

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: Wednesday, February 13, 2019**
John Zon Community Center, 35 Pleasant Street, Greenfield MA
Approved 03.13.19

Present: Don Alexander (DA); Katie Caron (KC); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Jordana Harper, Superintendent (JH); Susan Hollins (SH); William Martin (WM); Adrienne Nunez (AN); Cameron Ward (CW)

Absent: None

Also present: Erin Donnally Drake, parent; Matt Holloway, Director of Pupil Services; Stephen Nembirkow, Business Manager; other school staff and citizens.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (DA, KC, SE, SH, WM, AN, CW), Chair Nunez opened the meeting at 6:31 p.m. Chair Nunez noted new officers: Vice-Chair Katie Caron, Secretary Susan Eckstrom.

II. Approval of Minutes

KC moved to approve minutes of January 9, 2019. 2nd DA. Motion passed 6-0-1 (CW abstain).

III. Public Comment

Erin Donnally Drake, Newton School parent, shared concerns re: disrepair of Newton's basketball court, as safety issue and detrimental to Playworks curriculum and students' outdoor play. School received \$5K from Big Y to repair. Urged School Committee support to secure additional funding required.

IV. Reports

A. Student Representatives

Morghan Blanchard reported on events at GHS, including winter sports, club activities, and special academic projects, including Galileo Trial.

B. Chair (AN)

- AN noted that Supt's day started at 3 am with snow cancellation.
- Toured packet materials, including documents related to upcoming March agenda:
 - Audits
 - Documents related to cafeteria workers and Unit C contracts
 - DESE civics requirements to be implemented next year
 - Open Meeting Law information
 - Code of Ethics
 - Superintendent's goals
 - Ruling that Committee member who is not a Subcommittee member is to be treated like a member of the public at that Subcommittee's meetings
- Committee member annual stipend \$2,000,; can be reduced based on attendance (missing 3+ meetings)
- Phone chain for emergency communication
- Members to check school email at least every 3 days
- SE's update re: gpsk12 website at March meeting
- Mayor is reviewing contract for GMS to use neighboring church's parking lot
- Cafeteria Workers contract going to Town Council

C. Superintendent (JH)

JH provided overview of packet, including:

- Financial reports
- Media coverage of Newton School's Breakfast in the Classroom program; AEL's new principal; ice hockey team's successful season
- Kindergarten registration for Class of 2032
- Big Y donated \$5K to support free school store for GHS students in need (hygiene supplies)
- \$2,045 grant from MA Emergency Impact Aid Assistance for Homeless Children and Youth
- School newsletters
- Next week is February vacation
- Complex, difficult decisions on school cancellations. DPW's concern of icy or uncleared road conditions necessitated school cancellation today rather than 2-hour delay.

Discussion:

Grants (Big Y, Homeless) for program expenses, not salaries

Staffing: 3 new full-time hires; GMS special ed teacher is new position; other 2 fill vacant positions

→ Request for update from Food Services Director re: GHS new school breakfast program

SH moved that the Budget Subcommittee review the finance report on revolving funds received tonight. WM 2nd. Motion passed 5-2.

Nembirkow explained that large amount of revolving funds being applied to regular budget, per FY19 budget plan. Out of District Tuition has negative balance.

Transportation contract discussions to be in executive session.

→ AN to add to upcoming meeting agenda.

D. Subcommittees

1. Health, Safety & Facilities (KC) – No report

2. Personnel & Negotiations (DA) – No report

3. Policy & Program (DA)

Productive review of policies. Completed A and D. Currently working on Section B.

Tonight's agenda includes first reading of 13 Section A policies and 18 Section D policies.

4. Budget & Finance (CW)

Work continues on 2020 Budget. Budget hearing Feb. 25.

Committee Representatives

5. Collaborative for Educational Services (SE) – No report

AN urged GPS collaboration with CES.

6. Town Planning and Construction Committee (SH)

Committee reviews capital requests. School Department capital requests, with expanded supportive documents, on agenda for Feb. 21.

V. Business

A. 2019-2020 School Year Calendar

KC moved to approve the FY20 School Calendar. DA 2nd.

JH requested to move to Feb. 25 special meeting agenda to allow response to GEA comments received Feb. 11.

Motion withdrawn.

B. FY20 Budget Update

Public Hearing on budget: Feb. 25. Will include comprehensive budget presentation.

Special School Committee meeting for final vote on F20 budget: March 7.

Announcement in *Recorder* summarizes current and proposed budgets.

JH summarized:

- Budget Subcommittee meeting frequently: developing budget, meeting with school and program leaders. Concerns re: meeting charter deadline.
- Current draft: \$300K increase in local funding; uses anticipated \$1.1million increase in state aid
- Green River alternative education program is included, pared back to 1 teacher plus 2 staff.
- Increases are mandated:
 - Transportation, including out of district;
 - Contractual obligations (staff step increases)
 - Special Education, including out of district costs; other programs are raising their fees
- Send her questions so that she can cover in Feb. 25 presentation.

WM moved that the School Committee instruct the Superintendent and Business Manager to provide the comprehensive draft budget to School Committee members tomorrow. SH 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

SH moved that if and when Budget Subcommittee requests information, we can have it before the meeting. WM 2nd.

Discussion:

JH: Difficult to respond to detailed questions on short notice (48 hours before mtg). Preparing additional reports means staff lacks time to complete other work

AN: Urged Subcommittee not to get stuck in details or make non-essential requests that take staff time.

Motion passed 3-2-2.

[5-minute recess]

Supt. Harper left the meeting at 7:51.

WM: \$1.1 million Chapter 70 given to City. Full amount not necessarily going to School Department; may be used for City's expenses for schools (health insurance, pension, building maintenance and energy, etc.).

Nembirkow: Revolving funds \$900K shortfall to be covered by local contribution, now or later.

→ WM requested beginning and ending (June 30) balance of revolving funds.

SH: concern not to repeat 2007-2008 financial situation. Increases are required. Seeking places to decrease.

C. Policy Section A First Reading

AN reviewed Policy BGB Policy Adoption.

Consensus to review changes only, not read aloud all proposed policies.

DA summarized changes to revised policies, as listed in Policy Subcommittee minutes of No. 28, 2018.

Discussion:

- ACA on hold, waiting for legal review.
- ACAB – Questioned specific listing of Supt. Harper as Grievance Officer
- AD – Concerns re: vague wording: “in today’s society,” “challenges of rapidly changing world.”
- Policies re: marijuana. ADC: Is marijuana included with tobacco policy; request to clarify with MASC. Is marijuana no longer included in policies addressing controlled substances? What about medically prescribed marijuana?
- ADDA – Recommend separating policy from procedure. Policy is first paragraph; move rest to ADDA-R to allow procedural changes; e.g., cost of fingerprinting.
- ADF – Federal requirement for length of physical education? If so, need to include in policy?
- AE – Is responsibility shared by School Committee, Superintendent and staff? Recommend shortening policy: “The School Committee governs the district with a commitment to accomplishment. We focus on accountability in all programs.”

AN referred to Policy Subcommittee for review before returning for 2nd reading: ADDA series, ACAB, ACA, ACE, ADC, AD, ADF, AE.

D. Policy Section D First Reading

SE moved to table Policy Section D First Reading. WM 2nd. Motion to table passed unanimously.

E. Subcommittee Configurations & Committee Representatives

AN recommended no changes.

Goals & Strategic Plan Subcommittee has not met. → AN will follow up, add to April agenda.

KC moved to support no changes to Subcommittee configuration. DA 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

AN moved that SE continue to serve as representative to Collaborative with DA as alternate, and SH continue as School Committee Representative to City’s Planning & Construction Committee. KC 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

F. Vote on Time Limitations of Future Meetings

AN moved that future meetings end at 10:00 pm unless requested to continue by majority vote and all items be tabled to next regular meeting unless another time is specified. SE 2nd. Support for shorter meetings twice a month.

Motion passed 6-1.

G. Vote for Permission to Seek Legal Guidance

AN moved that the Committee request legal services from Atty. Gordon Quinn regarding:

- **Open Meeting Law**
- **School Committee impact on work environment**
- **Input on Committee authority over issues covered by City insurance**
- **School Committee process and role related to FMLA**

DA 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

SH moved to request clarification [from Atty. Quinn]:

- **What is difference between official and unofficial communication regarding Policy BHC? (School Committee – Staff Communication; e.g., saying “thank you” or checking the time of a game)**

- **What is reasonable practice for accommodations for members who don't have printers for meeting packet?**
- **Subcommittee function: Must Subcommittee cancel meetings if Superintendent can't attend?**
- **Who is technically responsible for the content of Subcommittee minutes?**

WM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

H. Request for Agenda Items

AN requested new practice, for members to put forward an agenda request as a motion to ensure majority of Committee is behind adding the topic for deliberation.

WM moved to consider at future meeting Response to Public Comment. KC 2nd. Motion passed 6-1.

WM moved to pass onto Policy Subcommittee and report back with any recommendation Policy EBCD: Emergency Cancellations. KC 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

AN moved that we do not create a Shared (digital) Folder. WM 2nd. Concerns re: inadvertently violating Open Meeting Law. **Motion passed unanimously.**

SH moved that School Committee add School Committee District Goals for 2019 to an upcoming agenda. KC 2nd. Superintendent goals, strategic plan, and School Committee goals are not the same things. **Motion passed unanimously.**

SE moved to hear more about individual programs under the umbrella of special education services in the district. KC 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. New Business

A. High School Telephone System

WM moved that we get a report at next School Committee meeting to clarify telephonics communication system with GHS as it relates to callers from city, parents, residents or others with a human contact at the high school. CW 2nd.

WM: Concern that parents can't reach a person. Wants to know how telephone system works. Brief verbal report from technology director.

Motion passed unanimously.

B. School Committee Meeting Location

AN moved to request the Superintendent to investigate costs related to using the John Zon space and the high school for School Committee meetings. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Executive Session

AN announced intent to move into Executive Session in accordance with MGL c 30A, §21, (3) & (10): 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 (Unit A, Unit B, and Administrative Assistants; general/potential litigation).

WM moved to enter Executive Session. DA 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes – DA, KC, SE, SH, AN, WM, CW. Moved into executive session at 9:37 p.m.

KC moved to leave Executive Session. AN 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SH, AN, CW. Returned to public session at 11:20 p.m.

IX. Adjournment

AN moved to adjourn. CW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary

Meeting Documents

1. Agenda and Timed Agenda February 13, 2019
2. Draft minutes: January 9, 2018
3. Chapter 56, Article VII: Stipend for School Board Members and Town Councilors
4. "Question regarding School Committee Chairperson and Communication/Access to School Counsel," from Atty. Gordon Quinn to Adrienne Nunez, Jan. 3, 2019
5. Policy BEDH, Public Participation at School Committee Meetings
6. Subcommittee and Committee Minutes:
 - a. Policy Subcommittee, Nov. 28, 2018
 - b. Planning & Construction Committee, Oct. 16, 2018
7. Superintendent's Report, Feb. 8, 2019
 - a. Media Coverage
 - b. Superintendent's Social Media Posts
 - c. Gpsk12.org website materials
 - d. Staffing Report
 - e. Letter from Big Y, \$5,000 donation to GHS, Jan. 31, 2019
 - f. Emergency Impact Aid Assistance for Homeless Children and Youth, \$2,045 grant, Jan. 21, 2019
 - g. DESE re: school breakfast, Jan. 18, 2019
 - h. School newsletters
8. Financial Reports & Business Manager's Forecast, Steve Nembirkow, Feb. 8, 2019
9. Draft 2019-2020 GPS Calendar
10. Policies for First Reading: Section A Foundations and Basic Commitments
 - AA School District Legal Status
 - AB The People and Their School District
 - AC Nondiscrimination
 - ACA Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex or Gender Identity
 - ACAB Sexual Harassment
 - ACE Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability
 - AD Vision and Mission
 - ADC Tobacco Products o School Premises Prohibited
 - ADDA Background Checks
 - ADDA-R DCJIS Model CORI Policy
 - ADDA-E Fingerprint Based CHRI Checks

- ADF School District Wellness Program
- AE Commitment to Accomplishment

11. Policies for First Reading: Section D, Fiscal Management

- DA Fiscal Management Goals
- DB Budget
- DBC Budget Deadlines and Schedules
- DBD Budget Planning
- DBG Budget Adoption
- DBJ Budget Transfer Authority
- DD Funding Proposals and Applications
- DGA Approval of School Budget Payroll
- DH Bonded Employees and Officers
- DI Fiscal Accounting and Reporting
- DIE Audits
- DJ Purchasing
- DJA Purchasing Authority
- DJB Capital Improvement Planning (CIP)
- DJE Procurement Requirements
- DJG Vendor Relations
- DK Payment Procedures
- DKC Expense Reimbursements

12. Policies to support discussion:

- EBCD Emergency Closings
- GBD (BHC) School Committee – Staff Communications
- BEDH Public Participation at School Committee Meetings
- BGB Policy Adoption

13. Code of Ethics Policy / MASC Code of Ethics

14. Superintendent’s Performance Goals

15. Open Meeting Law:

- Open Meeting Law Guide
- Hanne Rush, Assistant Attorney General, to Adrienne Nunez, Jan. 11, 2019
- Open Meeting Law Complaint, Marlborough City Council, Jan. 24, 2012

16. Audits

17. History, Social Science and Civics Education in Massachusetts