

GARDNER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – January 7, 2020
City Council Chambers
95 Pleasant Street, Gardner, Massachusetts

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

Student Representative: absent

School Personnel present: Mark J. Pellegrino, Superintendent
Ms. Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary
Ms. April Yu, Business Administrator
Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer
Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Manager
Ms. Paula Bolger, Principal, Gardner High School

Call to Order

Mrs. Pelavin, Vice 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 television.

Open Time for the General Public

No one from the general public wished to speak,

Recognition by the Superintendent

Superintendent Pellegrino said that Gardner students did very well on the MCAS. He and Ms. Bolger had Certificates for the students. The top 25% of the students in the District were awarded the John & Abigail Adams Scholarship based on their passing the MCAS and their academic scores in school. Many of the students and parents or guardians were present for the presentation of the certificates.

Reorganization of Committee – Officers

Vice Chair

Mrs. Hurst moved to nominate Mrs. Pelavin to serve as Vice Chair of the School Committee for the ensuing year.

Seconded by Mr. Abare.

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

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – Unanimous.

Roll Call Vote for Vice Chair – Mr. Abare, yes; Mrs. Cormier, yes; Mrs. Hurst, yes; Mr. LaFreniere, yes; Mrs. Pelavin, abstain; Mr. Swartz, yes.

Count – 5 yes; 1 abstention.

Mrs. Pelavin was elected Vice Chair.

Finance Officer

Mrs. Hurst moved to nominate Mr. LaFreniere to serve as Finance Officer of the School Committee for the ensuing year.

Seconded by Mr. Abare.

Mr. LaFreniere moved that nominations for Finance Officer be closed.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – Unanimous.

Roll Call Vote for Finance Officer – Mr. Abare, yes; Mrs. Cormier, yes;

Mrs. Hurst, yes; Mr. LaFreniere, abstain; Mrs. Pelavin, yes; Mr. Swartz, yes.

Count – 5 yes; 1 abstention. Mr. LaFreniere was elected Finance Officer.

Alternate Finance Officers (2)

Mr. LaFreniere moved to nominate Mrs. Pelavin and Mr. Swartz to serve as Alternate Finance Officers of the School Committee for the ensuing year.

Seconded by Mr. Abare.

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

Seconded by Mr. Abare.

Vote – Unanimous.

Roll Call Vote for Alternate Finance Officers – Mr. Abare, yes; Mrs. Cormier, yes;

Mrs. Hurst, yes; Mr. LaFreniere, yes; Mrs. Pelavin, abstain; Mr. Swartz, abstain.

Count – 4 yes; 2 abstentions.

Mrs. Pelavin and Mr. Swartz were elected Finance Officers.

Secretary

Mr. LaFreniere moved to nominate Mrs. Hurst to serve as Secretary of the School Committee for the ensuing year.

Seconded by Mr. Abare.

Mr. Swartz moved to nominate Mrs. Cormier to serve as Secretary of the School Committee for the ensuing year.

Seconded by Mr. Abare.

Mr. LaFreniere moved that nominations for Secretary be closed.

Seconded by Mr. Abare.

Vote – Unanimous.

Roll Call Vote for Secretary: Mr. Abare – Mrs. Hurst; Mrs. Cormier – abstain;

Mrs. Hurst – abstain; Mr. LaFreniere – Mrs. Hurst; Mrs. Pelavin - Mrs. Hurst;

Mr. Swartz – Mrs. Cormier.

Count – Mrs. Hurst – 3 yes; Mrs. Cormier – 1 yes; 2 abstentions.

Mrs. Hurst was elected Secretary.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Swartz moved that the District School Committee approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- **Approval of minutes of regular meeting, December 9, 2019**
- **Approval of following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**
 - **Warrant #20-23 dated 12/05/19 in the amount of \$312,669.37**
 - **Warrant #20-24 dated 12/12/19 in the amount of \$96,950.83**
 - **Warrant #20-25 dated 12/19/19 in the amount of \$150,046.22**

Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere.

Vote – Unanimous.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Subcommittee

Mr. LaFreniere, Chairperson, said that the Subcommittee met on December 10, 2019. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The Subcommittee reviewed the Finance packet for November 2019 and did not have any questions.

Ms. Yu and Superintendent Pellegrino gave an update on the FY21 budget timeline. The Student Opportunity Act has been passed by the House and Senate and signed by the Governor. The District hopes to receive more funding from the State during the next few years.

The Subcommittee approved unanimously a clerical position at Central Office to support Medicaid at the Special ED office, the Athletic Director, Technology Director and Facilities Director. Funding for the position will be mainly from Medicaid reimbursement from the State.

Mr. Dan Forte, Athletic Director, gave an update on the Athletic fee collection process. Unipay is being set up for athletic fee collection.

Transportation Subcommittee

Mrs. Pelavin, Chairperson, said that the Transportation Subcommittee met on December 11, 2019. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

Ms. Yu updated the Subcommittee on the Regular Ed bus bid. Mr. Josh Cormier, City Purchasing Director, is reviewing the bid documents and they will be finalized by December 16 and posted on December 18, 2019. The bid opening date will be January 16, 2020.

Ms. Colleen Cavanaugh, MAPT President, presented the Special Ed transportation review bid draft. The out-of-district transportation cost is reasonable, but the in-district Special Ed transportation cost is high and not effective or efficient. The Subcommittee agreed with Ms. Cavanaugh's suggestion to use 14 passenger or 8 passenger vans to provide a better environment for the students.

Policy Subcommittee

Mrs. Hurst, Chairperson, said that the Subcommittee met on December 5, 2019. 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 2019".

Policy JJE Pregnant Students

Policy JJICA Participation in Athletics by Parochial School Students

Two other policies were reviewed and discussed. They will be presented to the full Committee for a first reading at the February School Committee meeting.

Student Advisory Board

The Student Representative was not present and there was no report.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #3088 – Field Trip – GHS Quebec City

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the District Committee approve the Gardner High School request for a trip to Quebec City from May 1 to May 3, 2020. It is a French Program – Cultural trip and costs will be paid by the students.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – Unanimous.

Item #3089 – Field Trip 8th Grade Field Trip – New York City

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the District Committee approve the 8th Grade request for a trip to New York City from June 11 – 12, 2020. Students will experience culture, education, and diversity and visits historical landmarks. Costs will be paid by the students.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – Unanimous.

Item #3090 - Curriculum Coordinator Update

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

Item #3091 - Special Education Update

The Special Education Update was included in the packet. Ms. West was not present this evening.

Item #3092 – Grants, Communications & Compliance Update

The Grants, Communications & Compliance Update was included in the packet. Ms. Dunn was present to answer questions.

Item #3093– MSBA – New Building Project

A meeting on the project is scheduled for January 22, 2020.

COMMUNICATIONS

Superintendent Pellegrino is excited about the possibility of increased funding by the State. He is looking forward to working with the School Committee members to prepare the FY21 Budget.

FINAL COMMENTS

Mr. Abare congratulated all the students who were recognized tonight.

Mrs. Hurst also congratulated the students and said every year there are more students who receive the John & Abigail Scholarship. The community needs to take note of what is happening in our schools. The GHS Cheerleaders are raising money to go to Texas to compete and an upcoming spaghetti dinner is one of the events.

Mr. Swartz said it is amazing to note the number of Gardner students who are eligible for a free college. He congratulated all of them.

Mr. LaFreniere congratulated the students on a job well done. He is looking forward to the new school year and gave “kudos” to Courtney Dunn for her work regarding student attendance.

Mrs. Cormier thanked everyone for their warm welcome as she begins her term on the School Committee.

Mrs. Pelavin said it was wonderful to see the students who received recognition tonight. She is hopeful that the District will get extra funding from the State.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LaFreniere moved to adjourn.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – Unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 pm.

Anne Hurst, Secretary

Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary