

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES: Wednesday, May 29, 2019**  
Greenfield Public Schools Central Office, 195 Federal Street, Greenfield MA  
Approved 07.10.19

**Present:** Katie Caron (KC); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Jordana Harper, Superintendent (JH); Susan Hollins (SH); Glenn Johnson (GJ); Adrienne Nunez (AN);

**Absent:** William Martin (WM); Cameron Ward (CW)

**Also present:** Stephen Nembirkow, Business Manager; other school staff, and citizens.

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

With a quorum present (KC, SE, SH, GJ, AN), Chair Nunez opened the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

### **II. Approval of Minutes**

**KC moved to approve minutes of April 10, 2019. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **III. Public Comment**

Roxanne Wedegartner spoke in support of efforts to adequately fund public schools, the importance of good education, and of challenges in crafting a budget.

### **IV. Business**

#### **A. Audit Request to Commissioner**

**AN moved to request that [DESE] Commissioner Riley would audit Greenfield's net school spending as outlined in the draft letter presented today. SE 2nd.**

Discussion:

SH referenced 2002 agreement between Supt of Schools and Town Manager, recommended going first to City Council, less confrontational.

SE, KC: School Committee has been unable to get information from Mayor. Audit would provide information.

JH: Mayor endorsed this audit request.

GJ called the question. 2nd. Motion to end debate passed.

**Motion passed 4-1 (No: SH).**

#### **B. Action on FY20 Council's Budget**

Council voted appropriation, giving additional \$700K to School Department over Mayor's budget, which leaves School Department \$700K short of School Committee's budget request. JH requested Committee's support of her process to revise budget. Significant task; may involve increased use of revolving funds and additional cuts.

**GJ moved to authorize the Superintendent to work with the administrators to develop a proposal to update the budget so that it matches the appropriations set by the City Council. 2nd KC. Motion passed unanimously.**

#### **C. Legal Memo re: 2/3 vote**

AN shared legal memo from Atty. Hughes (Sullivan, Hayes & Quinn) re: two-thirds vote of Council; supports seeking our own legal opinion.

JH: Councilors didn't have the votes to increase the overall budget so they took \$ from other departments to increase school budget.

SH recommended not spending school funds on attorney but instead request second opinion from City attorney or Mass. Municipal Association.

KC: Different interpretation could have changed vote, given schools more money. Atty. Gordon Quinn (School Committee attorney) already gave his opinion, agrees with Atty. Hughes memo.

**GJ moved to request second opinion from our own lawyers on this question. KC 2nd.**

AN clarified intention to ask Atty. Peter Smith for review.

**Motion passed 3-1-1** (Yes: AN, GJ, SE; No: SH; Abstain: KC).

#### **D. Follow-up on OML training**

Attorney General's office not able to offer training. Support for in-person training to allow Q&A, rather than webinar. School Committee has structural issues [e.g., three-person subcommittees] that pose challenges.

**SE moved to request an organization currently providing training on Open Meeting Law in Massachusetts to sit with us to do an Open Meeting Law training. KC 2nd.**

Discussion: MASC, Mass. Municipal Association. Consensus to invite other School Committees.

**Motion passed.**

AN to follow up.

#### **VIII. Executive Session**

**AN announced intent to move into Executive Session in accordance with 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 (Administrative Assistants).**

AN moved to enter Executive Session. KC 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes –SH, KC, AN, SE, GJ. Entered Executive Session.

Motion to leave Executive Session. 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes –SH, KC, AN, SE, GJ. Returned to public session.

**KC moved to approve the tentative agreement and substantive changes presented today regarding the Administrative Assistants contract with final language for the contract forthcoming. GJ 2nd.**

AN described process for moving approved contract on to City Council, Mayor's office.

GJ called the question. KC 2nd. Motion to end debate passed unanimously.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

#### **IX. Adjournment**

AN moved to adjourn. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Farber  
Recording Secretary

#### **Meeting Documents**

1. Notice of Meeting and Agenda, May 29, 2019
2. Email to Mayor Martin and Mark Smith [City Director of General Administration] from Atty. Brendan Hughes, "Legal Opinion MGL Ch. 44, Section 7 and 'two thirds vote'," May 22, 2019

3. Letter to Jeffrey Riley, Commissioner of Education, DESE, from Greenfield School Committee, May 22, 2019
4. Minutes, Special School Committee meeting, February 25, 2019
5. Notice of Meeting, Budget & Finance Subcommittee, March 7, 2019
6. Email forwarded to School Committee, from Kerry Kilcoyne, Assistant Attorney General, "Training on OML in Greenfield," May 15, 2019