



# Mt. Greylock Regional School District

## School Committee Open Session Minutes

**Date:** May 14, 2020

**Start:** 6: PM

**Adjourn:** : PM

**Location:**

Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20, the public will not be allowed to physically access this School Committee meeting.

**In Attendance:**

| <b>Committee Members:</b>  | <b>Also Present:</b>  |
|--|---|
| C. Conry, Chair<br>A. Carter<br>S. Miller<br>R. DiLego<br>J. Art<br>A. Terranova<br>C. Greene<br><b><u>Absent:</u></b> | Kimberley Grady, Superintendent<br>Andrea Wadsworth, Asst. Superintendent for Business & Finance<br>Patrick Priester, Acting Dir of Pupil Services<br>Joelle Brookner, Principal of WES<br>Elea Kaatz, Asst. Principal of WES<br>Mary MacDonald, Principal of MGRS<br>Nolan Pratt, Principal of LES |

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| <b>Item</b>                          | <b>Comments</b>   | <b>Motion</b> | <b>Second</b> | <b>Vote</b> |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| <b>I. Call to Order</b>              | Meeting called to order by C. Conry at 6:02 PM  |               |               |             |
| <b>II. Mission</b>                   | At Mount Greylock Regional School District, our mission is to create a community of learners working together in a safe and challenging learning environment that encourages restorative based processes, respect, inclusive diversity, courtesy, integrity and responsibility through high expectations and cooperation resulting in live-long learning and personal growth.   |               |               |             |
| <b>III. Welcome to Carrie Greene</b> | The committee recognized the board's newest member, Carrie Greene, who was unanimously appointed at the May 4 <sup>th</sup> meeting to serve in place of Dan Caplinger following D. Caplinger's resignation.  |               |               |             |
| <b>IV. Public Comment</b>            | <p>As posted on the agenda: Community members were asked to email public comment to <a href="mailto:schoolcommittee@mgrhs.org">schoolcommittee@mgrhs.org</a>. The Chair will read any submitted public comments.</p> <p>Comment #1 – from Hugh Daly from Williamstown. Mr. Daly wrote in support of holding off on major capital commitments until further determinations can be made in relation to the economic impact of COVID-19.</p> <p>Comment #2 – from Wendy Skavlem from Williamstown regarding the school calendar. Mrs. Skavlem asked the committee to consider switching the start times when deliberating over the school calendar for 2020-2021 as the District plans to return from remote learning.</p> |               |               |             |



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| <p><b>V. Approval of Minutes (VOTE)</b></p> | <p>Submitted in the meeting packet for review and approval by the School Committee are meeting minutes from April 8; 15; 21; and 29, 2020 as well as from the joint meeting with the Town Select Boards on May 4, 2020.</p> <p><b>MOTION to approve by S. Miller, Seconded by J. Art.</b><br/> <b>Motion to approve by S. Miller, Seconded by R. DiLego</b><br/> <b>Motion to approve by S. Miller, Seconded R. DiLego</b><br/> <b>Motion to approve by S. Miller, seconded by R. DiLego</b><br/> <b>Motion to approve by S. Miller, seconded by R. DiLego</b></p>  |                  |                  | <p>6-0-1<br/>6-0-1<br/>6-0-1<br/>6-0-1<br/>6-0-1</p> |
| <p><b>VI. Principal Updates (VOTE)</b></p>  | <p><b>A. School Choice Slots (VOTE):</b><br/> All Principals gave an update in terms of remote learning, student engagement and the social-emotional welfare of the students during this time. At MGRS, the focus has turned toward graduation for, hopefully, an epic hybrid celebration. Virtual AP exams started virtually this week. Thank you to teachers, students and families. At WES, work is taking place on a virtual sixth grade musical. K. Grady gave an update regarding school choice and what that will look like in light of COVID-19. Taking in new choice students at this time could be very difficult in light of safety and social-emotional needs that will need to be met to accomplish any potential plan to re-open in the fall. For LES, N. Pratt would like to pause on making any choice slot recommendations at this time. For WES, J. Brookner stated</p> | <p>R. DiLego</p> | <p>S. Miller</p> | <p>7-0-0</p>   |



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|  | <p>that there are two K siblings she knows are interested in choice and would love to take them if that is possible. Otherwise, she also supports a pause on making choice recommendations for WES at this time. Discussion regarding enrollment numbers and the process for choice and if the District has to fill the slots if they are voted by the committee. Pre-K and K numbers may not be accurate particularly at LES because the registration process was not completed prior to the pandemic and school closure and had to be switched to a digital process. J. Art asked for clarification regarding sibling preference (which is within the District’s choice policy) as well as the budget impact of potentially not opening as many slots as the District had originally planned on. <b>MOTION</b> to open two K school choice slots at WES and to reserve the option to open further slots at LES and WES at the June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting by R. DiLego, Seconded by S. Miller. <b>MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY</b></p> |           |        |       |
|  | <p><b>B. Acceptance of Alice Shaver Foundation (VOTE):</b> M. MacDonald gave history of an annual \$5,000 gift that is to be used toward student trips/activities. Discussion: S. Miller asked for clarification as to what the money can be used for based on the accompanying letter. M. MacDonald clarified that she has spoken with the Trustee to clarify what the money can be utilized for. Vote 7-0-0; <b>MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY.</b></p>   | S. Miller | J. Art | 7-0-0 |



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| <b>VII. Superintendent Update (VOTE)</b> | <p><b>A. COVID-19 Update:</b> K. Grady gave an update on the District’s efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Administration has been pushing memos from the Commissioner out to families. K. Grady spoke to a time lag surrounding the distribution of those memos. The District has been participating in calls with the Commissioner and other key members from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. K. Grady outlined the process of communication and planning between Berkshire County Superintendents in planning for next steps. The Buildings &amp; Grounds department has been working on setting up classrooms based upon CDC recommendations. Through the summer, workbook materials are being looked at for students to prevent regression. In planning for re-opening, we must plan for additional costs in terms of the nursing staff, PPE, etc. In today’s Berkshire Eagle, Pittsfield Schools is looking at reductions based upon anticipated cuts to state aid. MGRSD will have greater concerns going into FY22 in terms of feeling the economic impact of the pandemic. Data is being analyzed from a parent survey that was distributed regarding remote learning. The Acting Dir of Pupil Services is working with staff to develop learning plans in order to stay in compliance with special education. Recently, K. Grady reached out to the Greenfield Virtual Learning school and walked through their process along with the Principal of MGRS. The administration is researching those models and platforms in order to make remote learning easier to access and more fluid for students and families. Planning is taking place in order to make digital learning more robust with current tools that the District has along with some additional purchases of workbook materials. The District is also looking at working with local college students to set up tutoring services for students. The Commissioner is planning to have more guidance and information by mid-June in the form of a memo and/or a Zoom call. The Governor has not made any remarks in terms of the re-opening in the fall. Tomorrow, MASS group members will be meeting with and working with a team from DESE and more information will be forthcoming as these meetings/planning takes place.</p> |               |               |
|  | <p><b>B. Present annual plan of professional development activities:</b> K. Grady stated that this year’s PD plan includes PD options for all faculty and staff members. K. Grady outlined and discussed each of the PD options planned for next year. Discussion regarding funds typically received from Williams College.</p>   |               |               |
|  | <p><b>C. Principal Search Update:</b> The final round has been completed for MGRS and reference checks are being completed. A second round interview was completed today for WES and one additional second round interview is scheduled for Monday. A search committee is established for the Assistant Superintendent / School Business Administrator position and interviews will begin for that position by the end of next week.</p>  |               |               |
|  | <p><b>D. School Calendar 2020-2021 discussion (VOTE):</b> September 14<sup>th</sup> may be declared a State Holiday if the Boston Marathon is re-scheduled. If that happens the last day would be 6/17 (assuming no snow days).<br/><b>MOTION</b> to approve the school calendar as presented with a potential</p>  | <p>DiLego</p> | <p>Miller</p> |



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|   | <p>holiday on September 14<sup>th</sup> which would push the last day to 6/17.<br/> <b>MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY</b></p>  |            |               |              |
|   | <p><b>E. Executive Session minutes declassification explanation:</b> K. Grady explained that Executive Session minutes will be reviewed by the Superintendent, Chair, and Legal Counsel to review via Zoom. Minutes will be brought forward for declassification at the June meeting.</p>   |            |               |              |
|   | <p><b>F. Special Education update:</b> K. Grady discussed work, progress and actions taken in the Special Education department along with building principals and the Acting Dir of Pupil Services. All requests that have come from the state as a result of the health crisis have been completed.</p>  |            |               |              |
| <p><b>VIII. Assistant Superintendent of Business &amp; Finance Update</b></p> | <p><b>A. Third Quarter FY20 Budget Update:</b> A. Wadsworth stated that the FY20 budget is currently right on track and she does not anticipate any shortfalls or issues. The District's Excess and Deficiency funds have recently been certified. Discussion regarding a potential transportation savings in FY20 which will be brought forward in order to off-set increased costs and reduced transportation aide in FY21.</p>   |            |               |              |
|   | <p><b>B. Warrant Signing Process Discussion (VOTE):</b> Currently 3 school committee members are responsible for signing warrants. A. Terranova, R. DiLego, and S. Miller. These three members together do not constitute quorum of any subcommittee which means no agenda must be posted in order to have warrants approved and signed. A. Wadsworth outlined the current process and read the Municipal Modernization Act to the committee. A. Wadsworth asked for a discussion to determine what is working or not working in the process. J. Art reviewed discussions that occurred within the Finance Subcommittee with the full committee. The Finance committee suggests authorizing one member of their subcommittee to sign (Finance Subcommittee Chair) and then that Chair would be obligated to make a report to the full</p> | <p>Art</p> | <p>DiLego</p> | <p>7-0-0</p> |



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|  | <p>committee. The Finance subcommittee would need to commit to meeting biweekly in order to review and sign warrants in a timely fashion. K. Grady stated that she believes this would assist the committee to become more familiar with spending and the regional budget. Discussion about having a member from each town sign off on warrants in order to have fiscal representation from each town. R. DiLego stated that by having one member sign off and then having the finance subcommittee review together in biweekly meetings, it allows for a group to review and question warrants in a timely manner. <b>MOTION</b> to authorize the Chair of the Finance subcommittee to sign all warrants with the expectation that there will be a schedule of finance subcommittee meetings timed to the payroll schedule to provide a forum for a discussion of the warrants prior to signature by J. Art, Seconded by R. DiLego. Further discussion regarding the process and logistics that this motion would put in place. <b>MOTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY</b></p> |  |  |  |
| <p><b>IX. Subcommittee/Liaison Reports</b></p> | <p><b>Finance Subcommittee:</b> J. Art gave an update regarding the Finance Subcommittee. Language has been drafted to go to the Town Meetings to propose the creation of a stabilization fund for the District. This is a fund that each Town will vote to establish and there is a cap of, at most, 5% and the funds can be used only for Capital expenses for which the District would otherwise need to borrow, i.e. the oil tanks at MGRS. The Finance subcommittee also discussed facilities needs including a storage shed at LES and the WES van. The Finance subcommittee plans to come back to the full committee with recommendations during the June meeting. Discussion has taken place within the Finance Subcommittee for the hiring process for the Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance. The subcommittee also went over some forecasts for funds/gifts from Williams college and related spending. At this time, it is the recommendation of the Finance Subcommittee to pause on any spending relating to the Phase II fields</p>     |  |  |  |



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|   | <p>projects due to the economic uncertainty brought on the COVID-19 pandemic. The deadlines related to ADA and Title IX compliance is April 2022; which means the committee should make a decision on how to proceed by October in order to allow architects enough time to complete projects. The value of the Williams gift is in question because it is tied in with Williams’ endowment.</p> <p><b>Education Subcommittee:</b> S. Miller stated the Berkshire County Education Task Force is proposing some shared learning platforms however, at this time, S. Miller does not recommend collaboration with the task force.</p>   |
| <p><b>X. Subcommittee Reorganization Discussion</b></p>                   | <p>Negotiations subcommittee would be unchanged. C. Greene will replace C. Conry within the Finance subcommittee and as Policy liaison.</p> <p>C. Conry discussed the possibility of an Evaluation Subcommittee or Liaison role. S. Miller noted it would be beneficial to have representation from each Town. Discussion regarding the evaluation process itself and how a subcommittee or liaison would be beneficial moving forward both in terms of evaluation the Superintendent and the Committee from start to finish. R. DiLegio asked about how the work of an Evaluations subcommittee might impact the timeliness of documentation becoming a public record before a full evaluation if completed and finalized. K. Grady reviewed the Superintendent evaluation process as outlined by DESE and voiced concern around the timing of this conversation and her upcoming evaluation process. Two liaisons will be established now and then a subcommittee will be established and goal-setting will take place during a retreat in August. The liaisons will be Steve Miller and Al Terranova.</p> <p>Discussion regarding school committee policy and the potential creation of a public relations liaison. The School Committee Chair will function as the Public Relations liaison.</p> |
| <p><b>XI. Subcommittee function/duty Discussion</b></p>                   | <p><b>A. Retreat Planning:</b> Annually the school committee comes together to review protocols, reflect on goals and set new goals. Locations are being explored in the event that the committee can meet together in August for 3-4 hours. The District Office Manager will distribute potential dates via a doodle poll to determine a date within the week of Aug. 10<sup>th</sup>.</p>  |
| <p><b>XII. Field Discussion – as requested by member Al Terranova</b></p> | <p>A. Terranova voiced concern that the Phase II subcommittee has not met since February. A. Terranova stated he is in favor of moving forward with a brock fill turf field. Mr. Terranova feels that in general the committee is unified except when it comes to the issue of the turf fields. A. Terranova discussed the history and initiatives that have been discussed as expenditures for the Williams College fund since 2016. The committee discussed whether or not there was an active Phase II group since D. Caplinger’s departure. C. Greene and S. Miller spoke to potential benefits for expending the gift for its intended purpose and moving forward with the Phase II capital projects. J. Art reiterated the uncertainty of the current value of the gift based on recent gains/losses to the College endowment. Further discussion regarding Phase I and II capital improvements and spending from the gift. Discussion regarding if the College has asked the District to not spend from the Gift at this time. K. Grady read an email from the District’s point of contact from the College. C. Greene spoke to the possibility of not keeping \$1.5 million</p>  |



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|  | from the Gift as an endowment when the District has E&D to draw from and the District is asking the Towns to create a stabilization fund. J. Art asked the committee to address whether or not to resurrect the Phase II Subcommittee or appoint a liaison. Discussion surrounding delegation of tasks, putting all information from Phase II in once place, and potentially voting to go back out to bid for the Phase II projects. The Finance subcommittee will get together with the former Phase II Capital Gift group.   |           |        |       |
| <b>XIII. Executive Session</b>   | <p><b>MOTION</b> to move into Executive Session with intent to return to open session per MGL Chapter 30A Section 21(a)(1) to discuss the physical condition of an individual (Teacher, C.C.); per MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (MGEA-Teachers)</p> <p>Miller Moves, Seconded by Art Roll Call Art -AYE, Carter- AYE, Conry-AYE, DiLego-AYE, Greene- AYE, Miller - AYE, Terranova - AYE</p> <p>The committee entered Executive Session at 8:42 PM<br/>The committee returned to Open Session at 9:20 PM</p> |           |        |       |
| <b>XIV. Decision Regarding Sick Bank Request (VOTE)</b>                              | The Superintendent will work with HR and legal counsel.  |           |        |       |
| <b>XV. Coaches Stipend MOA (VOTE)</b>  | <b>MOTION</b> to accept the Coaches Stipend MOA  | DiLego    | Miller | 7-0-0 |
| <b>XVI. Cafeteria Addendum (VOTE)</b>  | <b>MOTION</b> to accept the Cafeteria addendum as presented  | DiLego    | Miller | 7-0-0 |
| <b>XVII. Upcoming Meetings</b>   | <p><b>School Building Committee:</b> TBD<br/> <b>SBC Finance:</b> Tuesday, May 19, 2020<br/> <b>School Committee:</b> June 11, 2020<br/> <b>Education Subcommittee:</b> TBD</p>  |           |        |       |
| <b>XVIII. Other Business Not Anticipated by the Chair within 48 Hours of Meeting</b> | None   |           |        |       |
| <b>XIX. Motion to adjourn</b>  | Meeting adjourned at 9:24 PM   | Terranova | Miller | 7-0-0 |

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jonathan Nopper  
Mount Greylock Minutes Recorder