

# **Gardner School Committee**

**Regular Meeting – February 13, 2023**

**City Council Chambers, 95 Pleasant Street, Gardner, Massachusetts**

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

School Personnel present: Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent  
Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary  
Amber Cameron, GHS Student Representative  
Mark Hawke, Director of Finance and Operations  
Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer  
Peter McMorrow, Principal, GALT

## **Call to Order**

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 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).

## **Open Time for the General Public**

No one from the General Public requested to speak.

## **Student Advisory Board**

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, requested that if there were no objections Item F. - Student Advisory Board - be taken out of order. There were no objections.

Amber Cameron, Student Representative, reported on activities at GHS. The boys' basketball and hockey teams have qualified for States. There was good attendance at the Early College at MWCC. Currently the students are in Winter Fun Week and have a fund raiser for the Heart Fund.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Nicholson noted that there is a Scribner error on page 5 of the Regular Meeting of January 3, 2023. The correct date of the State of the City Address is January 10, 2023.

Mr. Swartz moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as amended.

- Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of January 3, 2023, as amended and
- as recommended by the School Committee Chairperson.
- Approval of Minutes of Special Meeting, State of the City, January 10, 2023.
- Approval of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:
  - Warrant #23-26 dated 12/29//22 in the amount of \$716,762.79
  - Warrant #23-27 dated 01/05/23 in the amount of \$540,824.81
  - Warrant #23-28 dated 01/12/23 in the amount of \$249,373.04
  - Warrant #23-29 dated 01/19/23 in the amount of \$199,146.05
  - Warrant #23-30 dated 01/26/23 in the amount of \$380,297.00
  - Warrant #23-31 dated 02/02/23 in the amount of \$1,193,296.54

Seconded by Mrs. Leighton

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, abstained from voting.

## SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

### Finance Subcommittee

Mr. LaFreniere, Chairperson, said that the Finance Subcommittee met on January 26, 2023. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The Subcommittee reviewed the Expense Report and Mr. Hawke explained why some accounts were in the negative. These accounts will be covered by existing funds at the end of the year.

The Watkins Field concession /restroom work is ongoing. Interior work should wrap up in February and final grading and paving will take place in the spring.

### Policy Subcommittee

Mrs. Hurst, Chairperson, said that the Policy Subcommittee met on February 2, 2023. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The following policies were reviewed, and it was determined that no changes were required. These policies will be updated as “Reviewed February 2023.”

- BDBC                      Duties of Secretary
- BDBD                     Duties of Finance Officer
- BDD                        School Committee – Superintendent Relationship
- BDF                        Advisory Committee to School Committee

- BDFA-E-1                      School Improvement Plan
- BEDD                            Rules of Order
- BEDG                            Minutes
- DBC                              Budget Deadlines
- DBJ                              Transfer Authority

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ITEM #3475 – First Reading of Policies**

Mrs. Hurst presented the following policies for a first reading as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee:

- BDBB                            Duties of Vice Chairperson
- BDFA-E-3                      Conduct of School Council Business
- DBD                              Budget Planning

**Item #3476 – Program of Studies**

The Program of Studies was presented for information. It will be voted on at the March 2023 School Committee meeting.

**Item #3477 – School Improvement Plan – GALT**

Mr. Peter McMorro, Principal of GALT, presented the School Improvement Plan for GALT Academy. GALT is now in its new location on Elm Street. This new location has given a great opportunity to reset the climate, culture, and routine for the school and the students.

He presented MTSS SEL updates with emphasis focused on attendance, MTSS Academic updates, and work with MWCC on Gateway to College. They are also focused on Equity and Parent/Community Engagement and are working to expand the Parent Council.

**Item #3478 – 2023-2024 School Choice Acceptance**

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to accept School Choice students for the 2023-2024 school year.

Seconded by Mrs. Hurst.

**Vote – so voted.**

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

**Item #3479 – 2022-2023 School Committee Schedule of Meetings**

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the amended schedule of School Committee meetings for 2022-2023 based on a start time of 6:30 p.m. as of February 13, 2023.

Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere.

**Vote – so voted.**

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

**Item #3480 – 2023-2024 School Committee Schedule of Meetings**

**Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the schedule of School Committee meetings for the period September 2023 to June 2024 as presented.**

**Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.**

**Vote – so voted.**

**Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.**

**Item #3481 – 2023-2024 Annual School Calendar**

Dr. Goguen presented two options for the start of school for the 2023-2024 school year.

- Option #1 – August 24-29 - Staff                      August 30 - Students
- Option #2 - August 28-31 - Staff                      September 5 - Students

Parents and staff were surveyed for a preferred calendar option. Dr. Goguen presented the results of the survey. There were 454 responses – 47.1% for Option 1 and 53.1% for Option 2.

**Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve Option #2 of the 2023-2024 Annual School Calendar as presented.**

**Seconded by Mrs. Leighton.**

**Vote – so voted.**

**Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.**

**Item #3482 – Stop Arm Cameras on Buses**

Mrs. Pelavin presented information on cameras being put on the stop arm of school buses. The cameras would take pictures of drivers that do not stop for school buses, and they would be ticketed. State House Bill H2426 did not make it out of committee last year. Other school committees have passed resolutions to have a similar version of this bill filed and voted on.

**Mr. Swartz moved that the Gardner School Committee vote to ask the State Delegation to advocate for a bill or to file a bill similar to H2426 regarding the Stop Arm Camera on school buses.**

**Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.**

**Vote – so voted.**

**Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.**

**Item #3483 – Letter of Partnership - “After Dark” Program**

**Mr. LaFreniere moved that the District School Committee vote to approve Dr. Pellegrino’s letter of December 28, 2022 to join several other school districts in piloting an innovative “After Dark” program that will provide more students with access to valuable vocational training opportunities.**

**Seconded by Mr. Swartz.**

**Vote – so voted.**

**Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.**

**Item #3484 – 2023-2024 Enrollment for Virtual School**

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to cap enrollment for Virtual School at 1%.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

**Item #3485 – College & Career Readiness Report**

The College & Career Readiness report was included in the members' packets. Ms. Melissa Paine, College & Career Readiness Program Coordinator, was not present this evening.

**Item #3486 – Curriculum Coordinator Report**

The Curriculum Coordinator's report was included in the members' packets. Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer, was present to answer questions.

**Item #3487 – Director of School Health Services Report**

The School Health Services report was included in the members' packets. Ms. Rebecca McCaffrey, Director of School Health Services, was not present this evening.

**Item #3488 – ELL Coordinator Report**

The English Language Learners report was included in the members' packets. Ms. Lori Simpson, ELL Coordinator, was not present this evening.

**Item #3489 – Grants Administrator Report**

The Grants Administrator report was included in the members' packets. Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Manager, was not present this evening.

**Item #3490 – Special Education Report**

The Special Education report was included in the members' packets. Ms. Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, was not present this evening.

**Item #3491 – SEPAC Report**

Mrs. Hurst reported that information on the SEPAC meeting held in January was contained in Ms. West's Special Education Report.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Dr. Pellegrino congratulated the basketball and hockey teams.

**FINAL COMMENTS**

Mrs. Leighton thanked Mr. McMorrow for his report on GALT Academy.

Mrs. Pelavin wished everyone a Happy Valentine's Day.

Mr. Swartz also wished everyone a Happy Valentine's Day.

Mrs. Cormier thanked Mr. McMorrow for his presentation this evening.

Mayor Nicholson said that the Prospect Street School is going on the market.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mrs. Pelavin moved to adjourn.**

**Seconded by Mr. Swartz.**

**Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.**

**Vote – so voted.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

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**Rachel Cormier  
Secretary**

Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary