

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING  
Monday, March 1, 2021  
Greenfield MA**

*Note: This meeting was held fully remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, §20.*

**Present:** Katie Caron (KC); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Susan Hollins (SH); Glenn Johnson-Mussad (GJ); Amy Proietti (AP); Jean Wall (JW)

**Absent:** Roxann Wedegartner (RW)

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

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

With a quorum present (KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP, JW), Chair Proietti called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

### **II. Public Comment**

Susan Voss, IA at AEL and Unit C GEA rep, thanked Head Nurse Pam Owen & principals for their work to install air purifiers to improve safety in schools.

### **III. FY22 Budget Public Hearing**

SE moved to open the GPS FY22 Budget Public Hearing. GJ 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

AP opened public comment on the budget. No comments.

Interim Superintendent Houle provided budget presentation (included in meeting materials).

**JW moved to approve the FY22 Budget as presented. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

Discussion:

- Overall FY22 proposed budget reflects 3.83% increase over prior year. 1.5% increase is intractable (contractual obligations)
- Andy Paquette, TMS, provided additional details and overview of Budget & Finance Subcommittee's work: Newly released ESSER II funding not yet included in budget. Transportation expenses are "worst case" scenario. Anticipate additional funding sources overall. Subcommittee members' priorities include staffing district curriculum office. Technology requests will go to City Capital Planning Committee but approval uncertain.
- Necessity for elementary arts teachers – allow contractually required open period for elementary teachers – in addition to educational benefits of arts
- Request for clarification whether positions are new vs. bringing back previously unfilled positions.
- Request for analysis of staffing for students attending in-person vs remote
- Support for elementary libraries resources and staff
- Anticipated revenue from GPS transportation services provided to other districts (approx. \$200K in FY20 budget) uncertain due to pandemic. Transportation budget will evolve.
- This is a needs-based budget. Meaning of level-services budget is unclear: level services reflecting FY20 in-person learning vs. unique FY21 remote learning.
- Potential for proposed federal stimulus funding to support schools
- Consider cooperative structure between GPS central office & city staffing
- Suggestion to review early childhood funding
- ESSER II: Strategic to begin discussion now of how to use anticipated \$1-\$1.5million funding

- Request for line item for initiatives related to annual district goals

**Motion passed unanimously.**

GJ moved to close the GPS FY22 Budget Public Hearing. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

**IV. Athletics Fall 2021 Proposal**

Mike Kuchieski, GSP Athletic Director, reported on successful winter sports season, importance of sports for students' well-being.

MIAA Fall I sports – football, soccer, volleyball, cheering – were permitted as practice-only for Sept.-Nov. Current Fall II proposal is to allow these sports to move to competition. MIAA Fall II season begins today through April 23.

Coach Kuchieski described safety protocols at games.

- Playing schools only in “Franklin County bubble.”
- No fans for indoor games. Will propose two fans (family) per player allowed for outdoor games.
- Livestream was successful – many thanks to GCTV.
- Transportation guidelines eased (2 students per seat, windows down)
- Coaches, staff are Covid-trained and certified.

Discussion:

Skate park opening in Greenfield. Are there sports in demand that we don't offer? Tried crew, swimming, but insufficient interest.

Golf season completed as Fall I sport.

Support for Greenfield sports to continue as fee-free. Acknowledged importance of funding from Greenfield Education Foundation.

No Covid cases caused by athletics.

**SH moved to approve the FALL II sports season as presented. GJ 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

**V. District Map**

GJ moved to table the "District Map" discussion for the March 10 School Committee meeting. SH 2nd.

Seeking community members to join District Map Advisory Committee. Letters of interest: SchoolCom@gpsk12.org.

Motion to table passed unanimously (AP temporarily absent).

**VI. In-Person Learning**

Judy Houle, Interim Superintendent, provided update: DESE Commissioner announced goal to return students to full-time in-person instruction. Elementary students to begin April 5.

Hybrid/remote learning hours will no longer count toward hours of instruction.

Allen Himmelberger, TMS, is coordinating preparations with GPS nursing staff and Pupil Services Director Janet Dickinson.

State will pay for pooled testing through April 16; option to continue with GPS funding. Testing training this week.

City will provide vaccinations to all staff within 3 weeks.

Transportation & school capacity limits have been removed.

DESE timeline calls for elementary, then middle school students. Discussion of GHS safe re-opening underway.

Family surveys this week: choose remote or in-person, need for transportation.

Discussion:

- Concerns re: state's rapid timeline, with limited options
- MCAS still on schedule. Canceling would require federal, state changes.
- Updates, in-depth discussion to continue at School Committee's regular March meeting.

## **VII. Superintendent Search Update**

Jean Wall, Chair of Search Committee, reported:

- 15 members selected, out of 28+ letters of interest; she will email decisions to all tomorrow.
- Committee includes wide representation. Anyone interested can attend public meetings, offer public comment. Process: Invite candidates; interview in executive session; refer 2-3 finalists to School Committee for public interviews, selection.
- With TMS providing interim leadership, we have time to time to find, hire the right person.

AP presented proposal from Mass. Association of School Committees (MASC) to manage recruitment, process, and selection.

**GJ moved to approve the execution of the contract presented from MASC to assist with the Superintendent Search Process. JW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.**

## **VIII. Adjournment**

SE moved to adjourn. GJ 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Farber  
Recording Secretary

## **Meeting Materials**

1. MIAA, DESE proposal for change athletics to four seasons for 2020-21, Memo from Mike Kuchieski, GPS Athletic Director, Feb. 24, 2021, with supporting documents
2. Superintendent Search Information & Cost Proposal, submitted by MASC, Oct. 22, 2020
3. FY22 GPS Draft Budget
4. FY22 GPS Budget Presentation