

Gardner School Committee

Regular Meeting – April 10, 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
Anne Hurst
Shannon Leighton
Robert Swartz

School Personnel present: Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer
Mark Hawke, Director of Finance and Operation
Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel
Rebecca McCaffrey, Director of School Health Services

Call to Order

Mayor Michael 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 was present.

Recognitions by the Superintendent

Dr. Goguen recognized four additional students who have received the John & Abigail Adams Scholarship. Two of them are Gardner High students and two are Gardner Academy students. The students were unable to be present this evening.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Swartz moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- **Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 13, 2023**
- **Accept Grant Funds listing dated 04/10/23 in the amount of \$22,000.00**
- **Approval of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**
 - **Warrant #23-36 dated 03/09/23 in the amount of \$322,877.96**
 - **Warrant #23-37 dated 03/16/23 in the amount of \$465,313.79**
 - **Warrant #23-38 dated 03/23/23 in the amount of \$547,224.84**

Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, abstained from voting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Subcommittee

Mr. LaFreniere, Chairperson of the Finance Subcommittee, reported that the Finance Subcommittee met on April 4, 2023. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The Subcommittee reviewed the Expense Report. At all schools, the sublines are becoming negatives and Mr. Hawke explained these accounts will be covered by available funds at the end of the year. Previously transfers from one line to another line were done all through the year. Now they are all done at the end of the year. The State favors this method.

The Subcommittee voted to declare property in the woodshop surplus and recommend this to the full School Committee. (See Item #3508 on the April 10, 2023 Agenda.) A grant has been received to replace most of this equipment.

Policy Subcommittee

Mrs. Hurst, Chairperson of the Policy Subcommittee, reported that the Policy Subcommittee met on March 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 April 2023.”

- CHD Administration in Policy Absence
- CL Administrative Reports
- DCB Fiscal Year
- DFG Use of School Facilities and Equipment, Security & Management
- DJ Purchasing
- DJELA Sales Calls and Demonstrations
- DK Payment Procedures

Four policies were approved for submission to the full School Committee for a first read. See Item #3504.

Superintendent’s Evaluation Subcommittee

Mrs. Pelavin, Chairperson of the Superintendent’s Evaluation Subcommittee, reported that the Subcommittee met on March 28, 2023. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

At the meeting, Dr. Pellegrino presented each of his goals and the evidence compiled to show his and the district’s progress towards these goals. After the presentation, Mrs. Pelavin, Chair, recommended that Dr. Pellegrino distribute the information to the full School Committee prior to their June meeting. The Subcommittee members agreed that the timeline was sufficient.

Student Advisory Board

Amber Cameron, Student Representative, was not present this evening.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #3504 – First Reading of Policies

The following policies were presented for a first reading as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee:

- BGD School Committee Review of Procedures
- CFA School Building Administrative Coverage
- CHCA Approval of Handbooks and Directives
- DJE Procurement Requirements

Item #3505 – Second Reading of Policies

Mr. Swartz moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to approve the following policies for a second reading as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee:

- BEDH Public Participation at School Committee Meetings
- BID School Committee Member Compensations
- CA Administration Goals and Objectives
- CE School Superintendent
- DH Bonded Employees and Officers
- DI Fiscal Accounting and Reporting

Seconded by Mrs. Hurst.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3506 - Field Trip – GH Senior Class

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to approve the Gardner High School Cheerleaders travel to Florida to compete in Nationals leaving on April 15 and returning on April 18, 2023.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – So voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3507 – 2023-2024 Pre-School Tuition Rates & Payment Schedule

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to approve the 2023-2024 Pre-School Tuition Rates & Payment Schedule as presented and approved by the Finance Subcommittee.

Seconded by Mrs. Leighton.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3508 – Surplus of Furniture GHS

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to approve furniture in the GHS woodworking shop as surplus as presented and approved by the Finance Subcommittee.

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3509 – Kindergarten Registration Update 2023-2024

There are 128 students presently enrolled for Kindergarten. Currently this is an increase of approximately 45 students.

Item #3510 – Director of School Health Services

Ms. Rebecca McCaffrey, Director of School Health Services, presented an update on school health services.

- District Emergency Response Plan - run, hide, fight drills will be held at all Gardner schools in collaboration with the Gardner Police and Fire Departments. Have also organized a Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT).
- Heywood Hospital Telemedicine – students can be seen and treated through the Health Office by a Nurse Practitioner during the school day.
- Wellness Committee – reviewing the current Wellness Policy and developing a Mission Statement.
- Comprehensive Health Needs Assessments for ELL and Homeless students – these populations may have additional barriers to accessing health services. A complete chart review is done on these students, and help is offered to parents with any healthcare needs.
- Thanked the Gardner Lions’ Club for the use of their van for eye testing.

Item #3511 – Curriculum Coordinator Update

The Chief Academic Officer’s report was included in the members’ packets. Dr. Goguen was present this evening.

Item #3512 - Grants Administrator Report

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

Item #3513 – Special Education Report

The Special Education report was included in the members’ packets. Ms. Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, was present this evening.

Item #3514– SEPAC Report

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education liaison, Michael McDonald, met with SEPAC parents on Thursday, March 23, 2023, and reviewed the Tiered Focus Monitoring process with them. SEPAC will host a training session on Bullying through the Federation for Children on April 6, 2023. The District pays an annual membership fee to the Federation to support SEPAC activities.

Item #3515 – MSBA – New School Building

Mayor Nicholson announced that the ribbon cutting for GES is scheduled for June.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Goguen said that all technical equipment is working well for online testing. Upcoming MCAS testing online should have no glitches.

FINAL COMMENTS

Mrs. Leighton spoke about equity and thanked Mrs. McCaffrey for her presentation. It was awesome to see the recent student musical productions.

Mrs. Hurst congratulated the cheerleaders and wished them good luck in Florida. She said lots of good things are happening in the school system and thanked Mrs. McCaffrey for all her work.

Mrs. Pelavin thanked Mrs. McCaffrey for presenting the improvements in the School Health Department. She expressed good luck to all the sports teams in their upcoming season.

Mr. LaFreniere thanked Mrs. McCaffrey for all she does for the health of the students. He wished the cheer leaders good luck.

Mrs. Cormier commented on the recent student productions and thanked Mrs. McCaffrey.

Mayor Nicholson said that City elections will take place this year and papers will be available at the City Clerk's office. The City Council has approved pay raises for all elected officials to go into effect in January 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LaFreniere moved to adjourn.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Vote – so voted.

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm.

**Rachel Cormier
Secretary**

Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary