

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES: Wednesday, August 10, 2022**  
Jon Zon Community Center, 35 Pleasant St., Greenfield MA

**Present:** Elizabeth Deneve (ED); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Glenn Johnson-Mussad; (GJM); Kathryn Martini (KM); Amy Proietti (AP); Jean Wall (JW); Roxann Wedegartner (RW)

**Absent:** None

**Also present:** Christine DeBarge, Superintendent; Andy Paquette, TMS, Business Manager; other school staff; citizens and the press.

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

With a quorum present (ED, SE, GJM, KM, AP, JW, RW), Chair Proietti called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

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

**RW moved to approve draft minutes of July 13 & July 25, 2022. KM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **III. Public Comment**

Andra Daunhauer spoke to families' need for improved communication, teachers' need for support from administrators, and asked for accountability to concerns from listening session.

Bram Moreinis advocated for alternatives to Yondr as "top-down control," addressing cell phone use as behavioral addiction needing deeper solutions.

Paul Jablon suggested using Yondr's \$16K for conflict resolution training instead, characterized cell phone use as a symptom, not the direct problem.

Doug Selwyn encouraged seeking community input on cell-phone solutions rather than top-down decision to purchase Yondr.

Ann Childs expressed concerns re: Yondr cost & decision-making without parents' involvement, need for digital health education & data on Yondr efficacy.

### **IV. Reports: Administration**

#### **A. Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning**

Dr. DeBarge summarized Karin Patenaude's report on recent work on professional development re: ELA K-7, Math 5-7, Pre-K curricula; library weeding; launch of new academic year's mentoring for new staff. *(Details in written report)*

#### **B. Superintendent**

Dr. DeBarge reported on upcoming tour of school buildings; social-emotional curriculum; vaccination bus on Aug 23; challenges re: pooled testing; hiring & staff vacancies; NESDEC report erroneously claimed need for roof repair at GHS; student/family handbooks; has purchased Yondr cell phone system; creating online portal for parents' questions re: Yondr. *(Details in written report)*

Discussion:

- Concern re: bias in staff survey on cell phones
- Opportunity for CASEL self-management learning to address cell phone use, digital citizenship.

- DESE will no longer fund Covid testing. Possibility of grant \$. Other strategies continue (e.g., hand-washing, masks available, air purifiers). Frustration that government policies & funding accept certain levels of illness & death.
- Preparations for potential monkey pox infections.
- Building administrators coordinate volunteers. No intent to hire PT volunteer program coordinator – \$26K budget line.
- Support strategies for students struggling with cell phone use, other behavioral challenges.

## **V. Reports: School Committee**

### **A. Chair (AP)**

- School Committee Self-Evaluation: MASC assisting. On agenda for September meeting.
- Tour of Schools for School Committee members: Members to attend walking tour August 23, 4:30pm

### **B. Policy (GJM)**

GJM summarized Policy Subcommittee's work:

- Continuing review of all School Committee policies. Working with MASC to host GPS policies online. Policies reflect values of equity/diversity.
- Developing new policy re: cell phones, with connections to student learning.

### **C. Redistricting Subcommittee (JW)**

JW presented:

- First goal is for School Committee members to tour all school buildings to enable discussions of how to use the buildings.
- Members asked to read NESDEC study (online) for plusses/minuses of each building, recommendations on using each building, especially elementary schools
- Community dialogue by end of October re: changes in elementary schools.
- Options may include changing start time for GMS/GHS; moving 5th grade to elementary schools; moving 8th grade to middle school.

## **VI. Budget Update**

Andy Paquette, TMS Budget Manager, presented monthly reports. Noted that revolving accounts totaled \$3.7million at year's start, now reduced to \$2.3million.

## **VII. Vote to declare surplus items**

**SE moved to declare as surplus the GPS library materials and GPS math resources for algebra, as inventoried & included in the meeting materials. GJM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

## **VIII. Cell phone practices at GMS and GHS for the 2022-2023 school year**

**SE moved: To directly address learning loss among students, and towards improving the social and emotional environment for GPS Middle School and High School students, I move the Greenfield School Committee express full support for the implementation of the Yondr locking cell phone pouches program at both Greenfield Middle School and Greenfield High School. JW 2nd.**

Discussion:

- School Committee's role: Show support for Superintendent's operational decision. Fiduciary responsibility ensuring funds spent effectively.

- Damaged pouches: Company provides free replacements. Handbook says families pay for damaged school equipment, but will not charge families for Yondr pouches unless damage is intentional, habitual.
- Balancing parents' wish for constant contact with children vs. teachers' & students' need for learning environment.
- Students need support to make good choices, manage compulsions.
- Response from public & parents has been minimal, mostly positive.
- Concern re: annual ongoing costs of Yondr program.

**Roll call vote: YES – SE, GJM, AP, JW, RW. NO – ED, KM. Motion passed 5-2.**

### **IX. Superintendent's Evaluation**

Chair Proietti provided a review of the process & materials: Superintendent's goals, as approved by School Committee; Superintendent's supplemental materials (documentation of work toward the goals); the Evaluation Form. Evaluation is limited specifically to the goals. Materials & members' comments are public. Revised evaluations due August 24. Evaluation results to be discussed at September meeting.

### **X. School Committee Strategic Planning Service Procurement**

**JW moved: As TMS, Inc. was recommended by the City of Greenfield Procurement Officer to be the responsive and responsible bidder with the lowest submitted price, I move the Greenfield School Committee contract with TMS for Strategic Planning services as outlined in the RFP. SE 2nd.**

**YES – SE, KM, AP, JW, RW; NO – GJM; Abstain – ED. Motion passed 5-1-1.**

### **XI. New business**

MASC annual conference: funds available for members to attend. ED interested, will work with Dr. DeBarge to arrange.

Public forums previously envisioned by School Committee are on hold. Low response to online survey. GPS lawyer advised against due to possibility of violating confidentiality of students & staff. AP encouraged ED to meet with GPS attorney, Superintendent & Chair if she wants to pursue public forums.

### **XII. Adjournment**

SE moved to adjourn. KM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Farber  
Recording Secretary

### **Meeting Materials**

1. Agenda: August 10, 2022
2. Draft minutes: July 13 and July 25, 2022
3. Assistant Superintendent Update, August 10, 2022
4. Financial Reports, July 29, 2022
5. GHS Math Books inventory

6. Library Weeding Log, Federal Street School, updated August 3 2022
7. Letter from NESDEC to Dr. DeBarge, August 4 2022, re: high school roof
8. Email from Laura Phelps to Dr. DeBarge, August 9, 2022, re: Recommendation for GPS Strategic Planning Service (TMS)
9. GPS staff comments re: Yondr cell phone pouches