
GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education

Regular Meeting – February 8, 2016

MINUTES

Vice President Shiflett called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. He led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call by Superintendent Brian Metcalf indicated the presence of ***Board Members***: Jon Shiflett, Jay Bennett, Sara Clark Pierson, Kim Mulvenna and Brody Boucher. ***Central Office Administrators***: Brian Metcalf, Andy George, Steve Gabriel, Nancy Rasinske, Norma Schutzki and Mark Deschaine ***Others in Attendance***: Ray Davis, Matt Pierson, Mike Lane, Todd Gute, Joanna Doren, Barry Doren, Kristy Merignac, Bri Dennis, Meghan Ritchey, Kurt Root, Katie Gregory, Candace Karrer, Michelle Hamilton, Laura Morrill, Andrea Dionise, Gail Schafer, Beth Johnston, Annette Kelly, Isabel Kelly, Jack Kelly, Linda Hoesl, Rachel Parish, Kelly Smith, Teresa Koenigsknecht, Chris Fizzell, Matt Szydlowski, Mandy Hall, Tracy Smith, Lindsey Grostefon, Susan Sowle, Kevin Mason, Kimberly Shoup, Jenny Kish, Denise Wilkinson, Michelle Knauff, M. Mazzola, John Ellsworth, Kelli Bohnet, Joni Wygocli, Julie Alexander, Denise DuFort, Sarah Felsing, Lisa Klingbiel, Jennifer Bouck, Greg Almy, Sharon Cusack, Nancy Nowak, Katie Westen, Tonya Rice, Shawn Bronson, Francie Skarritt, Jamie Slear, Jennifer Soria, Olivia Pahl, Pat Firtl, Amy Firtl, Staci Nye, Risa Hsu, Joseph Cook, Stacey Dohm, J. Marshall, Angela Lutz, Joni Henretty, Shelby Logel, David Logel, Colleen Price, Jim Price, Liz Price, Deborah McMartin-Finkel, Fred Hutchinson, Jeanine Cull, Mark Jones, Mackenzie Ferber, Kellee Auge, Josh Austin, John VanHoesen, Lori VanHoesen, Julie Shieding, Abby Taylor, Karen Densmore, Doreen Earl, Sheri Tulloch, Dana Schueller, Toni Heriford, Amy Heriford, Matt Bird and Kim Manning.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mrs. Clark Pierson for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the February 8, 2016 Agenda Items, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Mr. Boucher, seconded by Mrs. Mulvenna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the February 8, 2016 Consent Agenda Item, as presented.

Included on the Consent Agenda were the meeting minutes of the January 25, 2016 Regular Meeting and Closed Session.

The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

GLEA member John Ellsworth addressed the board on behalf of the teacher crisis team.

Grand Ledge teachers Jim Price, Rachel Parish, Candace Carrer, Susan Sowle, Sarah Felsing, Chris Fizzell, Sheri Tulloch, Matt Bird and Greg Almy individually addressed the board to provide information regarding what they, and their colleagues do, to make Grand Ledge great.

Parent and PTA President Matt Pierson spoke to the board advising them he works in a neighboring district and that district offers stipends to its teaching staff for teaching on their planning period. He remarked that even if his district increased the stipend amount, he would take back his planning period.

Teacher Kimberly Shoup gave a shout out to Beagle teacher Abby Sliger for the recent water drive conducted at Beagle Elementary School through the student council. She also noted teachers need to be compensated fairly.

Parent and community Member Todd Gute spoke to the board expressing his shock and disappointment when he learned there was not a signed contract with the teacher's union when he attended the January 25th Board Meeting. He noted that he believes both sides to be reasonable and encouraged the board to bring us together to continue the tradition of being a Community Committed to Excellence.

REPORTS

A. 2015-2016 BUDGET AMENDMENT PRESENTATION

Chief Financial Officer Nancy Rasinske presented the board with an overview of the 2015-2016 Budget Amendment including an overview of the transparency disclosure, a comparison of the approved November amendment and the February amendment noting a projected fund balance increase from 7.1% to 7.2%. However, she stressed there are several uncertainties that may impact public education, such as the Detroit Public Schools, the Flint Water Crisis, Energy legislation, the elimination of the Health Maintenance Organization Use Tax, no increase in the per pupil funding allocation or possibly a reduction, and the Governor's Executive Budget that will be presented later this week.

Mr. Shiflett noted while there are several items listed as uncertainties, they are really certainties. Detroit Public Schools and the Flint Water Crisis will have an enormous impact on the State's General Fund. Even though public schools receive funds from the School Aid Fund, monies are given to the State Aid Fund from the General Fund to make up the per pupil foundation allowance.

Mrs. Clark Pierson commented on another certainty regarding recently enacted Senate Bill 571 that "muzzles" local boards from providing their constituents with details of items on a ballot. She advised a federal judge has repealed this law, temporarily, but she understands the "fix" may be just as bad. She further explained Proposal A prohibited local school districts from being able to increase their operating revenue through bond proposals and SB 571 will further restrict public bodies from being able to increase their capital budget. She explained that right now, the district can get information out to the public regarding capital improvement

needs, but if Senate Bill 571 is allowed to take affect, this will not be the case. And even worse, she believes the public will view the silence of the school board and district as us trying to “trick them”, not that we are not allowed to provide information to them as outlined in this law. She explained this district continues to be creative noting this is one of the best boards she has served on. This board comes to meetings, they know, they are active in governance in a lot of ways. But this is so defeating. And, when this is our reality and our ability to get a bond proposal passed is completely stifled, those large capital improvements, such as a sink hole next to a parking lot or a roof that needs to be fixed, will have to start coming out of the operating budget, that is going to take care of school funding for years to come. She reminisced about closing two elementary schools under then Superintendent Matthews, noting this district took a proactive approach to the school funding crisis, but the question has always been, “what do we do after this?”.

B. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

- a. Capitol Connections Report** - Mr. Shiflett began by advising that Representative Dale Zorn out of Monroe has introduced legislation to repeal this Public Act 269, better known as Senate Bill 571. He encouraged everyone to contact their State Representatives to support the repeal of this legislation.

Mr. Bennett advised school superintendents now have some flexibility in determining school speed zones. He noted lots of activity in the House Education Committee including House Bill 4791 dealing with board’s of education implementing and adopting a policy with regard to social media and HB 5194 which would add calendar and scheduling as prohibited subjects of collective bargaining.

- b. Eaton RESA Report** – Mrs. Clark Pierson noted students are our sons and daughters and they are our priority and even though she has a day job that keeps her at work until at least 6:00 every night, she is here tonight because what the board does is important. And while she had to be dragged to serve on the Eaton RESA board. Even before beginning to serve on the board again, she continually reviews their audits, and that of the 6 surrounding ISDs to see if they had anything comparable. She advised she also reads the audits of St. Johns, DeWitt and Lansing school districts. Nowhere did it look worse than Eaton RESA. When you have a board that thinks they only have to be friends with the superintendent and everything else will work itself out, you’re asking for trouble. She advised this is not that type of board and Superintendent Metcalf is not that kind of superintendent. New superintendent Cindy Anderson, Saturday 8 in the morning for 8 – 4:30 Strategic Planning Meeting, 70 stakeholders, principal and couple other from our district. It is a frustrating process, but very important for Eaton RESA to rebuild its reputation and provide direction. She noted she pushed and is pleased to report that one of the goals the RESA will be focusing on for the next five years is math literacy and K-3 reading literacy. In addition, a special education group is meeting often to come up with a new funding model that more closely matches funding with student need. Very enthusiastic, because for the first time in a very long time, Grand Ledge Public Schools finally has an opportunity to receive appropriate funding from the RESA.

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- c. **Board Governance Committee** – Mrs. Mulvenna advised the committee met and did a quick overview of what we want to pursue over the course of the year.
 - d. **Grand Ledge Education Foundation** – No report at this time.
 - e. **Grand Ledge Parks & Recreation Committee** – Mr. Boucher noted he attended his first Committee meeting last week after being appointed to serve. He advised some changes coming to development of the boat launch and he looks forward to continuing the establishment of a partnership between the Grand Ledge Parks and Recreation and the school district as he believes there are many mutual benefits to not only the organizations but to the members of the community.

D. Superintendent's Report – Superintendent Metcalf recognized Beagle Elementary teachers Abbie Sliger and the members of the Beagle student council who conducted a water drive and were able to donate a lot of water to a Flint Elementary School.

Ms. Sliger provided the board with a detailed overview of how the project came to fruition, the generous donations received of not only water, but a truck to haul the over 4,000 gallons of water and two workers were donated by Meijer. In closing she noted she created a video chronicling the water drive that is currently playing on the Beagle YouTube channel and will soon be playing on the Channel 21 YouTube Channel.

Board members advised they received a copy of the video in their board packet.

Superintendent Metcalf concluded his report by congratulating our Grand Ledge Wrestlers and the varsity competitive cheer team and advising parents and community members they have until Friday to participate in the district's Strategic Planning Survey that can be found on the district's homepage noting information gathered through the survey will be used to help guide the direction of the district and develop our strategic plan priorities.

Mrs. Clark Pierson requested and Vice President Shiflett granted a short recess at 7:10 pm.

The meeting reconvened at 7:25 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of the Payment of Sinking Fund Invoices

Motion by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mrs. Mulvenna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Payment of Sinking Fund Invoices in the amount of \$8,975.13 , as presented. The motion carried unanimously with member Sara Clark Pierson abstaining from the vote in accordance with MCL380.4203.

B. Approval of the 2015-2016 Budget Amendment Resolution

Motion by Mrs. Mulvenna, seconded by Mrs. Clark Pierson for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the 2015-2016 Budget Amendment Resolution, as presented.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Mr. Shiflett	<u>YES</u>	Mrs. Mulvenna	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Bennett	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Boucher	<u>YES</u>
Mrs. Clark Pierson	<u>YES</u>		

The motion carried unanimously.

- C. Approval of 2016-2017 Participation in Section 105 & 105(c) Schools of Choice
Motion by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mrs. Clark Pierson for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Participation in Section 105 and 105(c) Schools of Choice for 2016, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

PUBLIC COMMENT FROM THE AUDIENCE ON AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Ellsworth thanked Mr. Shiflett for information on Senate Bill 703 introduced by Representative Zork. He thanked Mrs. Clark Pierson for the information on impact of Senate Bill 571 and while he thanked the board for the passage of a resolution opposing Public Act 269 (Senate Bill 571) but feels it was very after the fact and encouraged the board to become more politically active.

Mrs. Mulvenna questioned about the district having information on the website that is for legislative purposes.

Mr. Bennett clarified there is a Capitol Connections page under the Board of Education on the district website that contains links to sources that continually track of legislation.

Mr. Shiflett advised it would be nearly impossible for someone to keep track of all the legislation being introduced, moved to committee, moved out of committee, taken up by the House then repeating the same pattern in the Senate or visa versa. For example, Senate Bill 571 was fairly inoculant until second chamber, last hour of session on the last day of the year – which unfortunately is fairly common.

It was further pointed out that on the current Capitol Connections page there is a link to the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB) and you can sign up to be on their list serv. This would put you on the list to receive notifications from MASB when they feel important legislation is being taken up by the legislature.

Mrs. Clark Pierson commented the GLPS Board of Education is very politically active and over the last 12 years Mrs. Mulvenna, along with Dr. Metcalf, are frequent visitors at the State Capitol to discuss these issues.

Superintendent Metcalf furthered noted that with regard to Senate Bill 571, none of our Associations knew what was going to be included in this legislation. Like Mr. Shiflett said, it was very plain Jane, at 11:30 at night and all the sudden it went from a three page bill to a 53 page bill and was passed.

Mrs. Mulvenna also recommended Michigan Votes with regard to legislation that is introduced.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD AND STAFF

Mrs. Mulvenna expressed how proud she was of the Beagle Student Council for the Flint Water Drive and expressed her thanks to everyone who provided leadership and guidance, volunteered, helped and donated – especially Meijer. She noted it was a great video that was included with their board packet and a delight to watch.

Mrs. Clark Pierson noted that in thinking about the Flint Water situation and hearing that parents in our community were concerned about the water in our school buildings, to have them assured that it is I would ask when the last time we tested our water?

Superintendent Metcalf advised the water in our schools that operate on a well is tested at least annually, more often if necessary. Schools are not required to test local water that is provided through the City. That being said, in light of what is going on in Flint, we have taken it upon ourselves to test the water in all our schools. He noted that he was unsure how long it would take for the tests to be completed and then the results to be returned to us.

Mr. Shiflett advised the City of Grand Ledge publishes an Annual Water Report as is required by law.

Mr. Bennett expressed his thanks to the students and staff at Beagle Elementary School, he thanked everyone for coming out and to Nancy Rasinske for her budget presentation.

District Attorney Ray Davis from Thrun Law Firm provided the board with an overview of labor negotiations with the teachers including sessions on January 5, and January 20. The January 5 session was very engaging. The Association requested a lot of information and he felt they were able to provide the information and start answering some of their questions. He continued by noting that both sides have requested information from the other and over the course of the last week information has been shared. It is not his expectation they are going to agree with us on where our financial standing is and we will not agree with where they believe our financial standing is. He noted despite some of the commentary from earlier, he feels the groups are getting along very well. Both side are engaging in problem solving. Nothing has been taken off the table. We are willing to look at all concerns the teachers are raising, we just need to do it in a fiscally prudent manner. All of the different challenges that are facing the district. The next negotiations session is scheduled for March 10. He further commented that everyone involved in labor negotiations, including those for the teachers, would have liked to scheduled a session in February, but unfortunately schedules did not make it possible and the 10th was the first mutually appropriate date that worked for both the parties. It is hopeful we will all roll up our sleeves and get to solving the problem. We are going to always remain positive, always going to be in the problem-solving mode and we are always going to work within the board's parameters. You indicated to us you wanted to make sure there was an appropriate increase for the teachers and we have gone to that limit. There is an offer on the table and we are just waiting to hear from the teachers as to what their thoughts are and how we can get this matter resolved.

Mr. Shiflett thanked everyone for coming he just wishes it was under better circumstances.

CLOSED SESSION – Negotiations

Motion by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mrs. Clark Pierson for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to move into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Negotiations Strategies, as per Section 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Mrs. Mulvenna	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Bennett	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Boucher	<u>YES</u>	Mrs. Clark Pierson	<u>YES</u>
Vice President Shiflett	<u>YES</u>		

The motion carried unanimously at 8:10 p.m.

RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

The meeting reconvened in Open Session at 8:35 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:

Jay Bennett, Secretary

Jon Shiflett, Vice President