

Gardner School Committee

Regular Meeting – January 4, 2022

City Council Chambers, 95 Pleasant Street, Gardner, Massachusetts

Members present: Mayor Michael Nicholson, Chairperson
Jennifer Pelavin, Vice Chairperson
John LaFreniere, Finance Officer
Rachel Cormier, Secretary
Anne Hurst
Shannon Leighton
Robert Swartz

School Personnel present: Dr. Mark J. Pellegrino, Superintendent
Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary
Mark Hawke, Director of Finance and Operations
Dr. Catherine A. Goguen, Chief Academic Officer
Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications, & Compliance Manager
Gino DiVito, Student Representative to the School Committee

Call to Order

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7 00 pm. The meeting opened with a roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was broadcast live on Channel 8 (Gardner Educational Television Station).

Mayor Nicholson stated that any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the Chair as to the number, placement, and operations of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. No one requested permission to record the meeting.

Open Time for General Public

There was no one from the General Public present at the meeting.

Recognitions by the Superintendent

Dr. Pellegrino recognized Ms. Sherry Gelinas, Assistant Principal GHS, and all the personnel who helped to obtain and distribute the required Covid self-tests in time for school reopening. He recognized Mrs. Rebecca McCaffrey, School Nurse Leader, and her staff for organizing the Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic today at the Middle School.

Reorganization of Committee – Officers

• **Vice Chair**

Mr. LaFreniere nominated Mrs. Pelavin to serve as Vice Chair of the Gardner School Committee for the ensuing year.

Seconded by Mrs. Hurst.

Mayor Nicholson asked three times if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none.

Mr. LaFreniere moved that nominations for Vice Chair be closed.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Mayor Nicholson took a roll call vote, as required, on the nomination of Mrs. Pelavin.

- Mrs. Cormier Mrs. Pelavin
- Mrs. Hurst Mrs. Pelavin
- Mr. LaFreniere Mrs. Pelavin
- Mrs. Leighton Mrs. Pelavin
- Mrs. Pelavin Mrs. Pelavin
- Mr. Swartz Mrs. Pelavin.

Count – 6 in favor of Mrs. Pelavin to serve as Vice Chair.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

• **Finance Officer**

Mrs. Pelavin nominated Mr. LaFreniere to serve as Finance Officer of the Gardner School Committee for the ensuing year.

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Mayor Nicholson asked three times if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none.

Mrs. Pelavin moved that nominations for Finance Officer be closed.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Mayor Nicholson took a roll call vote, as required, on the nomination of Mr. LaFreniere.

- Mrs. Cormier Mr. LaFreniere
- Mrs. Hurst Mr. LaFreniere
- Mr. LaFreniere Mr. LaFreniere
- Mrs. Leighton Mr. LaFreniere
- Mrs. Pelavin Mr. LaFreniere
- Mr. Swartz Mr. LaFreniere.

Count – 6 in favor of Mr. LaFreniere to serve as Finance Officer.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

- Alternate Finance Officers

Mrs. Pelavin nominated Mr. Swartz to serve as an Alternate Finance Officer of the Gardner School Committee for the ensuing year.

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Mr. LaFreniere nominated Mrs. Pelavin to serve as an Alternate Finance Officer of the Gardner School Committee for the ensuing year.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Mayor Nicholson asked three times if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none.

Mr. LaFreniere moved that nominations for Alternate Finance Officers be closed.

Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Mayor Nicholson took a roll call vote, as required, on the nominations of Mr. Swartz and Mrs. Pelavin.

- Mrs. Cormier Mr. Swartz and Mrs. Pelavin
- Mrs. Hurst Mr. Swartz and Mrs. Pelavin
- Mr. LaFreniere Mr. Swartz and Mrs. Pelavin
- Mrs. Leighton Mr. Swartz and Mrs. Pelavin
- Mrs. Pelavin Mr. Swartz and Mrs. Pelavin
- Mr. Swartz Mr. Swartz and Mrs. Pelavin

Count – 6 in favor of Mr. Swartz and Mrs. Pelavin serving as Alternate Finance Officers.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

- Secretary

Mrs. Pelavin nominated Mrs. Cormier to serve as Secretary of the Gardner School Committee for the ensuing year.

Seconded by Mrs. Hurst.

Mayor Nicholson asked three times if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none.

Mr. LaFreniere moved that nominations for Secretary be closed.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Mayor Nicholson took a roll call vote, as required, on the nomination of Mrs. Cormier.

- Mrs. Cormier Mrs. Cormier
- Mrs. Hurst Mrs. Cormier
- Mr. LaFreniere Mrs. Cormier
- Mrs. Leighton Mrs. Cormier
- Mrs. Pelavin Mrs. Cormier
- Mr. Swartz Mrs. Cormier

Count – 6 in favor of Mrs. Cormier serving as Secretary.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Consent Agenda

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- **Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of December 13, 2021 (Scribner error on page 3 – Concert date – December 21, 2021) as recommended by the School Committee Chairperson**
- **Approval of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**
 - **Warrant #22-24 dated 12/09/21 in the amount of \$176,828.05**
 - **Warrant #22-25 dated 12/16/21 in the amount of \$202,852.83**
 - **Warrant #22-26 dated 12/23/21 in the amount of \$312,398.50**
 - **Warrant #22-27 dated 12/30/21 in the amount of \$3,557,279.79**

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities Subcommittee

Mr. Swartz, Chairperson, said that the Facilities Subcommittee met on December 21, 2021. Minutes of the meeting were presented. The Subcommittee began rotation visits of all school buildings in the district with this meeting at Gardner High School. The next meeting will be held at Gardner Middle School.

Mr. Anderson, Facilities Director, informed the Subcommittee that the new exterior lights have been installed at GHS and ten new projectors and two large screen televisions are being installed at GMS. Facilities did the work and saved the district funds over private contractor quotes.

The Subcommittee toured GHS and

- Noted the cleanliness of the building
- Viewed the main gymnasium and the work that has been done
- Viewed the ongoing work in the Auditorium

Policy Subcommittee

Mrs. Hurst, Chairperson, reported that the Policy Subcommittee met on December 16, 2021. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The following policies were reviewed and determined that no changes were required. They will be updated as “Reviewed December 2021”.

- Policy DBC Budget Deadlines and Schedules
- Policy DBD Budget Planning
- Policy DBG Budget Adoption Procedures

- Policy DBJ Budget Transfer Authority
- Policy DGA Authorized Signatures
- Policy DH Bonded Employees and Officers
- Policy DI Fiscal Accounting and Reporting
- Policy DJA Purchasing Authority
- Policy DJE Bidding Requirements
- Policy DK Payment Procedures
- Policy DKC Expenses/Expense Reimbursements

Several other policies were reviewed and the Subcommittee voted to send them to the February full School Committee meeting for a first reading.

STUDENT ADVISORY MEMBER

Gino DiVito, GHS Student Representative to the School Committee, reported on GHS student activities. The winter sports season is underway – hockey and basketball teams are busy.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #3355 – COVID-19 Update

Dr. Pellegrino reported that 270 self-test kits and a supply of masks were picked up from the State distribution center and distributed to staff prior to school reopening after the holidays. Presently there are 75 cases in the District – 14 staff and 61 students. Mrs. Rebecca McCaffrey, School Nurse Leader, and the Safety Committee are following all protocols to keep everyone safe.

Item #3356 - Curriculum Coordinator's Update

The Curriculum Coordinator's Update was included in the members' packets. Dr. Goguen was present to answer questions.

Item #3357 – Grants Administrator's Update

The Grants, Communications & Compliance Update was included in the members' packets. Mrs. Dunn was present to answer questions.

Item #3358 – Grants Administrator's Update

The Special Education Update was included in the members' packets. Ms. Joyce West was not present this evening.

Item #3359 – SEPAC Update

Mrs. Hurst reported that the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is still looking for a someone to volunteer to replace the present Chair who must retire at the end of the school year as her child will graduate.

Item #3360– MSBA – New Building Project

Dr. Pellegrino reported that construction on the new school building continues and that the project is on time and on budget.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Pellegrino thanked everyone who helped at the Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic today. Governor Baker and other dignitaries were present and acknowledged that it was very successful. School reopening after the holiday break was great and everything in the schools is going well.

FINAL COMMENTS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mrs. Leighton is happy to be a member of the School Committee. She thanked Mrs. Pelavin and Mrs. Hurst for helping her get started in her new position.

Mrs. Hurst volunteered at the Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic today and commented that the students were impressed and excited about the many dignitaries present.

Mrs. Pelavin wished everyone a Happy New Year. She volunteered at the Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic today and thanked Mrs. McCaffrey, her staff, and all who helped.

Gino DiVito wished everyone a Happy New Year and welcomed Mrs. Leighton.

Mr. Swartz welcomed Mrs. Leighton. Today's Clinic was well run thanks to Mrs. McCaffrey and her staff. He was amazed at the number of people who came for shots and good to see Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito and other state officials who were present.

Mr. LaFreniere wished everyone a Happy New Year and welcomed Mrs. Leighton to the Committee. He thanked Mrs. McCaffrey and her staff for their work at the Clinic today

Mrs. Cormier welcomed Mrs. Leighton and assured her that all members are here for a common goal. She had a great experience helping at the Clinic today.

Mayor Nicholson spoke about the Covid-19 Vaccine Clinic – over 300 students were vaccinated today at the Middle School. He mentioned all the officials who showed up and supported our students. The Inauguration Ceremony for City Councilors and School Committee members will be held in Perry Auditorium on Thursday evening and the Mayor invited everyone in the community to attend.

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ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LaFreniere moved to adjourn.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Vote – so voted.

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm.

Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary

Rachel A. Cormier, Secretary