

GARDNER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Public Hearing – May 10, 2021
Zoom Meeting (due to COVID-19 pandemic)

Members present on Zoom: Mayor Michael Nicholson, Chairperson; Jennifer Pelavin, Vice Chairperson; Rachel Cormier, Secretary; James Abare, Anne Hurst, John LaFreniere, and Robert Swartz

School Personnel present on Zoom: Dr. Mark J. Pellegrino, Superintendent
Ms. Brenda Smith, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer and Interim Business Administrator
Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Mgr.
Ms. Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel

Call to Order

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, called the Public Hearing to order at 6:06 pm. The purpose of the Public Hearing was a presentation of the Fiscal Year 2022 School Department Budget.

The meeting opened with a roll call. The meeting was broadcast live on Channel 8 (Gardner Educational Television Station), Gardner YouTube, and recorded by Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary.

Mayor Nicholson announced that this public hearing is being conducted “virtually” pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Gardner School Committee is being conducted via remote participation. All votes taken at this meeting will be by roll call. The public will be allowed to Zoom in at the end of the hearing with comments or questions.

Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2022 School Department Budget

Dr. Pellegrino presented a PowerPoint of the Fiscal Year 2022 School Department Budget. At the end of the presentation, School Committee members will be allowed to ask questions and members of the public will be allowed to Zoom in to ask questions or to give comments.

The changing demographics of students in the community have increased costs as additional resources are required to support our students. The FY2022 goal continues to be equity and excellence for every child, in every classroom, every day. The following strategies will be implemented to achieve this goal:

- Continue to implement targeted standards-based instruction driven by common assessment that measure student academic growth.
- Foster a culture of achievement that is positive, supportive and engaging for all students.

Dr. Pellegrino spoke about the budget development and the involvement of all administration, school principals and staff in this development. Every effort is made to provide quality service to Special Education students to keep from having to place them out-of-district - this is a saving. More students are coming to Gardner than going out under School Choice and this results in more revenue.

Dr. Pellegrino presented the proposed budget in the amount of \$35,700,791.00 to Mayor Nicholson and the Gardner City Council on May 3, 2022. The budget gap for FY2022 can be funded with grant funding. The plan is to only use these funds for FY2022.

Open Time for Public

Mayor Nicholson announced open time for the public to Zoom into the Public Hearing with comments or questions. No one zoomed in.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Nicholson declared the Public Hearing closed at 6:30 pm.

Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary

Rachel A. Cormier, Secretary