

Gardner School Committee

Regular Meeting – October 12, 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, and Robert Swartz

Member absent: John LaFreniere

School Personnel present: Dr. Mark J. Pellegrino, Superintendent
Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary
Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer
Ms. Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel
Gino DiVito, Student Representative to the School Committee

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

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

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 September 13, 2021 as recommended by the School Committee Vice Chairperson**
- **Approval of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**
 - **Warrant #22-10 dated 09/02/21 in the amount of \$187,408.55**
 - **Warrant #22-11 dated 09/09/21 in the amount of \$31,748.37**
 - **Warrant #22-12 dated 09/16/21 in the amount of \$155,937.05**
 - **Warrant #22-13 dated 09/23/21 in the amount of \$3,353,716.10**
 - **Warrant #22-14 dated 09/30/21 in the amount of \$248,129.70**

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities Subcommittee

Mr. Swartz, Chairperson, said that the Facilities Subcommittee met on September 21, 2021. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

An update on the facilities projects (16) currently in progress was presented to the Subcommittee members. For the District Wide Security system, 35 new security cameras are being installed at GHS/GMS. GMS will also get four new 180 degree looking cameras in the academic wing. The Swipe System (building access) is being upgraded.

An update by District and school buildings on the FY2021 Facilities Summer Projects with comments on their completion or future completion dates was also provided. A great deal of work has been completed and much is in progress.

Requests were made to address rusting panels and drainage issues at the GMS gym entrance and for additional trash barrels near the tennis court/practice fields at GHS.

Finance Subcommittee

Mrs. Pelavin said that the Finance Subcommittee met on September 7, 2021. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

Mr. Hawke, Director of Finance & Operations, gave an update on major summer projects – some are complete and progress on remaining projects was provided.

Mr. Hawke stated that all breakfast and lunches are free again this year. Whitsons is offering multiple lunch choices and students are eating in the cafeterias.

The Subcommittee voted to declare surplus the Prospect Street School building and a powermatic wood lathe and a surface grinder. Both items were presented to the Full School Committee on September 7, 2021 and were approved as presented by the Finance Subcommittee.

Policy Subcommittee

Mrs. Hurst, Chairperson, stated that the Subcommittee met on September 21, 2021. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The following policies were reviewed and determined that no changes were required and they will be updated as “Reviewed September 2021”:

- Policy BG School Committee Policy Development
- Policy JRA Student Records

Four other policies were reviewed and changes recommended. They will be presented to the full School Committee at the October meeting. (See Item #3319).

STUDENT ADVISORY MEMBER

Gino DiVito, a Gardner High School Senior and the newly appointed Student Representative to the School Committee, was introduced. He read his report of GHS student activities especially of the sports programs. School Committee members welcomed him and thanked him for his report.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #3319 – First Reading of Policies

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

- Policy BDFA School Councils
- Policy BEDA Notification of School Committee Meetings
- Policy BEDF Voting
- Policy EBCFA Face Covering

Item #3320 – COVID-19 Update

Mrs. Rebecca McCaffrey’s, Gardner School Nurse Leader, report on COVID-19 had been forwarded to School Committee members. The numbers of positive results have been increasing and the school nurses are doing a lot of contact tracing work. They are doing a wonderful job. Protocols are in place to keep students and staff safe.

Item #3321 – Ratify GEA Contract

Mrs. Hurst moved that the District School Committee vote to ratify the Agreement between the Gardner School Committee and the Gardner Education Association for the period July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – 5 in favor.

Mr. LaFreniere was absent from the meeting and Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3322 – District Improvement Plan (DIP)

Dr. Goguen presented a PowerPoint of the District Improvement Plan (DIP) which outlined the Mission, the Core Values (community, appreciation, responsibility, excellence – CARE), the Vision and the Theory of Action.

The DIP for 2018-2021 included Strategic Objectives, the Action Steps that were taken and the Outcomes and Benchmarks. Many projects have been completed, and many are in process or are on-going.

The DIP for 2021-2024 includes four Strategic Objectives and the Outcomes expected by 2024. The Implementation Timeline outlines the Activity, the Person(s) Responsible, the Measurement Tool(s) and the Date to be completed (dates are provided).

Item #3323 – Superintendent's Goals for FY22

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to accept the Superintendent's Goals as presented at the September 13, 2021 School Committee meeting:

District Improvement

- Goal 1: Increase & Improve School Family Partnerships & Culture of Dignity
- Goal 2: Reduction of and Equity in Discipline & Dropout Rates

Student Learning

- Goal 1: Fidelity to Tier 1 Academic Supports in Core Instruction
- Goal 2: Fidelity to Tier 2 SEL Behavioral Supports

Professional Practice

- Participate in Lynch Leadership Academy District-level Supervisory Program

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote - so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3324 – MASC Voting Delegate Appointment

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to appoint Mr. Robert Swartz to represent the Gardner School Committee as the Voting Delegate at the MASC 2021 Annual Meeting in November 2021.

Seconded by Mrs. Hurst.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3325 – MASC Resolutions for Consideration

Mr. Swartz moved that the District School Committee vote to adopt the resolutions proposed by the members of the MASC Resolutions Committee for consideration at the MASC 2021 Annual Meeting.

Mayor Nicholson clarified the motion to state that the Gardner School Committee takes a formal stance on the proposed resolutions and is allowing Mr. Swartz, as the Gardner School Committee Delegate, to vote in favor of the adoption of the resolutions at the MASC 2021 Annual Meeting. This vote is guidance for the school delegate at the Annual Meeting.

Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

A copy of the resolutions was included in the members' packets.

Item #3326 – Curriculum Coordinator's Update

Dr. Goguen, Chief Academic Officer, presented a PowerPoint on the District Improvement Plan - see Item #3322.

Item #3327 – Special Education Update

The Special Education Update was included in the members' packets. Ms. Joyce West was present to answer any questions.

Item #3328 – Grants Administrator’s Update

The Grants, Communications, & Compliance Update was included in the members’ packets. Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants Communications & Compliance Manager, was not present at the meeting.

Item #3329 – MSBA – New Building Project

Mayor Nicholson thanked everyone who attended the walk-thru at the new school building. The building project is on schedule.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Pellegrino spoke on the importance of the District Improvement Plan and the Goals he has laid out for FY22. A lot of work is done by all School personnel to keep the school system moving forward. He appreciates all their efforts.

FINAL COMMENTS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Abare thanked the members of the Negotiations Subcommittee for their work on the GEA Contract. He also urged everyone to get out and vote on November 2 – every vote counts. Member of the 2011 GHS football team will be coming back on October 22 for a visit.

Mrs. Hurst liked Dr. Goguen’s presentation on the DIP and is proud to be part of the Gardner School Committee. She welcomed Gino DiVito – it is important to have a student on the Committee. The Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) needs volunteers for the organization and she can supply contacts to anyone who is interested.

Mrs. Pelavin thanked the members of the Negotiations Subcommittee, thanked Dr. Goguen for the DIP – an important plan – and thanked Ms. Dunn for the update on the Extended Day Program which is up and running.

Gino DiVito stated he is happy to be on the Committee.

Mr. Swartz welcomed Gino – he has missed having a student representative on the Committee. He encouraged people to vote on November 2 – every vote counts. He mentioned a meeting of the SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council) on October 14 at which Mrs. Rebecca McCaffrey, School Nurse Leader, will speak on COVID-19 and health issues.

Mrs. Cormier welcomed Gino and enjoyed hearing his report. She attended the Homecoming football game, and toured the new school building. She thanked everyone who is working the project.

Mayor Nicholson welcomed Gino and thanked him for stepping up to represent GHS. He thanked the personnel of the Gardner Educational Television Station (Channel 8) for filming City events. They have recently purchased new equipment and will be installing it soon – some in City Hall Chambers. He also spoke about the wearing of masks, vaccine mandates and the keeping of protocols as they are issued by the CDC and OSHA.

Mayor Nicholson stated that there are some changes in Gardner voting places due to COVID-19 and that absentee voting and early voting are now available.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Swartz moved to adjourn.

Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Vote – so voted.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary

Rachel A. Cormier, Secretary