

GARDNER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting - September 13, 2021
City Council Chambers
95 Pleasant Street, Gardner, Massachusetts

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

School Personnel present: Dr. Mark J. Pellegrino, Superintendent
Ms. Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary
Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer
Mr. Mark Hawke, Director of Finance and Operations
Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Mgr.
Ms. Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel
Ms. Paula Bolger, Principal, Gardner High School

Call to Order

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7 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 General Public

Mr. Justice Graves, Booster Track Club, said that the 47th Annual Turkey Trot will be held on November 16. It is great to be planning the race this year.

RECOGNITION-Capital Skills Grant Award - Paula Bolger

Ms. Paula Bolger, Principal Gardner High School, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Capital Skills Grant Award. It will be used to better market the Manufacturing Pathway Program specially to promote the program to Middle School students. Students in grades 8 to 12 in this program earn credentials (like OSHA certification) that they can take with them to future job opportunities.

Ms. Bolger presented information on the funding sources for the Manufacturing Program and thanked Ms. Dunn for her work in obtaining grants and funding.

Dr. Pellegrino commended Ms. Bolger for her work on this program and is proud of the Guidance Department and the work with Middle School students.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 14, 2021 and the Executive Session of June 14, 2021 as recommended by the School Committee Chairperson.
- Approval of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:
 - Warrant #21-50 dated 06/10/21 in the amount of \$235,399.85
 - Warrant #21-51 dated 06/17/21 in the amount of \$165,416.16
 - Warrant #21-52 dated 06/24/21 in the amount of \$274,036.83
 - Warrant #21-53 dated 06/30/21 in the amount of \$3,324,920.51
 - Warrant #21-54 dated 06/30/21 in the amount of \$827,027.03
 - Warrant #21-55 dated 06/30/21 in the amount of \$541,662.99
 - Warrant #22-04 dated 07/22/21 in the amount of \$75,128.85
 - Warrant #22-05 dated 07/29/21 in the amount of \$128,006.44
 - Warrant #22-06 dated 08/05/21 in the amount of \$96,115.48
 - Warrant #22-07 dated 08/12/21 in the amount of \$32,245.00
 - Warrant #22-08 dated 08/19/21 in the amount of \$152,232.14
 - Warrant #22-09 dated 08/26/21 in the amount of \$2,609,108.73

Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere.

Vote-unanimous.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities Subcommittee

Mr. Swartz, Chairperson, said that the Facilities Subcommittee met on June 15, 2021. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

Mr. Swartz reported on the end of the year and the summer projects. Remaining projects are:

- GHS Landry Auditorium upgrades are in progress.
- GMS Locker replacement will be done during the winter school break.
- Masonry work on all buildings will be contracted out.
- Adding antifreeze to the hot water heating system at GMS is not complete.

The Facilities Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on September 21, 2021.

Finance Subcommittee

Mr. Lafreniere, Chairperson, said that the Finance Subcommittee met on June 7, 2021. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The Subcommittee members reviewed and discussed the Finance packet for the month of May. Mrs. Pelavin stated that the accounts payable warrant will be processed electronically and sent to two of the three Finance Subcommittee members each month on a rotating basis for signature. All other School Committee members will receive an electronic copy of the warrant for informational purposes.

Summer projects were discussed with Mr. Wayne Anderson, Director of Facilities. Student/Staff Meal Prices will be discussed at the September Finance Subcommittee meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #3307 - Policy Subcommittee

No report at this time.

Item #3308 - COVID-19 Update

Dr. Pellegrino said that the school keeps in close communication with parents regarding COVID-19. To date there have been no transmissions in the schools. Mrs. Rebecca McCaffrey, Gardner School Nurse Leader, continues to meet with the Safety Committee and as requested by Mr. Swartz a copy of her reports will be provided in future School Committee packets.

Item #3309 - Ratify GEA Contract

Mrs. Hurst said that a vote to ratify the GEA Contract will be postponed until the October 2021 School Committee meeting. She thanked Mrs. Cormier and Mr. Swartz for their work on negotiating the contract.

Item #3310 - Surplus GHS Machinery

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the request to declare surplus a lathe and a grinding mill at GHS. They are unsafe, in need of repair, and have not been used in many years.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote - unanimous.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3311-Surplus of Property –Prospect Street School

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the request from Mark Hawke, Director of Finance & Operations, to declare the building located at 75 East Broadway, Gardner, MA, as surplus by the Gardner School Committee and turned over to the City of Gardner for disposition. The building, formerly known as the Prospect Street School, has not been used by the Gardner Public Schools since the Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology moved into the Helen Mae Sauter School building.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote - unanimous.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3312-School Goals Presentation and
Item #3313-School Superintendent's Goals/Select
Goals Dr. Pellegrino presented his goals for FY22.

- District Improvement
 - o Goal I: Increase & Improve School-Family Partnerships & Culture of Dignity
 - o Goal 2: Reduction of, and Equity in Discipline and Dropout Rates
- Student Learning
 - o Goal I: Fidelity to Tier 1 Academic Supports in Core Instruction
 - o Goal 2: Fidelity to Tier 2 SEL/Behavioral Supports
- Professional Practices
 - o Participate in Lynch Leadership Academy District-level Supervisory Program

Item #3314-Curriculum Coordinator's Update

The Curriculum Coordinator's Update was included in the members' packets.

Dr. Goguen, Chief Academic Officer, was present to answer questions.

Item #3315-Director of Finance and Operations Update

The Director of Finance and Operations Update was included in the members' packets.

Mr. Mark Hawke, Director of Finance and Operations, was present to answer questions.

Item #3316-Grants Administrator's Update

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

Item #3317 - Special Education Update

The Special Education Update was included in the members' packets. Ms. Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel, was present to answer questions.

Item #3318-MSBA - New Building Project

Mayor Nicholson said that there was a tour of the new school building last week and another tour is being scheduled. Much work has been done and it is very impressive.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Pellegrino thanked School Committee Members for their support. He said the opening of the schools went smoothly. Teachers, staff, and administrators are happy to have students back in the classrooms full time.

FINAL COMMENTS

Mr. Abare commented on the passing of David Fisher and Mike St. Pierre. Both men were always willing to volunteer their time to help with school activities and community needs.

Mrs. Hurst said it is great to have in person meetings again. She also said that September is Suicide Prevention Awareness month and gave a few awareness signs.

Mrs. Pelavin said that it is amazing to see the progress on the new school building. Students will be in the building in the next school year and it is an exciting time for Gardner.

Mr. Swartz stated that the Union negotiations with the teachers are finally completed. He thanked Dr. Goguen, Ms. Dunn, Ms. West and Mr. Hawke for their monthly updates. They are very informative.

Mr. LaFreniere spoke about David Fisher. He remembered the Swamp League he set up for kids and what fun it was. He welcomed everyone back for the new school year.

Mrs. Cormier commented on the energy in the room tonight and how nice to see everyone in person.

FINAL COMMENTS (continued)

Mayor Nicholson spoke about technology in the City and pointed out improvements in the Council Room. He thanked the people from Garlock for their commitment to the City and the schools – a company trying to give back to the community. He walked all the schools on opening day. He has some labels created by students on the new equipment in his office. There will be a Hispanic Celebration on City Hall Steps on September 15.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LaFreniere moved to adjourn.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote -unanimous.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

The meeting adjourned at 8 pm.

Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary

Rachel A. Cormier, Secretary