

GLTS

Greater Lawrence Technical School

**DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MEETING #1764
FEBRUARY 18, 2020**

Members Present:

Leo Lamontagne	Lawrence	Chairperson
Marilyn Fitzgerald	Andover	Vice Chairperson
Frank Rossi	North Andover	Assistant Treasurer
Zoila Disla	Lawrence	
Stephany Infante	Lawrence	
Anngybel Moreta	Methuen	
Francisco Surillo	Methuen	

Members Absent:

Others Present:

John N. Lavoie	Superintendent-Director
Maria Silva	Business Manager
Gerry DiStefano	Treasurer
Susan Lally	District Recorder

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 February 4, 2020

2ND: Mr. Rossi

VOTE: Unanimous

#17928

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.

2ND: Mr. Rossi

VOTE: Unanimous

#17929

b.) Consolidated Cash Reconciliation Report

No Discussion

c.) Revolving Fund Report

No Discussion

d.) Budget Report

No Discussion

e.) OPEB Presentation

The OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) presentation was given by Brian Jamros and Kathleen Glowacki of Bartholomew & Company, Inc. OPEB refers to the benefits, that are any retirement benefits a public employee is promised other than his or her pension. Benefits under the OPEB umbrella include anything from life insurance premiums to post-retirement healthcare costs to deferred-compensation arrangements. MASS General Law Chapter 32B, Section 20 allows a city, town, district, county or municipal lighting plant to set up a special trust fund. The governmental unit's treasurer is the custodian of the fund. These benefits are typically paid using one of two methods: A pay-as-you-go method, in which a public employer annually allocates a certain percentage of its annual operating budget (or general fund) to disburse to its retirees; or an OPEB trust method, in which an employer annually transfers a set amount of earmarked cash into a dedicated trust fund, and invests it. We have been paying as you go for a very long time, but now people are living longer, and health care costs are going up 5-12 percent and the money is not earning as much as it used to. All these factors play a big role. Additionally, GASB 75 took your unfunded liability and put it on the balance sheet as a liability and now your credit rating will drop if you do not address it. Mr. Jarmos reported that they have been working with Gerry DiStefano and Maria Silva since February 2019 and we meet semi-annually. This the first time presenting to the District Committee and we thank you. Ms. Glowacki reported on GLTS Historical Market Value and Performance, Performance Summary and history, Portfolio Holdings and Risk Metrics. Mr. Jamros reported on the updated Investment Policy Statement. One member asked what month of the year we hand over the \$100,000. Ms. Silva reported that it is done, every time we send out the assessments, August, November, March and June. One member reported that she thought our credit rating was based on our four communities and we have used the town of Andover's credit rating when we borrowed money. Do we now have our own? Mr. Jamros reported that it is still based on your four communities but another component is based on your unfunded OPEB Liability. One member asked if we ever took a stance and directed you in investments that we do or do not want to invest in such as climate changes. Ms. Glowacki reported that we have clients, especially in a school district that wants us to invest in ESG (Environment, Social and Government) and is something that we can do. Mr. Jamros reported that we have not been directed by this district yet, but we can help you and advise you on that. Supt. Lavoie asked if we are funding our account enough that it does not affect our rating? Mr. Jamros reported that S&P is starting to look at how you are funding your account. They will be looking at if you are targeting your discounted rate at 6 1/2 percent and you are and from a funding standpoint, are we doing 1 percent of the annual contribution or are we doing 50 percent. It has been alluded to that they are looking for a higher rate of contribution. Mr. Jamros will give an update when he has the numbers. One member asked what "Alts" means next to the Portfolio Equity Bonds line item. Ms. Glowacki reported that it means "Alternative" and that these funds will be up in a down market. One member reported that 2018 was a terrible year. Ms. Distefano reported that it was timing.

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the update to IPS Investment Policy Statement related to OPEB.

2ND: Mr. Rossi

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	No
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Infante	Abstain
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes
Ms. Moreta	No
Mr. Rossi	Yes
Mr. Surillo	Yes

#17930

f.) Budget Transfers.

Ms. Silva reported that this time of year she starts to prepare the budget for next year's budget. However, throughout the year, we have to take funds from one account and fund another account based on changes that happen during the year, such as new hires, projects and additionally, we also have account number changes.

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the budget transfers as presented.

2ND: Mr. Rossi

VOTE: Unanimous

#17931

g.) 457b Plan

Ms. Silva reported that we currently have a 403(b) plan in place to enable staff/teachers to put more into their retirement fund. We now are offered a 457(b) which is similar to the 403(b). The difference is that if you part ways from your employer or retire, you are able to start taking the funds from the 457(b).

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the implementation of the 457(b) in the District.

2ND: Mr. Rossi

VOTE: Unanimous

#17932

Budget:

Supt Lavoie reported at our next District Committee meeting our intention is to provide you with a preliminary budget. It is about 95% completed. This way, if you have any questions, you can call or come by and we can help you answer your questions and concerns. Ms. Silva reported that her door is always open for anyone to come and sit with her. It is hard to understand all the numbers. Supt. Lavoie reported that he and Ms. Silva will be glad to hold a workshop next week to help with this as well. Chairman Lamontagne requested that we post to accommodate the Open Meeting Law. The workshop will be held on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 from 5:00PM-6:00PM. One member asked if we are voting on the budget on March 3, 2020 District Meeting. Ms. Silva reported that we are not looking for a vote then.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

a.) Donations

b.) Articles

- GLTS Student's Participate in Cosmetology Community Service Event.
- SkillsUSA Winner of the National Tee-Shirt Design Contest.

c.) Public Participation

None

5. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR

a.) Student Opportunity Act

Supt. Lavoie reported on the SOA (Student Opportunity Act). The new law chapter 70, SOA passed last fall. A power point and webinar from the state was provided to us which Ms. Silva, Ms. Freedman and I attended. I will provide you a copy of the power point in advance of next District School Committee meeting so you can have time to review it. We have to provide the state with a three-year plan on how we are going to close the performance gap in ELA, math and science regarding our low-income students, special ed and EL students in order to get close to what achieving students look like in the state. The webinar went over the long form that needs to be filled out and the process that needs to happen which involves our parents and District School Committee. We are doing a lot of initiatives already that are acceptable to the DOE and we will look at any new initiatives to close the gap and then put a basic foundation plan together. We will meet with the Student Council and the District School Committee and present our plan. Supt. Lavoie reported that we can have a subcommittee if you prefer. We can start the March 17th meeting at 5:30 if that is acceptable to allow more time. We will continue to keep you informed of the progress and process ongoing. One member asked if we can provide data that shows how we are doing in performance compared to the state. Supt. Lavoie reported that we can put it together and provide it to the District Committee. One member asked if we are voting on a subcommittee, or are we doing it as a whole committee. Supt. Lavoie reported that if we do want a subcommittee then we should put it together sooner, rather than later. They will be working with Principal Freedman, Ms. Silva and myself. One member reported that she prefers a subcommittee. Chairman Lamontagne asked if any members were interested. Three members responded yes.

b.) Diversity Update

Supt. Lavoie reported that they have been working on a plan on how the school relates to recruitment in the building and how the staff feels we are doing. Ms. Silva, Ms. Zahn, Mr. Haas, and I have been attending a workshop provided by the DOE. This is a three-part series and we have attended two. The purpose of this is to address better ways of recruiting more diverse population of candidates that want to apply and to make them feel they matter and that GLTS is a good place to work. The next workshop is February 26th and the agenda was provided so you can get a sense what we are covering and what some of the work that has to be done. Some initiatives we are working on are reviewing our forms, website and postings to seek out any biases. We have not put a plan in place yet, but we are working on putting a committee together. Additionally, the HR Director will be contacting colleges in

Massachusetts that have teacher prep courses and we will be asking them to post our positions. Supt. Lavoie reported that he attended an educational program in Boston last week and I spoke to a gentleman from Boston College and asked if they had a teacher prep program. They also have a teacher prep course specifically for people of color and will have the Director that oversees that program reach out to me to develop a relationship in which we can work with their students. We may be able to have them student teach and then stay here. On March 31, at 6:00PM at the Lawrence Public Library, Ms. Zahn and myself will be conducting a workshop on how to become a teacher. I will be contacting newspapers and social media and our graphics' department will make posters to promote. We are doing a teacher recruitment week the first week in April. We will be training for diverse staff to be on our interviewing committee. We also will be sending out a survey to staff to get feedback on how we are doing and any ideas they may have.

c.) Out of State Travel

Caroline McCullough, Marla Chae with STEAM Students are requesting Out of State Travel to attend Junior Science and Humanities Symposium at University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH where STEAM students will be competing on March 26 and March 27, 2020, No Cost, No Substitutes needed.

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the out of state travel for Caroline McCullough, Marla Chae with STEAM Students to attend Junior Science and Humanities Symposium at University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH where STEAM students will be competing on March 26 and March 27, 2020, No Cost, No Substitutes needed.

2ND: Mr. Rossi

VOTE: Unanimous

#17933

Rob and Karla Mahoney are requesting Out of State Travel to Rivier University in Nashua NH on February 20, 26, March 19, 21, 24, 26, April 4, 7, 9, 11 and Colby-Sawyer, March 31 in New London, NH to observe NCAA Volleyball Matches on College Campus. No Cost, After School, No Substitutes needed.

MOTION: Mr. Rossi moved to approve the out of state travel for Rob and Karla Mahoney to Rivier University in Nashua NH on February 20, 26, March 19, 21, 24, 26, April 4, 7, 9, 11 and Colby-Sawyer, March 31 in New London, NH to observe NCAA Volleyball Matches on College Campus. No Cost, After School, No Substitutes needed.

2ND: Ms. Fitzgerald

VOTE: Unanimous

#17934

d.) March Calendar

No Discussion

e.) Business Technology Update

Supt. Lavoie requested to table the update on Business Technology

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to table the update on Business Technology

2ND: Ms. Infante

VOTE: Unanimous

#17935

6. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

One member requested to add a box on the out of state form to check off if a substitute is needed.

7. OLD BUSINESS

a.) District Committee Priorities

b.) Policy

One member reported that she receives policy updates from MASC and wants to know if they automatically get updated in our Policy Manual. Supt. Lavoie reported that Ms. Lally is in the process of working with MASC on updating the manual. It does not happen automatically, and we have already paid them \$2,500. We will update the District Committee once we have more information to report.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a.) Compensation to District Committee Members

Supt. Lavoie reported that he was asked to add this to the agenda. This request is based on the following law, M.G.L.A. c. 71, section 52. "The School Committee shall serve without compensation" ... however a member of a regional school committee may be compensated "by majority vote of the voting member towns authorized at their respective town meetings." Chairman Lamontagne reported that this has been requested before and if each member would like to pursue this, they need to go to each of their communities. One member reported that the city of Lawrence is reviewing their charter and thinks there will be a discussion on this. She will follow up. Chairman Lamontagne reported that it does not matter what our communities are doing, we would still have to get permission from each one for our committee to be compensated. One member reported that she has an issue with getting compensated. It may attract the wrong people for the wrong reasons.

9. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS /REPORT

a.) Resignations

b.) Leaves of Absence

c.) Retirements

d.) Appointments

- James Coleman, Math Tutor, \$35.00 per hour, Effective Date: February 28, 2020-May, 2020
- Joseph Ruane, Math Tutor, \$35.00 per hour, Effective Date: February 28, 2020-May, 2020

e.) Job Postings

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

One member requested to have all new hires, including coaches' names and title under Personnel.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

MOTION: Mr. Rossi moved to go into Executive Session

2ND: Ms. Infante

VOTE:

Roll Called by District Recorder:

Ms. Disla	Yes
Ms. Fitzgerald	Yes
Ms. Infante	Yes
Mr. Lamontagne	Yes
Ms. Moreta	Yes
Mr. Rossi	Yes
Mr. Surillo	Yes

#17936

ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION

ENTER OPEN SESSION

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Fitzgerald moved to adjourn at 7:10 p.m.

2ND: Mr. Rossi

VOTE: Unanimous

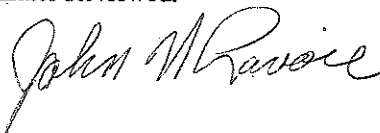
#17939

Respectfully Submitted:



Susan Lally
District Recorder

Minutes Reviewed:



John N. Lavoie
Superintendent-Director

