policy JNDB — Empowered Digital Use (First Read)

Vice Chair Childs and other members expressed a preference for the Policy Subcommittee to review and provide input on the revised policy before it comes to the full committee for a vote.

<b>MOTION</b>	Refer revised Policy JNDB (Empowered Digital Use / AI) to the Policy Subcommittee for review and recommendation
<b>Moved by</b>	Chair Sexton
<b>Seconded by</b>	Vice Chair Childs
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Abstain   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED (1 abstention)</b>

Note from Superintendent Joyal: Superintendent Sullivan and IT Director Ian Edwards are available to provide input to the Policy Subcommittee on this item.

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## 7. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Chair's Report

- Policy Manual Updates: A review was conducted to identify policies voted on during 2025 not yet reflected in the online policy manual. The warrant-signing policy was identified as one that was verbally agreed upon but never formally voted — to be rectified during this meeting. Members were asked to flag any other discrepancies.
- School Facilities Tours: Completed today (see Administration Report). Several long-term maintenance needs identified, including exterior window repainting.
- Organizational Chart: Updated to reflect the current structure. Available in new member materials.
- City Council Community Relations Subcommittee: A proposed agenda item regarding internships for Greenfield Public School students is scheduled for the following Monday. The School Committee has not been formally contacted but will monitor.
- MASC Day on the Hill: Scheduled for Monday, March 30th. Members discussed whether to attend in Boston or conduct a local Connecticut River Valley "road show" visiting legislators' offices. No formal commitment made; to be revisited at the March 11th meeting.

### Legislative Priorities Discussion

Members identified the following potential legislative priorities:

- Reopening the Chapter 70 funding formula study to better reflect the reality of rural and suburban school costs (raised by Childs, concurred by Diteman)
- Increased state funding for rural transportation costs (Goodwin)

- Greenfield's inclusion at the table in determining new state graduation requirements (Childs)
- Greater MSBA contribution to the proposed Franklin Tech school construction (Desorgher — noting a 50% state share is insufficient)
- Addressing teacher salary and healthcare disparities in rural versus urban areas (Goodwin)

No formal vote was taken. Discussion to continue at the March 11th meeting.

### SOS — Save Our Schools Week of Action (March 9–13)

Chair Sexton introduced a rural and declining enrollment Schools Week of Action initiative led by State Representative Joe Commerford. The campaign (theme: "SOS — Save Our Schools") seeks photos and video submissions by March 3rd for a coordinated media effort.

Member Goodwin proposed visual ideas including SOS letter formations using empty chairs, sports equipment, or other school objects. The empty Green River School building was also suggested.

<b>MOTION</b>	Designate Member Goodwin as the committee's representative for the SOS Week of Action campaign, to coordinate submissions by the March 3rd deadline
<b>Moved by</b>	Member de Neeve
<b>Seconded by</b>	Member Diteman
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Yes   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED unanimously</b>

### Budget & Finance Subcommittee Report

Subcommittee Chair Childs reported on the February 3rd meeting:

- Preliminary figures were presented for projected level-service costs for FY27, including anticipated wage increases, Chapter 70 estimates, and choice/charter spending.
- Projection: a rough financial year is anticipated.
- The budget development calendar is out of date due to a state-mandated change at the city level that pushed all deadlines back by approximately one month. Central administration has agreed to update the calendar.
- Next subcommittee meeting: March 3rd, at which department head budget requests will be reviewed.
- Draft subcommittee minutes from February 3rd were distributed for informational purposes; to be formally approved at the next subcommittee meeting.

Member de Neeve suggested that subcommittees submit their annual goals to the full committee for awareness (not formal approval), to create institutional memory and facilitate transitions when subcommittee chairs change. Subcommittee Chair Childs agreed to include goal review in the March 3rd agenda.

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## 8. NEW BUSINESS

### A. School Committee Mediation

Chair Sexton brought a motion to pursue mediation services to increase productive collaboration and collegiality among members. The motion authorizes the district to enter into an agreement with a mediation service provider. The process is confidential; details were not disclosed.

Key details discussed:

- Proposed provider rate: \$150/hour for sessions; \$100/hour for out-of-session work. A cost cap can be established.
- Process: individual sessions with each willing member, followed by group sessions. Expected timeline: ongoing over several months.
- Timing: attachment to existing meeting nights as executive session was suggested as a practical option.
- Member de Neeve expressed support, noting the timing is appropriate with an incoming new superintendent.

<b>MOTION</b>	Authorize the district to enter into an agreement with a mediation service provider to support productive collaboration among School Committee members
<b>Moved by</b>	Chair Sexton
<b>Seconded by</b>	Vice Chair Childs
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Abstain   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Abstain
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED (2 abstentions)</b>

### B. Business Manager Interview Committee Appointment

A motion was made to appoint a School Committee member to the Business Manager interview committee. Member Elizabeth de Neeve nominated herself, noting her prior experience on the interview committee.

Member de Neeve shared insights from that experience, emphasizing the importance of selecting a candidate who fits the team of central office staff who work with the Business Manager daily — not only the committee's preferences. Superintendent Joyal indicated he would lead the process, with the incoming superintendent and central office staff participating.

<b>MOTION</b>	Appoint Member Elizabeth de Neeve to the Business Manager hiring interview committee
<b>Moved by</b>	Member de Neeve (self-nomination)
<b>Seconded by</b>	Vice Chair Childs

<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Abstain   de Neeve: Abstain   Desorgher: Abstain
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED (3 abstentions)</b>

### C. Non-Voting Student Member on School Committee

Member de Neeve introduced a motion to add a non-voting student member to the Greenfield School Committee, citing:

- Growing precedent across Massachusetts school committees
- Pending state legislation (House Bill 568) that may mandate this in the future
- The value of student voice in decisions that directly affect students' lives
- Potential for participating students to earn civic leadership experience and academic credit

It was proposed that the student would come from the School Council (chosen by students), rotate periodically, and would not attend executive sessions.

Discussion noted that implementation would take time (likely no sooner than September) and should involve a proper policy framework. Member Goodwin suggested possible logistical overlaps with honor societies and student council guidelines.

<b>MOTION</b>	Create a non-voting student member position on the School Committee and refer the matter to the Policy Subcommittee to develop the policy framework and implementation plan
<b>Moved by</b>	Member de Neeve
<b>Seconded by</b>	Vice Chair Childs
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Abstain   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Abstain   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED (2 abstentions)</b>

### D. Meeting with Student Advisory Council

Member de Neeve introduced a motion citing Massachusetts General Law requiring school committees to meet at least once every other month (during school months) with a student advisory committee composed of five elected high school students. A school committee member may be designated as student outreach coordinator.

Discussion noted that going to students "on their home turf" may elicit more candid input than student representatives attending committee meetings. The motion was amended to refer the matter to the Policy Subcommittee to develop a framework, with the designation of a representative to be made when the policy returns to the full committee.

<b>MOTION</b>	Commit to meeting with the Student Advisory Council per MGL requirements and refer to the Policy Subcommittee to develop a framework and calendar for implementation
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<b>Moved by</b>	Member de Neeve
<b>Seconded by</b>	Vice Chair Childs
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Yes   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED unanimously</b>

### E. Rescind Subcommittee Assignments Vote (January 14, 2026)

Member de Neeve moved to rescind the January 14, 2026 vote on subcommittee assignments, citing procedural concerns: subcommittee charges (including new subcommittees such as Facilities Use, the addition of handbook work to Policy, and the addition of warrants to Budget & Finance) require a formal vote of the full body per Policy BDE.

Discussion was extensive. Chair Sexton acknowledged they did not provide written subcommittee descriptions at the time of assignments and committed to drafting and presenting descriptions at the next meeting. The majority view was that the procedural issues could be addressed through the subsequent motions on the agenda (items F–J) without the need to rescind.

<b>MOTION</b>	Rescind the vote on subcommittee assignments from the January 14, 2026 meeting
<b>Moved by</b>	Member de Neeve
<b>Seconded by</b>	Vice Chair Childs
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Abstain   Goodwin: No   Sexton: Abstain   Webb: No   Childs: No   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: No
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>FAILED (1 Yes, 2 Abstentions, 4 Nos)</b>

### F. Transfer of Handbook Work to Policy Subcommittee

Chair Sexton moved to formally transfer the ad hoc handbook subcommittee work (now dissolved) into the standing Policy & Program Subcommittee, formalizing a change that had already occurred without a formal vote.

<b>MOTION</b>	Formally move ad hoc handbook subcommittee work into the Policy & Program Subcommittee
<b>Moved by</b>	Chair Sexton
<b>Seconded by</b>	Member de Neeve
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Yes   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED unanimously</b>

## G. Warrant Review Charged to Budget & Finance Subcommittee

Chair Sexton moved to charge the Budget & Finance Subcommittee with the work of reviewing warrants, including having a subcommittee member serve as the single signatory. This does not change the number of signatories (still one) or restrict other members' access to warrant information. Goals include more substantive review, identification of spending patterns, and reporting out to the full committee.

An addition was made: warrant-related questions from members outside Budget & Finance should be directed to the Budget & Finance Subcommittee Chair.

<b>MOTION</b>	Charge the Budget & Finance Subcommittee with warrant review (including signing) and establish a process for full committee warrant questions
<b>Moved by</b>	Chair Sexton
<b>Seconded by</b>	Mayor Desorgher
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Abstain   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Yes   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED (1 abstention)</b>

## H. Formalize 24-Hour Warrant Signing Waiting Period

Chair Sexton moved to formalize a previously verbally agreed-upon practice: that no member should sign a warrant until 24 hours after it is distributed, to allow all members adequate review time. The motion was expanded to include referral to the Policy Subcommittee for inclusion in both the member handbook and the formal policy manual.

<b>MOTION</b>	Formalize the 24-hour warrant signing waiting period and refer for inclusion in the member handbook and policy manual
<b>Moved by</b>	Chair Sexton
<b>Seconded by</b>	Secretary Webb
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Yes   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED unanimously</b>

## I. Item Tabled (Details to Follow)

Chair Sexton moved to table Item I to the March 11th meeting in order to provide a clearer and more specific rationale.

<b>MOTION</b>	Table agenda Item I: Creation of an Ad-Hoc Long-term Facilities Use Subcommittee to the March 11, 2026 meeting
<b>Moved by</b>	Chair Sexton

<b>Seconded by</b>	Secretary Webb
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Yes   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED unanimously</b>

## J. Policy JA — Field Trip Policy (Out-of-State Day Trips)

Superintendent Joyal raised a concern that the current Policy JA requires school committee approval for all out-of-state field trips, including routine day trips to neighboring states (e.g., Vermont, Connecticut). He noted that day trips to New York City (approved earlier in the meeting) require the same approval as a 30-minute drive to Brattleboro, which is disproportionate.

He recommended revising the policy to distinguish between out-of-state day trips (which should not require committee approval) and overnight or international trips (which should). Members noted the importance of understanding the insurance and liability rationale behind the original policy before revising it.

<b>MOTION</b>	Refer Policy JA (Field Trips) to the Policy & Program Subcommittee for review and revision, specifically regarding out-of-state day trip requirements
<b>Moved by</b>	Chair Sexton
<b>Seconded by</b>	Vice Chair Childs
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Abstain   Webb: Abstain   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED (1 abstention)</b>

## 9. OLD BUSINESS

### A. Commonwealth Virtual School Enrollment Cap

The committee voted on whether to restrict Greenfield Public Schools students' enrollment in Massachusetts virtual schools to the 1% threshold (approximately 12 students), as required when enrollment exceeds that level.

Current enrollment: 17 students (1.32% of 1,285 eligible students). The state-imposed overall cap is 2%.

Discussion summary:

- Those in favor of a cap (1–2%) cited fiscal pressure, the higher per-student cost of virtual schools (\$13,366 vs. \$5,000 for regular school choice), and the upcoming difficult budget year.
- Those opposed noted the small numbers involved, testimonials from families who found the virtual school essential for specific needs (not chosen lightly), and the risk of

inequitably restricting choice for families who may have children in multiple Greenfield schools.

- Member Diteman proposed an amended cap of 1.5% (approximately 19 students). Chair Sexton accepted the amendment. The discussion further evolved to a possible 2% cap.
- Member Goodwin noted that Greenfield originally helped create one of the virtual schools and benefited financially from it. She expressed broader concerns about school choice fiscal impacts on public schools.

<b>MOTION</b>	Restrict Greenfield Public Schools students' enrollment in Commonwealth virtual schools to 1.5% (amended during discussion; final vote taken at approximately 1.5%)
<b>Moved by</b>	Chair Sexton
<b>Seconded by</b>	Mayor Desorgher
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: No   Sexton: Yes   Webb: No   Childs: No   de Neeve: No   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>FAILED (3 Yes, 4 No)</b>

Outcome: Greenfield will not restrict virtual school enrollment for this year. The committee noted it will likely face the same vote again next year if enrollment remains above 1%.

## 10. ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING (MARCH 11, 2026)

The following items were submitted for the March 11th agenda:

### Member de Neeve

- Motion for school committee building tours via yellow bus, co-timed with a meeting, potentially involving food service
- Resolution to support the Foundation Budget Review Commission (draft by Member Diteman)
- Resolution to support House Bill 4361 — Teachers' Retirement (draft by Member Diteman)
- Motion to establish a public-facing location on the school website for warrants

### Member Goodwin

- Presentation on the district's reading program: current curriculum, interventions, student data, and assessment criteria for students below grade level (noted as a long-pending request)
- Request for principals to present to the school committee about their schools (to be split across March and April meetings per Superintendent)

## Vice Chair Childs

- Motion to appoint a liaison to Yellow and the Leadership Conference at the high school to assess needs and possible committee support
- Motion to revise public comment procedures to remove the address requirement in favor of name and affiliation (per OML training recommendation)

## Standing Items

- Transportation presentation (materials to be distributed well in advance)
- Continuation of legislative priorities discussion and Day on the Hill planning (March 30th deadline)
- Executive session update on incoming superintendent contract
- Half of district principals to present school reports

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## 11. ADJOURNMENT

<b>MOTION</b>	Adjourn the meeting
<b>Moved by</b>	Vice Chair Childs
<b>Seconded by</b>	Member Goodwin
<b>Vote</b>	Diteman: Yes   Goodwin: Yes   Sexton: Yes   Webb: Yes   Childs: Yes   de Neeve: Yes   Desorgher: Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>PASSED unanimously</b>

Meeting adjourned at 10:21 PM.

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*These minutes are DRAFT until approved at a subsequent meeting of the Greenfield School Committee.*