

## GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS *Board of Education*

Special Meeting – January 31, 2018

### MINUTES

President Shiflett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### ROLL CALL

Roll Call by President Shiflett indicated the presence of **Board Members:** Beverly Winstanley, Kim Mulvenna, Patrick McKennon, Sara Clark Pierson and Jon Shiflett. **Central Office Administrators:** Steve Gabriel and Sara Sutherland. **Others in Attendance:** Jarrod Smith, David Zerbe, Marisa Evans, Jim Evans, Matt Pierson, Maryann Pierson, Ben Cwayna, John Ellsworth, Carly Sharland, Cindy Zerbe, Andra Dionise, Melissa Mazzola, Katie Westen, Erica Ledesma, Garrett Brown, Katie Grass, Jim Gee, Kellee Auge, Susan Sowle, Jennifer Bouck, Kristy Merginac, Erica Deters and Kim Manning

#### SELECTION OF NEW GLPS BOARD OF EDUCATION TRUSTEE

President Shiflett noted Special Meetings like this are not to be taken lightly, as the name would imply. He noted tonight's meeting is dictated by state law that requires the Board fill any vacancy within 30 days. He mentioned the board is aware of several potential board member absences throughout February. Without filling the vacancy tonight, the board would be at risk of not being able to call a quorum. Failure to gather a quorum would mean the vacancy could not be filled and the Eaton RESA would be required to fill the vacancy for the district. He noted this is not what the voters of this district want. He stated the voters put their trust in the current members to run this district correctly.

Which brings me to the process you are about to witness. Michigan state law MCL 168.311 spells out how the legislature intended for school boards to fill vacancies. When there is a vacancy on the board, the board has 30 days to fill the vacancy by appointment. So tonight the board will follow state law and appoint one of the candidates that applied for appointment.

Similar to the election of Board Officers, Mr. Shiflett advised he will ask for nominations three times. After nominations are closed there will be a vote. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes of those present, the board will discuss the candidates and vote again. This will continue until a candidate receives a majority vote. The candidate appointed will serve on the board for the remainder of the year and will need to seek reelection on the November 2018 ballot if they wish to continue serving.

He expressed how pleased the board is with the quality of people who applied to be on this board. He remarked serving your community is not always a fun thing to do, noting

no matter what decision you make, someone will not like it and will absolutely discuss it with you, at length, in Meijer, while you're holding a bunch of groceries. But public service is also very rewarding. Helping to create a better school, community, or state with nothing to gain feels good.

President Shiflett then asked for nominations for Trustee of the GLPS Board of Education.

**Mrs. Clark Pierson nominated Ben Cwayna.**

President Shiflett asked a second time for nominations for Trustee of the GLPS Board of Education.

**Mr. McKennon nominated Marisa Evans.**

President Shiflett asked a third time for nominations for Trustee of the GLPS Board of Education.

There were no other nominations.

**By show of hands, President Shiflett asked for all those in support of Ben Cwayna's nomination. Mrs. Winstanley, Mrs. Mulvenna, Mrs. Clark Pierson and President Shiflett raised their hands.**

**By show of hands, President Shiflett asked for all those in support of Marisa Evan's nomination. Mr. McKennon raised his hand.**

**By majority vote, Ben Cwayna was appointed to Trustee of the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education.**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

District employee John Ellsworth noted today is the last day of School Board Recognition Month and offered his thanks. He went on to express his concern with the process to appoint the new Trustee to the Board of Education.

District employee Melissa Mazzola noted she regularly attends the meetings but was unfortunately absent at the meeting when Ms. Wacyk resigned. She expressed her surprise at the urgency of this meeting and expressed her concerns with the process to appoint a new Trustee to the Board of Education.

#### **COMMENTS FROM STAFF AND BOARD**

Mrs. Clark Pierson thanked Ben Cwayna and all the candidates noting the board received lots of information from the candidates. Some called the members, some didn't. She noted she is the one who asked to move this process up as she is awaiting the arrival of a grandchild and knows she will be absent. She noted is two members are absent and one gets sick, the board would not have a quorum and she was not aware, at the time, of the possibility of a telephonic vote. However, she felt if only two or three members were physically present and the rest of the members were on the phone, she does not feel that represents the district well.

She remarked the board did need to move fast as Ms. Wacyk resigned at the first and only board meeting in January. She felt the board got the call for letters of interest out to the community and the number of candidates seemed similar to what the board has received for past vacancies that required appointments by the board. She expressed her concerns regarding the rumors this was a secret meeting noting that a lot of people don't take a lot of interest in the board. However, the board followed the appropriate procedures for appointing a member to fill this short-term vacancy, as the seat will be open on the November 2018 ballot.

Mrs. Mulvenna advised there was a deadline in the process and remarked the board received all the letters of interest and supporting documents on Friday. They had time to review all the candidates. She expressed her hope that all the candidates will run for the seat on the November ballot. In closing she noted that she supported Mr. Cwayna not only because he is a qualified candidate, but because he is without a special interest. He is not paid by state funds; he works in the private sector.

Mr. McKennon remarked he was looking for a parent in the district noting almost all 10 candidates are. He looked at their ability to form relations with the community, knowledge of how the schools work from the inside. Again, most who applied. He went on to not he asked himself if he saw this person active in the community and in the schools to which he was really happy to read that with most of our candidates are involved. He went on to note he believes there can be improvements in the process and expressed his appreciation for the suggestions.

Mrs. Winstanley expressed her thanks to all the candidates. She noted she was pleased to see how involved the candidates were in the community. She remarked there are many different things that come to the board table and the board must keep an open mind.

President Shiflett thanked all the candidates. He noted he sought appointment to the board with Jim Shell stepped down. He lost to Mrs. Winstanley. So, he again expressed his appreciation to everyone who is interested in getting involved, especially in an era where you turn on the television and people are yelling at other people, you cruise the Grand Ledge Community Facebook page and again, find people yelling there. He encouraged people to get involved, be willing to take the time to understand.

Mr. McKennon remarked to the candidates that he too applied for the seat that Mrs. Winstanley won and the one that Mr. Shiflett won. So, he took the Abraham Lincoln way and put his name on the ballot. Third time was a charm.

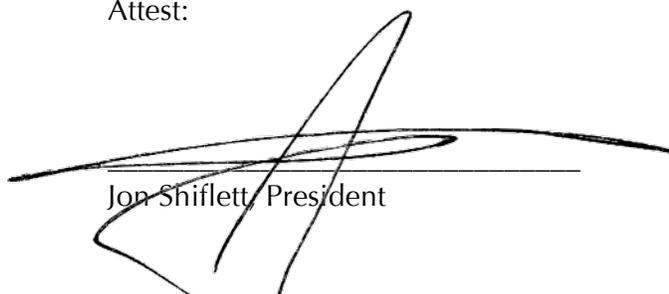
**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:

  
Patrick McKennon, Secretary

  
Jon Shiflett, President