

# **Gardner School Committee**

**Regular Meeting – September 12, 2022**

**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  
Robert Swartz

Member absent: Shannon Leighton

School Personnel present: Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent  
Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary  
Mark Hawke, Director of Finance and Operations  
Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Manager  
Ms. Melissa Paine, College & Career Readiness Coordinator  
Ms. Lori Simpson, ELL Coordinator  
Ms. Julie Campbell, Secretary, Gardner High School

## **Call to Order**

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:03 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 requested to speak.

## **Recognitions by the Superintendent**

Dr. Pellegrino recognized Ms. Melissa Paine, College & Career Readiness Coordinator- For District. She spoke about the early college programs and that three programs have completed their orientation on campus at MWCC.

Dr. Pellegrino introduced Ms. Lori Simpson who was recently hired as ELL Coordinator – For District.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- **Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 13, 2022, as recommended by the School Committee Chairperson.**
- **Approval of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**
  - **Warrant #22-50 dated 06/09/22 in the amount of \$73,524.06**

- Warrant #22-51 dated 06/16/22 in the amount of \$266,636.51
- Warrant #22-52 dated 06/23/22 in the amount of \$753,612.72
- Warrant #22-53 dated 06/30/22 in the amount of \$274,136.13
- Warrant #22-54 dated 06/30/22 in the amount of \$177,454.76
- Warrant #22-55 dated 06/30/22 in the amount of \$252,281.37
- Warrant #23-03 dated 07/21/22 in the amount of \$38,825.55
- Warrant #23-04 dated 07/28/22 in the amount of \$6,317,229.67
- Warrant #23-05 dated 08/04/22 in the amount of \$22,709.51
- Warrant #23-06 dated 08/11/22 in the amount of \$22,208.68
- Warrant #23-07 dated 08/18/22 in the amount of \$1,301,345.98
- Warrant #23-08 dated 08/25/22 in the amount of \$416,249.24
- Warrant #23-09 dated 09/01/22 in the amount of \$197,415.70

Acceptance of a donation of \$10,000 from Stephen Greeno in memory of his wife, Linda. The funds are to purchase wanted Library (Media Center) equipment at Gardner Elementary School. Mrs. Greeno was a longtime employee in the Gardner Elementary Schools.

Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, abstained from voting.

## SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

### Facilities Subcommittee

Mr. Swartz said that the Facilities Subcommittee met on August 18, 2022. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

Moir's Cleaning is mobilizing efforts to clean the new Elementary School, GHS and GMS. They will close supporting Waterford and Helen Mae.

The Chair thanked the students hired to assist as summer help. They completed various tasks throughout the district. Mr. Anderson, Director of Maintenance, reported on other summer repairs and upcoming projects.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Item #3425 – Surplus Items

Mr. Swartz moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the items declared surplus from Waterford, Elm, Prospect and Helen Mae Schools as submitted by Mark Hawke, Director of Finance and Operations, and approved for disposal by the Facilities Subcommittee on August 18, 2022.

Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

**Item #3426- School Calendar**

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the Gardner Public School District 2022-2023 School Calendar as presented.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

**Item #3427 – AFSCME Contract 2022-2025**

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to ratify the AFSCME Contract 2022-2025 as presented.

Seconded by Mrs. Hurst.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

**Item #3428 – MASC Delegate**

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 2022 Annual Meeting in November 2022.

Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere.

Vote – so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

**Item #3429 – Student Advisory Board**

The GHS student representative to the Gardner School Committee has not yet been selected.

**Item #3430 - Superintendent's Goals**

Dr. Pellegrino presented his goals for FY 23:

**District Improvement**

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

**Student Learning**

- Goal 1: Fidelity to Tier Academic Supports in Core Instruction
- Goal 2: Expand and Reorganize Dual Enrollment Programs

**Professional Practice**

Participate in Lynch Leadership Academy District-level Supervisory Program

**Item #3431 – District Improvement Plan**

Dr. Pellegrino spoke about the District Improvement Plan.

**Item #3432 College & Career Readiness Coordinator**

Ms. Melissa Paine, College & Career Readiness Coordinator, submitted an update on the Programs as of September 12, 2022.

**Item #3433- Curriculum Coordinator's Update**

The Curriculum Coordinator's Update was included in the members' packets. Dr. Goguen was not present this evening.

**Item #3434 – Grants Administrator's Update**

The Grants, Communications & Compliance Update was included in the members' packets. Mrs. Dunn was present this evening.

**Item #3435 – Special Education Update**

The Special Education Update was included in the members' packets. Ms. Joyce West was not present this evening.

**Item #3436 – SEPAC Update**

Mrs. Hurst reported that no parent has come forward to head up the SEPAC Committee. A meeting of the SEPAC Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, September 21.

**Item #3437 – MSBA – New School Building Project**

Dr. Pellegrino reported the new school building opened this morning. He had prepared a video to show this evening but there were technical difficulties. The new building is beautiful and what the teachers and children of Gardner deserve. He thanked everyone for the team effort to get the building open. There are still a few items in the building and on the grounds to be completed.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Dr. Pellegrino thanked families, staff and administration for their patience with the many things that had to be changed prior to the opening of the new Gardner Elementary School.

**FINAL COMMENTS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Mrs. Hurst said it is a great time for Gardner with the opening of the new school and welcomed everyone back for the school year. She also mentioned that this is Suicide Awareness Month and that there is a Crisis Line – 988 for help.

Mrs. Pelavin spoke about walking through the building early in the year and seeing what has happened since then. A wonderful school for the younger kids. Great news for Gardner!

Mr. Swartz spoke about seeing the video of the plans for the school for the first time and the magnificent building we have today for the students to begin and continue their education.

Mr. LaFreniere welcomed staff and student back for a great school year. He thanked Wayne Anderson, his staff and all who helped make things go smoothly.

Mrs. Cormier has toured the new building and talked to the teachers who are very excited. She wished everyone in the District a great year.

Mayor Nicholson said it is wonderful to see the how excited the students are about the new building. He spoke about plans in the works for the now empty schools.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Mrs. Hurst moved that the District School Committee vote to accept Mayor Nicholson's request to go into executive session under MGL c 30A, §21(3)3. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. The meeting will reconvene in open session only to adjourn.**

**Seconded by Mr. Swartz.**

**Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Cormier, yes; Mrs. Hurst, yes; Mr. LaFreniere, yes;**

**Mrs. Pelavin, yes, Mr. Swartz, yes. Five in favor; one abstention (Mayor Nicholson)**

Mr. LaFreniere voted to go into executive session but announced he would not enter due to a possible conflict of interest. He left the meeting at 7:40 pm.

The Committee went into executive session at 7:40 pm and reconvened at 8:17 pm.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mrs. Pelavin moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Swartz. Vote – so voted.**

**Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

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Rachel A. Cormier  
Secretary