

# GLTS

Greater Lawrence Technical School

**DISTRICT COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
MEETING #1735  
NOVEMBER 28, 2018**

The Regional District Committee met in a regular meeting on November 28, 2018 at 6:00 PM at Greater Lawrence Technical School, 57 River Road, Andover, MA 01810.

**Members Present:**

Leo Lamontagne	Lawrence	Chairperson
Marilyn Fitzgerald	Andover	Vice Chairperson
Russell Bourassa	Methuen	
Barbara Grondine	Methuen	
Stephany Infante	Lawrence	

**Members Absent:**

Gary Mannion	Lawrence	Assistant Treasurer
Frank Rossi	North Andover	

**Others Present:**

John N. Lavoie	Superintendent-Director
Elizabeth Freedman	Assistant Superintendent-Director/Principal
Maria Silva	School Business Administrator
Gerry DiStefano	Treasurer
Susan Lally	District Recorder

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## **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Lamontagne called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM with a pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence. He asked members to remember those who protect us around the world

## **2. MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the minutes of November 13, 2018.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Bourassa

**VOTE:** Unanimous

#17637

## **3. FINANCE REPORT**

### *a.) Cash Balance Report*

Mr. DiStefano read the report into the record.

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the Cash Balance Report as presented.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Bourassa

Discussion: One member asked what communities the assessments were from and Mr. Stefano answered all but Methuen.

**VOTE:** Unanimous

#17638

*b.) Consolidated Cash Reconciliation Report*

No Discussion

*c.) Revolving Fund Report*

No Discussion

*d.) Budget Report*

No Discussion

*e.) Health Insurance Speaker*

Chairman Lamontagne reported that we have a visitor, Mr. Edd Byrnes who is a Senior Accountant with NFP, a consulting firm brought in to help us with our insurance. Supt. Lavoie reported that he asked him here tonight to help the District Committee understand Chapter 32B; Sections 19, 21-23 and what the law represents. NFP is also looking at our data and will make a recommendation. Mr. Byrnes spoke about how municipal health insurance is very different than corporate health insurance in that we are surrounded by Chapter 32B and all the regulations. Chapter 32B runs all our insurance benefits and statues. His firm, NFP works regularly throughout 50 states that help companies understand the rules of collective bargaining and self-funding. He has over 46 years of setting rates for firms that are self-funded and has experience in working with collective bargaining groups. The rules surrounded by Chapter 32B are very complicated today. Mr. Byrnes stated that he reviewed our last five years of claims with BCBS from the efforts of our administration and he did his own underwriting and found the action taken by raising twenty percent was the right thing to do. If he was going to renew in January, he would only raise it another point. The administration did a very good job setting the rate in September.

**4. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to enter into executive session at this time for contract discussions.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Bourassa

Roll Called by District Recorder

Mr. Bourassa	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Grondine	Yes
Ms. Infante	Yes
Mr. Mannion	Absent
Mr. Rossi	Absent
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes

#17639

**ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**ENTER OPEN SESSION**

**5. COMMUNICATIONS**

*a.) Donations*

Chairman Lamontagne reported the following donations to the school:

- 2004 Chevrolet Colorado, valued at \$2,096.00, donated by Mr. John Cronin of Methuen, MA
- 2011 Chevrolet Traverse, valued at \$7,525.00, donated by Mr. David Milne of Andover, MA

Supt. Lavoie updated the committee on the first payment of \$2,000 towards their commitment of \$10,000 from the Shaheen Brothers for the Athletic Facility Capital Campaign. The Shaheen brothers are a vendor that we use for our culinary department. Ms. Starkweather spoke to them and they agreed to give us \$10,000 over five years. They were great to work with. Supt. Lavoie was very much appreciative.

*b.) Articles*

“Reggie Resilience”, Michele Cubelli Harris – Class of 1984

*c.) Public Participation*

Kate Keyes lead instructor in Business Tech spoke on behalf of her personal experience as a teacher in Business Technology. Ms. Keyes has been employed by GLTS for ten years and as a Business Tech Instructor for several years. When she became an instructor she questioned the longevity of the shop because of the ongoing multiple changes it was going through. At that time, she was told that the shop would probably never go away and that it would always change with the times, because business was always present in our community. She was very disappointed with the news she received in June on closing the shop. She wanted the Committee to understand that in the years teaching Business Technology, she has not taught the same curriculum. They have taught to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century needs and updated software because we knew the importance of getting our enrollment up. We merged with marketing and changed our direction to teach students project based learning and how to become entrepreneurs. The students loved it and our numbers jumped. Having two successful years, she was blind sided and disappointed. She is only here on her behalf and her students and not the other Business Tech Instructors. This shop was one of the original career area shops, Data Processing, Office Tech, Business Tech and now Business Tech with Marketing in which we started focusing on the business piece. Our goal was to provide skills necessary to work in a professional environment using office based technology. Our curriculum, framework and equipment have changed and our graduates are working in doctor offices, human resources, sales, finance, bookkeeping and a few have become entrepreneurs. We have students who have chosen higher education. The skills learned are not limited to an office setting. We do not just teach Microsoft Suite and Technology. We teach business math, writing, public speaking, accounting, web design, marketing and more. Business Tech is an option for students who do not want the traditional shop setting. She asked the Committee to consider the valuable skills learned before phasing out the shop.

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to move the discussion of Business Technology into open session

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Ms. Infante

**VOTE:** Unanimous

#17642

Supt. Lavoie reported that he wanted to move Business Tech to open session so that the public could hear the reasons why the decision was made to phase out Business Technology. We started looking at all Chapter 74 programs not just Business Technology. This was done to decide if we needed to expand a program, make a program smaller or close a program. This was done consistent and fair and it was data based. Supt. Lavoie reported that he started looking into starting new programs last February, but in order to do this, we need space and instructors. Our budget and space would not allow this without closing or reducing another program. One program that is extremely important to give our students an opportunity for future pathways was Mechatronics, which is the repair of automation and robots. We receive several calls weekly from companies looking for students with those skills. Supt. Lavoie reported that he has spoken to over 40 companies looking for that skill set. As manufacturing grows in Massachusetts and continues to grow, we are seeing opportunities in IT, Machine Technology, Metal Fabrication and Pipefitting. These companies are all using robots and automation to support them. We are also looking into Programming and Auto Cad. There is also a need to expand our IT program because there are many jobs in this area that we cannot fill. IT offers many different pathways and a lot of our students want this program. This is why we have to look at our existing programs to make sure we are giving better opportunities for our students and what the economy and the future workforce dictate. That is why we put in a MSBA letter of interest to put an addition on to offer more programs and take in more students which would bring in the dollars to support those programs and instructors to teach our programs. Supt. Lavoie reported that one thing that came up in the Advisory Board Minutes and the two speakers at our last meeting was that business technology skill sets are needed in all career plans. If we look at all the frameworks in our career programs, strand 5 aligns with many of the competencies that are in line with strand 2 which is the basic heart of business tech. Many companies are looking for that high level technical skill not just the content of that career. Supt. Lavoie reported that the data that backed the decision to close the Business Tech shop comes from data from the MA Department of Labor, Federal Department of Labor and directly from the North Shore Workforce Investment Board, the Lowell Workforce Investment Board and the Merrimack Valley Work Force Investment Board in which Supt. Lavoie serves as a board member. He communicates with other members to determine where the shortages are and what is in the best interest of our students and to prepare them for their future life and career path. Supt. Lavoie reviewed the data and presented it to the Committee members in a presentation. There are three pieces of data that we look at, occupational growth, what students are choosing and how many stay in their career areas after graduation. The data

showed that with occupational growth, all but four areas are declining in the business technology field. We also have data from the past five years that showed Business Tech was not their first choice of career paths. It was either their second or third. Thirty two percent of these students chose IT. The data from our graduate studies, years 2014-2017 who graduated in office tech, only about twenty eight percent stayed in their career of business technology. One member stated that he feels all shops are like that. Some stay in their career areas and some do not. Supt. Lavoie reported the difference is that there are not a lot of students that choose Business Tech. About eighty percent of shops are being filled with first choice students. Although we do not know what students would pick if we had a robotics career area, the data shows the job opportunity is better, the pay is better and the growth in this industry is growing immensely. Supt. Lavoie reported that business tech skills are being taught in all career areas. Strand two of Business Tech is the most important of all frameworks. It is the skills competencies, knowledge and your hands on curriculum that you do in your career area. Strand five is what every career areas have in their program. However, the most important target should be how to do the business of any particular career. There are some advantages of business technology in some career areas but it is not the most important. Supt. Lavoie also presented a project that was done in carpentry that had students do a project of building a deck for a customer which included customer service and technology skills. The students had to use chrome books, excel and software to complete this project.

One member stated that she was a graduate of Business Technology and read some of the student's testimonials. She works for a 1.2 billion dollar company in Marketing. She came to GLTS to be in the Culinary Program, but after going through exploratory decided that Business Tech was for her because of the entrepreneurship in her family. After reviewing the package that was given to her, she decided that she did not want to vote to close the Business Technology Program. One statement that stuck with her stated from Ms. Keyes is long term success in students. She feels that she is a product of that. Supt. Lavoie is recommending closing the shop based on his presentation and belief of giving students the opportunities where job opportunity is better, the pay is better and the growth in this industry is growing.

**MOTION:** No member moved to close Business Technology Program

**2<sup>ND</sup>:**

**VOTE:**

Motion Fails

Supt. Lavoie stated that if this is the Committees' desire to keep the shop open, then we will all work very hard to make it successful. One member stated that she would have liked to have seen what part of business technology that would have been transferred into all career areas. It may have changed her mind.

## **6. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR**

*a.) Hot Press Bid for AFFOA*

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the Hot Press Bid for AFFOA as presented.

**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Ms. Infante

**VOTE:** Unanimous

#17643

*b.) Admissions Report*

Supt. Lavoie updated the Committee on the Admissions policy. Currently students who select a shop for their second choice can bump out a student that picked that shop for their first choice because they scored higher on their admissions scoring. The changes to the policy are to not have these second choice students bump the first choice students. Further discussion will be tabled based on not all changes were included in this packet

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to table this discussion based on not all changes were included in this packet.

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** Ms. Infante

**VOTE:** Unanimous

#17644

Table it to first meeting in January

*c.) Seacoast RFP for Field (DRAFT)*

Supt. Lavoie reported that the two RFPs were put out and members received the draft proposal for leasing the field. We accepted two proposals to continue to negotiate. Seacoast United was one of the proposals. It was for one million dollars over ten years that included the space we are leasing to Merrimack College.

*d.) Merrimack College RFP for Field*

Supt. Lavoie reported that changes have been made to the draft proposal and the changes have gone to our attorneys. If any members have any concerns, he wanted you to see this before the final proposal. One member stated that a concern is that Merrimack College would be renting during GLTS season. She would like it to be stronger wording in the contract that GLTS will take precedent. Additionally, Seacoast would like to rent indoor space that is during our basketball season and she would not want to see the members that have been renting from us for 30-40 years get bumped out. Supt. Lavoie reported that there are changes about priorities that will be going into the contract. Seacoast has not met with our attorney's yet. We are waiting to look at the states contract which will drive us to make some minimal changes. One member asked if we were comfortable with ten years. One member asked if we would be hiring a person to cover all of the grounds. Supt. Lavoie reported that we have a grounds person now, but not specifically for the turf fields. Seacoast is offering services with their contract to help us with this and that is why they are asking for an office. It is a business situation that could benefit us. We don't want to hire a full time person that would drain our proceeds. They are also working with Andover soccer who rents our fields now.

*e.) Meeting with Executive Director of Licensure*

Supt. Lavoie will meet with the Executive Director of Licensure, Charles Borstel. One issue surrounding licensure changes is with our cosmetology students. Sophomore students who are sixteen years old are unable to count their sophomore hours which means that they cannot go out on co-op until the end of their senior year. Supt. Lavoie is also representing MAVA on this issue as well. Another issue he would like to discuss is the number of plumbing students that can go out to work on our house project which means half of the students are left behind which impacts their learning and they miss opportunities that they will not be able to have again. Supt. Lavoie reported that was told it is a safety issue. We are working on getting that changed. The next issue is the regulation of our HVAC students and their hours for co-op placement.

*f.) Attorney Morris meeting with the Undersecretary of Finance Regarding Field Financing*

Supt. Lavoie reported that our attorney spoke with the Undersecretary of Finance, Jennifer Sullivan and they are working on the contract. Ms. Sullivan is onboard and they are working on getting some of her issues resolved.

*g.) Two -year Graduate Data Report*

Supt. Lavoie reported that we report on students that have been out of school for one and two years to see what they are doing. This study is part of our Perkins grant. Supt. Lavoie will update the report and distribute a copy to the Committee by shop in place of their name which would be easier to see.

*h.) Holiday Celebration*

Supt. Lavoie reported that the Holiday Celebration will be held at our next District Meeting, December 11, 2018.

**7. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**8. OLD BUSINESS**

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

**10. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS/REPORT**

- a.) Resignations
- b.) Leaves of Absence
- c.) Retirements
- d.) Appointments
- e.) Job Postings

- STEAM Computer Science Instructor, effective SY 18-19, replacement position

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the job posting as presented.

2<sup>nd</sup>: Ms. Infante

**VOTE:** Unanimous

#17645

- Communications, Designer, interim position, replacement

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the job posting as presented.

2<sup>nd</sup>: Ms. Infante

**VOTE:** Unanimous

#17646

**11. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**12. ADJOURNMENT** at 8:00 PM.

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to adjourn.

2<sup>ND</sup>: Mr. Bourassa

**VOTE:** Unanimous

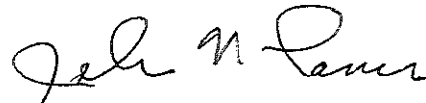
#17647

Respectfully Submitted:



Susan Lally  
District Recorder

Minutes Reviewed:



John N. Lavoie  
Superintendent-Director