

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: Wednesday, January 11, 2023
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; Karin Patenaude, Assistant Superintendent; other school staff, citizens & the press.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (ED, SE, GJM, KM, AP, JW, RW), Susan Eckstrom, as ranking member, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ED moved to change the agenda to allow public comment to be first and to allow Susan Eckstrom to continue to facilitate the meeting during public comment. GJM 2nd.

Discussion: Precedents of Greenfield School Committee & City Council, other towns' school committees & other governing bodies. Guidance from School Committee policy. Principle of public participation. SE called the question. Motion to end debate passed 5-0-2 (Abstain: SE, AP).

Motion to move public comment failed 3-0-4 (Yes: ED, GJM, KM; Abstain: SE, AP, JW, RW).

II. Election of Officers

- Election of Chair

Dr. DeBarge opened nominations for School Committee Chair.

ED nominated Glenn Johnson-Mussad. KM 2nd.

SE nominated Amy Proietti. JW 2nd.

Vote for Glenn Johnson-Mussad: Yes: ED, GJM, KM. No: SE, AP, JW. Abstain: RW. Tie 3-3-1.

Vote for Amy Proietti: Yes: SE, AP, JW. No: ED, GJM, KM. Abstain: RW. Tie 3-3-1.

2nd vote:

Vote for Glenn Johnson-Mussad: Yes: ED, GJM, KM. No: SE, AP, JW, RW. Failed 3-4.

Vote for Amy Proietti: Yes: SE, AP, JW, RW. No: ED, GJM, KM. **Proietti elected 4-3.**

AP assumed leadership of the meeting.

- Election of Vice-Chair

JW nominated Kathryn Martini as Vice-Chair. SE 2nd. Vote – Yes: ED, SE, GJM, AP, JW, RW. Abstain KM). **Martini elected 6-0-1.**

- Election of Secretary

JW nominated Susan Eckstrom. AP 2nd. Vote –Yes: ED, KM, AP, JW, RW. Abstain: GJM, SE.

Eckstrom elected 5-0-2.

III. Approval of Minutes

SE moved to approve draft minutes of December 14, 2022. JW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

None

V. Reports

A. Student Representatives

S.T. and B.W. reported on Student Council and club activities and community service projects at GHS. Students are preparing for next week's midterms. All bathrooms except one set are still closed.

B. Administration Reports

1. Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

Karin Patenaude summarized recent work including high school math curriculum; staff PD; AEL library; grants; Title I activities. *(Details in written report.)*

2. Superintendent

Dr. DeBarge described recent work with staffing; Re-envisioning Our School Facilities; strategic planning; FY24 budget preparations, including public hearing planned for March 2; student enrollment data; incident data showing significant improvements in student behavior at GHS, GMS. *(Details in written report.)*

Discussion:

- Request for periodic reports on student data from Superintendent. Are discipline incidents data prior to 2021 available?
- Request for additional information re: supports for student behavior.
- Family survey: Will be quantitative, not qualitative, to provide data for analysis; opportunity for focus group/interview. Strategies to increase participation.
- Request for data on student academic competencies.
- Is Re-envisioning Our School Facilities information available in Spanish, other languages?
- Concerns re: decrease in enrollment: Harms of School Choice, especially for rural school districts. Need collaboration with nearby districts. Effect of Pioneer & Gill-Montague merging? Effect of tech school? Census data predicts continuing reduction in Greenfield's population, school enrollment.

C. School Committee Reports

1. Chair (AP)

AP will provide Subcommittee assignments by next School Committee meeting. Concerns re: officer election policy should go to Policy Subcommittee.

2. Budget Subcommittee (SE)

Need to schedule meetings re: 2024 budget preparations.

3. City School Construction (AP)

Continuing tour of City buildings, see need to improve document storage.

4. Collaborative for Educational Services (ED) met to elect officers.

D. Budget Update

Dr. DeBarge reported on FY23 budget highlights, including:

- Budget now has positive balance.

- Circuit-breaker fund \$1.3 million fully accounted for.
- School Choice: Received \$300K from DESE, less than expected \$400K in GPS budget. Will offset lack with grant funds.
- Transportation: Projected deficit of \$500K resolved, using \$390K from special education revolving fund + \$100K from transportation revolving account.
- Acknowledge best practice to maintain 1 year's revenue in reserve. Currently have no reserves.

VI. Business

A. Superintendent's Goals

Dr. DeBarge presented goals & benchmarks.

JW moved to approve the Superintendent's Goals for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 academic years, as presented, with an interim evaluation in June 2023. SE 2nd.

Discussion:

- Committee had agreed on need for improved Superintendent evaluation tool. Request to move ahead with finding replacement tool.
- Last year's goals were more operational. This year's goals are more leadership-based & thus broader.
- Timeline: Conclude at end of academic year 2022-23 or with two-year goals 2023-24.

AP's search for better evaluation tool will continue. Other tools located so far are similarly lacking. No guidelines from state. We may prefer to create our own tool.

Request discussion, opportunity to deliberate how to create our own; put on February's agenda. Request for definition of terms, such as "best practices."

Motion passed unanimously.

B. Vote to restrict enrollment in Commonwealth Virtual Schools

GPS does not currently cap # of students able to enroll in Commonwealth Virtual Schools. 1.29% of our students are enrolled (19 students).

GJM moved to restrict the enrollment of Greenfield Public Schools students in the Commonwealth Virtual Schools at 1%. SE 2nd.

Discussion:

- Limit would be consistent with School Committee's opposition to School Choice.
- Students currently enrolled would not be affected by cap; could stay enrolled in virtual school.
- Need more information & data: Is there a wait list? Parents may need virtual school. Invite public comment from parents. How many Greenfield virtual school students will graduate soon?
- DESE's decision deadline: March 1.

ED moved to table until next meeting. RW 2nd. Motion to table passed 6-1 (No: GJM).

C. Donations: Jennison Family Musical Instruments, J.B. Hunt Transport

RW moved to consider both donations together as consent items. ED 2nd. Motion passed.

JW moved that the School Committee accept the donation of musical instruments from the Jennison Family, and that the School Committee accept the donation of gift cards and branded items from JB Hunt Transport for Ms. Scagel and her Kindergarten class at Four Corners School, with gratitude. GJM 2nd. Motion passed 6-0 (KM temporarily absent).

VII. Requests for New Agenda Items

Presentation from SE of year-long agenda (e.g., Budget, Supt. evaluation) at February meeting

VIII. Executive session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 21(a) (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; (7): to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements (approval of executive session minutes from December 14, 2022 meeting). The committee will not return to Open Session.

JW moved to enter Executive Session. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Entered Executive Session at 8:54 p.m.

KM moved to adjourn public session. ED 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

IX. Adjournment

RW moved to adjourn. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m. out of executive session.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary

Meeting Materials

1. Agenda: January 11, 2023
2. Draft minutes: December 14, 2022
3. Superintendent's Update, January 11, 2023
4. Assistant Superintendent Update, January 11, 2023
5. Financial Reports, January 4, 2023
6. Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School Enrollment Restrictions
7. Email from J.B. Hunt Transportation, Nov. 17, 2022, re: Adopt-a-Class Winner
8. Letter from Neal Jennison, January 4, 2023, re: donation of musical instruments
9. 2022-2023 Superintendent Evaluation Goals & Indicators
10. January 2023 School Newsletters
11. Policy BDA School Committee Organizational Meeting