

Glocester School Committee  
Glocester Town Hall, Room 9  
1145 Putnam Pike  
Glocester, RI 02857

May 7, 2024  
6:30 pm

### MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the Glocester School Committee was called to order by Chair, Ms. Keeling, at 6:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call:

Present: Ms. Keeling, Ms. Joyce, Mr. Dupuis, Ms. Henry, Mr. Rizzo, Ms. Ferreira  
Also present: Ms. Dubois, Mr. Piccirilli

3. Pledge of Allegiance

### DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mr. Dupuis, seconded by Mr. Rizzo, to approve the Open and Executive Session minutes from the April 4, 2024 School Committee meeting as presented.

Motion passed 6-0-0

5. Approval of Bills for April

Motion by Mr. Dupuis, seconded by Ms. Henry, to approve the check register dated May 1, 2024 in the amount of \$552,637.49.

Motion passed 6-0-0

6. Superintendent's Report-Personnel: Leaves/Resignations/Non-Renewals  
Appointments/Recalls and other Personnel Actions

Ms. Dubois explained that ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) funding, which was to address learning loss as a result of Covid, is ending. The teachers who were paid through this grant are going back into their classrooms, which will displace some teachers.

7. Town Council Update - Update on activities relating to the School Department

8. Accomplishments/Recognitions of Fogarty Memorial and West Glocester Schools

9. Corrective Action Plan for FY 2024 School Budget Deficit

Motion by Mr. Dupuis, seconded by Ms. Joyce, to approve the corrective action plan to address the FY 2024 school budget deficit as recommended by the Superintendent.

Motion passed 6-0-0

Ms. Dubois reported that for several years the town has level funded the school department budget forcing the school department to draw money from fund balance, significantly reducing the amount in the fund balance line item. Additionally, there was a reduction in State Aid over a 10-year period. She added that, the amount needed for out-of-district student placements, and transportation are always unknown expenses. In addition to freezing all but essential spending, the following cost saving measures have also lowered expenses: moving from two bus companies to one company; switching from being self-insured WB to The Trust; and working with Gloucester DPW for facilities management. Ms. Dubois stated that she is very appreciative of the Town Council approving the School Department's FY 2025 budget. However, that despite the steps taken to reduce expenses, regrettably, the only thing left to cut at this time is staff.

Audience member, Walt Steere informed the committee that, according to the Town Charter, using fund balance to cover a deficit is not allowed, which means that the committee has been in violation of the Charter. During discussion, Mr. Piccirilli confirmed that state law requires that all available unrestricted funds must be used to cover a deficit.

Motion by Ms. Keeling, seconded by Mr. Dupuis, to request from the Town Council a loan of \$350,000 in order to meet FY 2024 expenses.

Motion passed 6-0-0

10. Vote to Move Funds from Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Line Item to the General Fund

Motion by Ms. Joyce, seconded by Mr. Rizzo, to move up to \$100,000 from the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Line Item to the General Fund

Motion passed 6-0-0

11. Facilities Management for Gloucester Schools

Ms. Dubois reported that the schools have immediate concerns that need to be addressed and asked the committee to contract with the Region for facilities management for the next two months. Due to contract issues, the Town's Department of Public Works is not able to do the work that is necessary to address these concerns.

Ms. Keeling reiterated that this agreement is for May and June only to address the immediate needs at the schools. Additional conversations will be had with the Region regarding Gloucester facilities management going forward.

12. Public Comment

13. Seek to Convene to Executive Session per RI General Laws 42-26-5(a) (1) Job Performance – Certified Non-Renewals; Contracts for Facilities Management (2) Collective Bargaining – Educational Support Personnel MOA

Motion by Ms. Joyce, seconded by Mr. Rizzo, to Convene to Executive Session per RI General Laws 42-26-5(a) (1) Job Performance – Certified Non-Renewals; Contracts for Facilities Management (2) Collective Bargaining – Educational Support Personnel MOA  
Motion passed 6-0-0

14. Reconvene to Open Session

15. Vote to Seal the Minutes of Executive Session

Motion by Ms. Joyce, seconded by Mr. Rizzo, to seal the minutes of Executive Session.  
Motion passed 6-0-0

Ms. Keeling reported that in Executive Session, the committee discussed Job Performance – Certified Non-Renewals; Contracts for Facilities Management, and Collective Bargaining – Educational Support Personnel MOA. No votes were taken.

16. Vote on Certified Non-Renewals

Motion by Mr. Dupuis, seconded by Mr. Rizzo, to approve the certified non-renewals as recommended by the superintendent.  
Motion passed 6-0-0

17. Vote on Contracts for Facilities Management

Motion by Ms. Keeling, seconded by Ms. Joyce, to authorize the Superintendent and Committee Chair to move forward securing facilities management for May and June 2024 via either of the following two procedures within the parameters of the school budget:

1. Contract with the Region for Gloucester facilities management
  2. Contract directly with Steve Essex and Gary Gras for Gloucester facilities management.
- Motion passed 6-0-0

18. Vote on ESP Memorandum of Agreement

Motion by Ms. Joyce, seconded by Mr. Dupuis, to approve the Educational Support Personnel Memorandum of Agreement recognizing June 19<sup>th</sup> as a paid state holiday for 12-month employees.  
Motion passed 6-0-0

19. Communications From/To Members of the School Committee and/or School District

20. Future Agenda Items – Identification of Future Agenda Items:  
Facilities/Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent/ Secretary/Website

21. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Dupuis, seconded by Ms. Joyce, to adjourn.

Motion passed 6-0-0

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Kathryn Ritter-Smith, Clerk