



**DISTRICT COMMITTEE  
OPEN MEETING MINUTES  
MEETING #1859  
February 14, 2023**

**Members Present:** Leo Lamontagne                      Lawrence                      Chairperson  
Thomas Hatem                      Methuen                      Vice Chairperson  
Marilyn Fitzgerald                      Andover                      Assistant Treasurer  
Zoila Disla                      Lawrence  
Francisco Surillo                      Methuen

**Members Absent:** Vivian Marmol                      Lawrence

**Others Present:** John N. Lavoie                      Superintendent-Director  
Susan Zielinski                      Principal  
Melissa Martel                      Director of Finance  
Gerry DiStefano                      Treasurer  
Cheryl Dennis                      District Recorder  
Susan Lally                      District Recorder

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Lamontagne called the meeting to order at 6:00PM  
*Roll Call by District Recorder: Ms. Disla (present), Mr. Hatem (present), Mr. Surillo (present), Ms. Marmol (absent), Ms. Fitzgerald (present), Mr. Lamontagne (present).*

**2. EXCEPTIONAL REGGIE**

Superintendent Lavoie introduced and presented Michelle Batista, a dental assistant career student, with a certificate for being the Exceptional Reggie this month. Superintendent Lavoie stated that Michelle’s been a student at GLTS since 2019 and has a GPA of 4.43. She is currently employed as a dental assistant through our co-op program with Andover Pediatrics. Her achievements include being ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> out of a class of 405 students in the class of 2023 and receiving the Boston College Book Award as a Junior. Michelle contributes to the school community as a Reggie leader and is a member of the Interact Club which sponsors events in community service in Lawrence. Congratulations were extended from the committee to Michelle and photos were taken.

**3. MINUTES**

**MOTION** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the Open Session Minutes of January 17, 2023 as presented.  
**2<sup>ND</sup>:** Mr. Surillo

**Vote:** Roll Call by District Recorder

Ms. Fitzgerald                      Yes  
Ms. Disla                      Abstained  
Mr. Hatem                      Yes  
Mr. Surillo                      Yes  
Mr. Lamontagne                      Yes

#18413

#### **4. FINANCE REPORT**

##### *a. Cash Balance Report*

Mr. DiStefano read the Cash Balance report into the record.

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

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

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18414

##### *b. Consolidated Cash Reconciliation Report*

No Discussion

##### *c. Revolving Fund Report*

No Discussion

##### *d. Budget Report*

No Discussion

##### *e. Budget Transfers*

Ms. Martel stated the Committee received documents in their packet and that they were broken out by salaries and expenses. The salary entries were essentially to clean up accounts with negative balances using some positions funded by Perkins, reallocating two administrative positions to proper budget line and some revenue from unfilled positions. The expense entries were to clean up negative balances.

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the Budget Transfers as presented.

Ms. Fitzgerald voiced her concern that a lot went into salaries versus program expenses. She questioned if that was due to the fact that they hadn't budgeted enough or if it was because of new positions. Ms. Martel explained her process. She breaks things out as she does for organizational purposes. On the salary side the savings primarily came from a grant which was originally budgeted. Others were due to reclassification of positions and either unfilled or positions filled mid-year. Ms. Fitzgerald wanted clarification on the discipline professional salary which put in \$142,000 and similarly the athletic department. Ms. Martel said she reclassified Ms. Gillis' when she changed her role. There was an overage amount there which corrects that. The same thing with athletics. Mr. Hatem questioned if the automotive equipment for the new part of the building was already budgeted for. The \$12,000 going into supplies made sense due to increases but not automotive equipment for \$10,600. Superintendent Lavoie said he'd received requests to buy a specific type of lift so a change was made to accommodate that and felt the excess money could be transferred into this year's budget to cover that.

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

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18414

##### *f. Revote on FY22-23 Budget*

Ms. Martel reported that with the completion of the FY22 end of the year report, we didn't meet net school spending by 1.6 million but we were under the 5%. To comply with Chapter 70, we have to reallocate that money to our budget this year. Asking to revote the budget at the \$39,053,23.00 which is our foundation budget, plus the unspent money from FY22 that needs to be moved to FY23. Chairman Lamontagne asked if it will affect the communities. Ms. Martel responded that it would not. Mr. Surillo claimed he has no documentation showing the numbers. Ms. Martel reported that she could provide a copy of the end of the year report to everyone.

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve the revote on FY22-23 Budget

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

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18415

## 5. COMMUNICATIONS

### a. Donations

Chairman Lamontagne acknowledged the donation of a 2007 Toyota Tundra valued at \$6,475.00 donated by Mr. Stevens of Andover and a 2007 Volvo valued at \$3,400 donated by Ms. Gray of Andover.

### b. Articles

None

### c. Public Participation

None

## 6. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR

### a. Update on New Programs Approval

Superintendent Lavoie reported that we received final approval from DESE on Aviation, Child Care and Programming, Part A. We're working on part B which is due on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Once Part B is approved the next step is that the department of education will come in May to inspect the space where the programs will be located. This includes looking at the curriculum and safety of the space. Will also meet with our advisory committee in May. The CTE team is meeting regularly to get Part B completed. There are still some action steps that need to be taken to be prepared.

### b. Purchasing of Hangar for Aviation

Superintendent Lavoie reported the biggest challenge is finding a home for them at the airport. To be approved for Aviation, we need a hangar which will take about one to two years to complete. There's one currently for sale at Lawrence airport for \$320,000. We've been dealing with the representative of the owner regarding the sale and now need a vote from the committee to continue with the negotiations to purchase the hangar to put in Part B. to satisfy that we have the required space. Chairman Lamontagne made a recommendation to purchase a hangar.

**MOTION:** Mr. Surillo moved to recommend the purchase of a hangar.

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

Superintendent Lavoie reported that we put in a grant for five million dollars to include building a hangar. Preliminary drawings were sent with the grant proposal for the Aviation Program and these spaces were submitted for approval. We'll use the funds for those three projects which has been approved by the state. We'll use the excess dollars for amendments and we'll possibly go to our cities and towns. The architects will get back to us with concrete numbers for the cost. We may need to ask for more capital improvement funds from this year's budget. Possibly need an additional \$500,000 - \$1,000,000. Mr. Hatem asked if the new space was just for the Aviation Program. Superintendent Lavoie said it also includes space for academic programming and theory programming. Ms. Fitzgerald asked how many additional freshmen students are we looking to take in with the three new programs? Superintendent Lavoie said 40 to 45 additional students this year in the Freshman class and that we're looking to increase by one academic staff member for each discipline area, four core subjects. Ms. Fitzgerald suggested that the owner of the hangar may be persuaded to offer a good will gesture donation with a healthy tax deduction. Superintendent Lavoie indicated he plans to approach him in that manner first. The owner is wealthy and is uninterested in this particular hangar and wants to dispose of it. He has asked the person handling the sale to arrange a meeting with the owner to speak directly with him to allow for the opportunity to suggest he consider donating the hangar to GLTS. If that doesn't work, he'll look for ways to reduce the cost.

Mr. Hatem wanted to know how the programs will be publicized. Can the PR firm we currently use handle that for us; and if so, how would they do that? Can we contact the PR firm? Superintendent Lavoie said that we will be contacting the PR firm and get something out to the community soon. We'll be putting together an article that addresses GLTS growth in programming, changes inside the building, the upgrades to the space in the shop and our plans for the future. He wants to compile a comprehensive article that encompasses everything. We want to do this with our PR firm sometime in March. Ms. Fitzgerald wanted clarification on what would be the ramifications relative to the buses and what personnel would be required over there? Has every last detail been thought through with regards to safely having an entire program taking place off campus?

Superintendent Lavoie responded that we've had a lot of experience in running programs off campus. For instance, students building houses require ensuring student safety. The Aviation Program would be similar. The instructor would be the lead person and the only staff. We'd have to meet state regulations designing with regards to installing bathrooms and safety facilities, first aid and CPR training which our instructors presently have. All of these would be addressed. We have a consultant from Westfield Academy where they have an aviation hanger at the airport and they're helping us design the space, with equipment and the curriculum. We're paying him a consulting fee, to help us with part a and he's helping us with Part B. Chairman Lamontagne asked if we're talking about just purchasing the hanger on leased land. Superintendent Lavoie said yes, we'd own the building and lease the land which is owned by the city. The purchase also needs to be approved by the airport commission in Lawrence and the state. It's a long process after purchasing it and they'd have to approve us as a tenant. Chairman Lamontagne questioned the cost of the lease. Superintendent Lavoie believes it's .50 cents per square foot.

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18416

*c. Update on School Projects*

Superintendent Lavoie said that the Reggie Café has been open for two weeks. The refrigeration for pastry is not in yet but we're told it will hopefully be coming in this Thursday. At the Four Winds we just need to finish the tables which we took the old tops off of and built new tops out of the mahogany pews we received from the church in Methuen last year. They'll match our glass door. Everything will be completed over February vacation and we're looking to open the second week of March. New chairs are roughly a 4-week lead time. We'll use the library chairs for another purpose, they won't go to waste. The furniture for the library is expected next week. We have a targeted date of March 13<sup>th</sup> to open the child care center and take children in. The custodians are coming in early today to clean the space. All necessary inspections happening next week. On the 28<sup>th</sup> the state will be in to do a final inspection and we'll get our license upon passing that.

Mr. Surillo asked if we're going to have a grand opening for the child care program? Superintendent Lavoie answered that we are once approved by the state. We will have an opening for the staff after school and then one for all three spaces for the community perhaps on a school committee meeting evening. We'll have a grand opening for all of them: Cosmetology, Four Winds, Reggie and the Child Care Center; and if windows are in, we can do automotive too.

*d. Out of State Travel*

Ms. Jacklyn Hunter, Instructional Technology Specialist to travel to Pennsylvania Convention Center for the Professional Development & Leadership Exchange at the ISTE Conference, June 24<sup>th</sup> through June 28<sup>th</sup>. Total cost is \$3,180.76.

**MOTION:** Mr. Surillo moved to approve the out of state travel for Ms. Jacklyn Hunter, Instructional Technology Specialist to travel to Pennsylvania Convention Center for the Professional Development & Leadership Exchange at the ISTE Conference, June 24<sup>th</sup> through June 28<sup>th</sup>. Total cost is \$3,180.76.

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

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18417

*e. Transportation Bid*

Superintendent Lavoie said we put out an invitation to bid for a new bus contract. The RFP went out by Melissa which was very comprehensively put together. He commended Melissa for the exceptional work she did. We only received one bid from the same company we have now, North Reading Busing Company. Ms. Martel reported that the numbers are shocking. It's a 25% increase for the first year. While the bus company hadn't increased our prices for the last two years, she was projecting an 18% increase. Everyone should have the numbers in front of them. Ms. Fitzgerald said that this is a very comprehensive document and that the detail is outstanding. She complimented Melissa on a job well done. Mr. Surillo said they didn't charge us more but we paid more than any other school district in the area during covid. This is an insult from the bus company especially in light of their lack of service. Unfortunately, we have no choice right now. We must look at something going forward. Ms. Disla asked if this was the total new bid? What was the old price? It's not here, right? Ms. Martel reported that didn't have the exact number but said we're currently at 1.47 million and this is now 1.7 million. Superintendent Lavoie recommended going with the bidder's proposal as there are no other options.

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald

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

Mr. Surillo question how many years this contract was for? Superintendent Lavoie said it was for three years with a two-year extension if we decided we wanted to extend it. Ms. Martel said that there are options in the contract that we do have an out if they're not providing satisfactory services but we'd have to go out to bid again and would probably be stuck with the same company. Ms. Fitzgerald said Superintendent Lavoie was going to meet with Whittier about their program. We have three years to figure out if we can run our own fleet of buses. Let's pass this tonight and it'll give us time to investigate the viability of that option.

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18418

Superintendent Lavoie commented that we have no control but we can look at providing late service runs with mini buses to save some money but the challenge is getting bus drivers. We've offered the custodians a 5% increase in their contract if they're willing to get a 7-day license but we've had no takers. It's really hard to get people interested in driving buses.

*e. Admissions Report*

No Discussion

*g. Student Achievement Award for High Need Students*

Superintendent Lavoie addressed the new award the Commissioner is putting out. It's an award for high need students that perform well in the MCAS. He will send a certificate to the school and a gift certificate to the students. He'll also provide recognized students with a letter. We have to provide them with the names. We just received the communication from him. This is a new program that he's just starting.

*h. Update on Advisory Board Recommendations for Safety Issues*

Superintendent Lavoie and Ms. Martel met with each individual supervisor of the different programs for safety and all the recommendations. We'll be looking at what we can fund this year. We will address funding all of the recommendations by the end of this year and we'll be updating you on all of those projects at our next meeting.

*i. Legislative Breakfast*

Superintendent Lavoie informed the committee that the annual legislative breakfast is scheduled for March 24<sup>th</sup> which allows us time to discuss special funding with them. We do know Representative Frank Maron is

moving a three billion-dollar bill through the House and a bill in the Senate to try to provide more funding for vocational education. We'll be doing work with MAVVA to ensure support for that. He'll be providing the committee with information relative to that bill and ask the committee as a whole to sign a letter to submit in support of his bill. He'll provide more details about those bills before the legislature at our next meeting. At the breakfast we'll want support for that and funding for our existing projects and expansion of the school and other special programs for high school students that don't have access now. I'll be providing the committee with an outline report of my 5-year strategic plan at the next meeting that I'd like your input on and so you'll have an opportunity to weigh in on what you'd like to see prior to the legislative breakfast.

## **7. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE**

### **8. OLD BUSINESS**

a. *District Committee Priorities*

b. *Policy*

### **9. NEW BUSINESS**

No discussion

### **10. TABLED MATTERS**

- *Position Title Change (Coordinator of Grants)*
- *Part-time to Full-Time Position (HR & Business Office Specialist)*
- *Dental Assisting Instructor - off the table/motion*

**MOTION:** Mr. Surillo moved to remove the Dental Assisting Instructor position off the table

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

Superintendent Lavoie reported that he is looking to post for a Dental Assistant Instructor for next year to replace an Instructor retiring in September. Looking to bring on someone early to get trained, fill some current voids and be better prepared for next year. Mr. Hatem asked about the Director of IT Position? Superintendent Lavoie reported that we have a subcommittee that is interviewing three candidates.

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18419

**MOTION:** Mr. Surillo moved to remove the part-time to fulltime position off the table

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

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18420

Superintendent Lavoie stated that now that that contract has been completed we want to move the HR Business Office Specialist from a part to a full-time position. This position assists the HR director which makes a huge difference and it would be beneficial for them to learn payroll as well as a backup.

**MOTION:** Mr. Hatem moved to make HR Business Office Specialist a full-time position as presented

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

Ms. Disla questions if the part time to full time position was part of the negotiations? Superintendent Lavoie answered that no it was not. Mr. Surillo clarified that the Superintendent had tabled it until after the negotiations. Ms. Disla asked if the clerical negotiations were complete? Mr. Surillo responded yes.

Mr. Hatem asked if this was a union position? What would the impact be for us to go for full time moneywise? Superintendent Lavoie said yes and this is not a new position. The money would be minimal this year. Not a

large cost and we can afford it.

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18421

## **11. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS/REPORT**

*a. Resignations*

*b. Leaves of Absence*

Ms. Fitzgerald questioned if the LOA's have a start and end date?

Superintendent Lavoie said the majority of them do have end dates that are not listed.

Chairman Lamontagne suggested, without mentioning names, end dates be listed in the future.

*c. Retirements*

*d. Appointments*

Ms. Sean Davis, Electrical Instructor, January 23, 2023

*e. Job Postings*

- Dental Assisting Instructor, Per Teachers Contract, March 1, 2023, Replacement Position (Teacher Retirement)
- Aviation Instructor, Per Teachers Contract, New Position (See Attached)
- Child Care Instructor, Per Teachers Contract, New Position (See Attached)
- Programming Instructor, Per Teachers Contract, New Position (See Attached)

**MOTION:** Mr. Surillo moved to approve the job postings as presented

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

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18420

- Evening Adult Auto Collision Repair Instructors (2), \$65.00/hr. for up to 280 hours of instruction, \$50.00/hr. for prep time, March-June, 2023, Monday-Thursday, 4PM-8PM, to be supported through a contract with the Commonwealth Corporation for a Career Technical Initiative Grant awarded for an occupational skills training program for adults, Annual Position.

**MOTION:** Mr. Surillo moved to remove the part-time to fulltime position off the table

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

Chairman Lamontagne wanted to clarify that the Commonwealth Corporation is paying for this? Supt. Lavoie reported yes.

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18421

- School Counselor (Guidance Counselor), Per CBA, August 2023, Replacement Position.
- Strategic Plan Focus Committee (8), 20 hours each total, to be conducted after school, SY2022-23, New Position. (See Attached)

**MOTION:** Mr. Surillo moved to remove the part-time to fulltime position off the table

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

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18422

## **12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM**

*a. March District Committee Meetings*

Superintendent Lavoie said he will be on vacation March 14<sup>th</sup> and would like to move the March 14<sup>th</sup> meeting to March 28<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Martel reported that we are waiting for the budget numbers from the governor which should be out the end of February or the beginning of March. We don't want to wait too long to present it to you as we want to get those numbers. Chairman Lamontagne asked if they're not out by March 7<sup>th</sup> then there's no need to meet then? Ms. Martel believes she should have them by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March and then Superintendent Lavoie would present them to the committee on March 7<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Lamontagne suggested scheduling a preliminary meeting for the 7<sup>th</sup> of March if needed and then skip the 14<sup>th</sup> for the 28<sup>th</sup> and asked if that was agreeable to the committee. Discussion ensued moving the February 28<sup>th</sup> meeting to March 7<sup>th</sup> and then the meeting after that would be March 7, 2023.

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to eliminate the February 28<sup>th</sup> meeting and meet on March 7<sup>th</sup> and March 28<sup>th</sup>.

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

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18423

Ms. Fitzgerald requested another agenda item for the meeting on March 28<sup>th</sup>. She reported that she would like Superintendent Lavoie to report on the actual plans for classroom spacing for the three new programs and the actual spaces they will have. Will there be a place in the building if we don't have the hanger immediately? Where would we be putting them? She stressed that it would be helpful to see a preliminary plan. Superintendent Lavoie reported that he will provide a complete, comprehensive plan on how many staff members will be new for next year, where the classroom and shop space will be and how we'll meet those needs over the course of the next three years. Mr. Hatem wanted to clarify if we are closing any shops to make room for the new programs? Supt. Lavoie reported that we are not. Mr. Surillo wanted an update on marketing?

**13. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION:** Mr. Surillo to go into Executive Session at 7:15 pm

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

Roll Call by District Recorder:

Ms. Fitzgerald: Yes

Ms. Disla: Yes

Mr. Hatem: Yes

Mr. Surillo: Yes

Mr. Lamontagne: Yes

**Vote:** Unanimously approved

#18424

Enter Executive Session

Enter Open Session

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to approve Superintendent Lavoie to sell back his vacation days to get him to 30 vacation days which is approximately 20-25 days as presented.

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

Ms. Disla commented that she believes he should take those days instead of selling them.

**Vote:** Roll Call by District Recorder:

Ms. Fitzgerald: Yes

Ms. Disla: No

Mr. Hatem: Yes

Mr. Surillo: Yes



Mr. Lamontagne: Yes  
3 Yes', 1 No  
Motion Passes  
#18426

**14. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Ms. Fitzgerald moved to adjourn at 7:28 PM.

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

**Vote:** Unanimously Approved

#18427

Respectfully Submitted:

Minutes Reviewed:



Cheryl Dennis  
District Recorder



John N. Lavoie  
Superintendent-Director