

GPS Food Service Program Review Committee

Date: March 20, 2019

Place: Havemeyer Boardroom, 290 Greenwich Avenue, Greenwich, CT

Present: Committee: Lori O'Donnell, John Hopkins, Abbe Large, Jeff Ramer, Nerlyn Pierson, Lauren Rabin (by telephone)
Guest: Dave Nanarello, Jayne-Marie Lockett, Eugene Watts, Pat Maranan

The meeting began at 11:03 AM.

Mr. Hopkins introduced Jayne-Marie Lockett (GHS Food Service Manager) and Dave Nanarello (K-8 Food Service Manager) to the group.

Ms. Large brought up the topic of meeting minutes; (Mr. Ramer moved to discuss them and Mr. Hopkins seconded). The general consensus was that they were to high level and did not provide enough detail. Ms. Large recommended that Ms. O'Donnell possibly add some administrative support. Ms. O'Donnell agreed to inquire. Ms. Pierson recommended that draft minutes be issued to the members in .doc files so they could make edits prior to the next meeting. The committee agreed.

Mr. Ramer began a conversation about who should chair this committee. Having rationalized that this committee was sanctioned by and is reporting to the BOE, he felt that Ms. Rabin should chair it. Ms. O'Donnell clarified that this is an administrative committee and therefore she is the chair. Ms. Large commented on the origins of the committee and its purpose (financial), the expanded purpose of the committee (food quality) and agreed with Mr. Ramer, that since the BOE will be making all the decisions, that it should be chaired by a BOE member. Ms. Pierson recommended that we have co-chairs Ms. O'Donnell and Ms. Rabin. Ms. O'Donnell said she would follow up with superintendent on the ownership of this committee and report back next meeting.

Ms. Large recommended extending the length of these meetings to 2 hours to facilitate the work. All agreed and the next meeting was set for April 8, 2019 from 10AM-12PM. The May 14, 2019 meeting was also extended to 10AM-12PM.

Ms. Rabin began the conversation on the financial document supplied to the committee. The document will be used to gain a better understanding of the school lunch program finances and to help build out a perfunctory program for a pilot program. The first item discussed was the 712 account. This account represents the annual benefit charge to the program. Since it is entered as a lump sum in Munis, the committee felt it would be better to distribute that number out proportionately to all schools for a more accurate effect on each school's finances. In fact it was decided that all administrative expenses be distributed out proportionately to all schools. Ms. Rabin asked the question: What is

a reduced Priced student charged? Mr Hopkins answered .40 cents. This lead us into a discussion of student meal eligibility vs. student participation. Ms. Large, Ms. Rabin and Mr. Ramer wanted to know why students who are free or reduced don't eat all the time? Mr. Hopkins commented that it could be: pride, stigma and/or a choice. He went on to say that even in districts where all student were eligible for meal benefits that their high range for participation may 80-85%. The question helped the discussion on pilot. If the pilot is not on the NSLP but needs to feed eligible students, should that number be used or the avg. participation of eligible students. The decision was made to include all eligible, as that was the possible exposure. Ms. Large reported that based on Glenville's F& R eligibility that No Fuss Lunch (NFL) could handle (financially/operationally) the exposure of feeding all of them on a daily basis.

Ms. Large described her concept of the pilot program: 3 tracks. 3 schools on NFL, 3 schools on Brigade (a consulting firm that works with current staff) and 5 school remain self-operated by current program with improvements. Run the pilot for a year (2019-20) to gather information to compare/contrast and disseminate on how to proceed. Mr. Ramer would like a better understanding of what the BOE is looking for. Ms. Rabin commented the BOE's original thought was improve existing program and do an RFP for an FSMC. However, after hearing the public comments and discussion at its February 22, 2019 meeting was interested in pilot information and suggestions to consider. The committee had a brief discussion about RFP procedures and legalities in the context of several pilot possibilities and decided to exercise caution on what we can/can't do until we had accurate information.

Ms. Pierson started a conversation on a possible sub-committee. Looking to improve the existing program she recommended a "Menu Planning Committee" that would address food specifications, nutritional content, and be appealing to both parents and students. She motioned the formation of this committee consisting of: John Hopkins, Jayne-Marie Lockett, Dave Nanarello, Lori O'Donnell, Lisa Suriano, Dr. Sara Seidelmann, Dr. Elissa Diamond-Fields, Stephanie Knuff and Nerlyn Pierson. Mr. Ramer seconded. We all voted yes and the committee was formed.

The next subject addressed by the committee was the movement to remove foam trays from the program. Ms. DesChamps (PTAC –Green Schools) mentioned the bill before the CT State Legislature to "Prohibit the use of Styrofoam trays in CT Schools). Let's get a head of this before it's here. Mr Hopkins discussed his preliminary work on installing dishwasher in all the schools and moving to a washable reusable tray. The rough estimate (excluding GHS where we don't use foam products) was about \$115,000. We had a brief discussion on Melamine (Plastic) vs. Stainless Steel trays and decided that Stainless Steel would be the best choice if the price was comparable. Mr. Hopkins discussed that we could pilot this program at New Lebanon now (as they have a dishwasher in the new school), giving us an opportunity to analyze the operational effects on our current program. We discussed some of the possible issues: labor, timing, durability and felt all these could all be answered with an NLS pilot. The timing is being discussed, but the pilot should be able to run through the end of the current school once started. The conversation continued about funding the remaining

schools dishwashers, whether an interim appropriation (current budget year) or amended capital plan (2019-20 budget year would be best). We discussed the timing of each and how it would affect the installations before next school year. Ms. Pierson and Ms. Large expressed dismay that funds of \$115K could not be made readily available in the Town's finances. Mr. Ramer reminded us of BOE, BET and RTM procedures and cautioned that it should be done at a measured pace with community support to sway the Town's decision makers. Ms. Large thought there may be an opportunity to find money in the current food service budget if we concentrated on food waste and what savings could be derived from that. It was explained that post waste had no savings associated with it and pre waste was minimal based on the department's strict food handling procedures. Ms. Pierson expressed the sooner we eliminate foam from the program the better and reiterated to Ms. O'Donnell 'whatever you can do to get this initiative underway would be greatly appreciated.

The meeting was dismissed at 12:42PM