

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education

Work Session – April 8, 2019

MINUTES

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

ROLL CALL

Roll Call by Superintendent Metcalf indicated the presence of ***Board Members:*** Jarrod Smith, Jon Shiflett, Kim Mulvenna, Sara Clark Pierson, Ben Cwayna and Denise DuFort
Central Office Administrators: Brian Metcalf, Steve Gabriel, Mike Johnson, Sara Holding, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. ***Others in Attendance:*** Kristy Merignac, Zach Merignac, Kara Merignac, Pete Vereecke, Angie Vereecke, James Vereecke, Jacob Vereecke, Amy Korte, Elsa Korte, Sheila Bell, John Blossey, Katie Blossey, Casey Ries, Logan Ries, Melissa Mazzola, Dan McNeilly, Ken Hoskins, Tamara Lipsey, Jackson Lipsey, Megan Drake, Kristin Baker, Tim Kwast, Meghan Ritchey, Greg Miller, Melissa Mazzola and Kim Manning

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There was no public comment.

ACTION ITEM

A. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF SINKING FUND INVOICES

Motion by Mrs. Mulvenna seconded by Mr. Cwayna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Payment of Sinking Fund Invoices in the amount of \$44,261.03, as presented.

Mrs. DuFort advised this represents three invoices to E.T. MacKenzie, KEBS and Myers respectively for work at the Bitzer property, Beagle property and Grand Ledge High School. She noted the Board Bond Advisory Committee reviewed all the invoices and approved them to be brought forward for full board approval.

In accordance with MCL 380.4203, member Jarrod Smith abstained from the vote.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. APPROVAL OF PAY-TO-PARTICIPATE FEE INCREASE

Motion by Mr. Cwayna seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve a \$25 increase in the Pay-to-Participate Fee Structure for the Comet Middle School and High School Teams, as presented.

Vice President DuFort noted the Athletic Department recommends an increase to our pay to participate fee structure for our Comet middle school and high school teams. Currently, students pay \$100.00 per sport to participate in athletics. The last increase to our participation fee was in 2010. A \$25 increase in our fee is comparable to other school districts our size and ensures that Grand Ledge Public Schools continues to have an athletic program that delivers all the valuable lessons educational athletics can offer. She further noted any student who qualifies for Free or Reduced lunch has the entire fee waived.

Mrs. Mulvenna asked and was advised the fund received through pay to participate goes into the Athletic Department budget and not the General Fund.

Mr. Cwayna asked and was advised the athletic department will work with any student who can show a hardship with the fee, whether on the free and reduced lunch program or not.

The motion carried 5-1 with member Sara Clark Pierson opposing the increase.

DISCUSSION ITEM

A. ROBOTICS

Grand Ledge High School Teacher and High School Robotics Coach Greg Miller provided the board with a detailed overview of the robotics program at the high school and advised there is a large contingency of elementary students participating in a robotics club that is driven and sponsored by parents.

Mr. Miller explained FIRST Robotics and the Vision, Mission and Gracious Professionalism of the program noting that normally in competition you would try to find your opponent's weakness to exploit it. However, under gracious professionalism, when you a weakness is discovered by a team, the other teams try to help resolve the issue.

He advised there are 6 students on the build team and 3 students on the business team. The build team had six-weeks to learn the game and rules, design, build, program and compete with the robot. The team has competed twice; Jackson on March 21 and in Mason this past weekend. At both competitions the team exceeded expectations noting in Jackson they were one of three rookie teams and ended up in the quarter finals. In Mason, they ended 26 out of 40 and selected to go to the playoff round where the team won the Rookie All-Star Award. The Chairman Award is the highest award, but the Rookie All-Star Award goes to a team in their rookie year that the judges feel is Chairman Award worthy in the future. This is a great honor and a huge accomplishment.

Mr. Miller noted robotics offers many leadership opportunities for students. They develop a business plan, they have a fundraising team and safety animation team. They have face-to-face contact that could lead to internships down the road. The ultimate goal is to create a K-12 robotics program at Grand Ledge Public Schools utilizing the existing Grand Ledge Robotics club as a feed program and bring them into the FIRST family of

robotics competitions and to create a High School STEM class that allows the use of classroom time to build the robots.

Students then demonstrated their robot.

Robotics Club Coach Casey Reis explained the elementary/middle school robotics club was developed out of the vision of parent Tamara Lipsey to provide students that might not excel on the athletic field the opportunity to express themselves. He noted the club has touched over 200 Grand Ledge students over the past four-years and will make a perfect feeder program for the High School program. He noted the club has 12 teams made up of 2nd through 9th grade students with three to six students on each team.

The students then demonstrated their robots and provided Vice President DuFort and Trustee Smith an opportunity to try their hand at operating the robots.

The board took a recess at 6:33 p.m. to allow members the opportunity to look at the robots and talk with the students.

The meeting reconvened at 6:43 p.m.

B. MATH INVENTIONS WITH SHEILA BELL

Elementary Math Coach Sheila Bell provided an overview of the progress we have seen in one year of growth in our second full year of having math interventionists in our buildings. She provided an explanation of math interventions and what is looked at, noting Delta Math has helped us as a district.

A detailed discussion among the members covered using the data to guide instruction, the interventions is totally separate from what Sheila does as a math coach, but she supports the interventionists, math relies on knowing the fundamentals, math is an explanation of some phenomenon in the world, math doesn't lie and the goal is to help our students get better at math.

C. BUDGET UPDATE

Superintendent Metcalf apologized that Chief Financial Officer Nancy Rasinske was unable to attend tonight's meeting to present her Budget Update. However, this is just an update and she will present the district's budget amendment in June. He noted the update does show a slight deficit but the district is fiscally sound with an 11.2% fund balance. He noted board policy requires we maintain an 8% fund balance but the board wanted to get us out of having to borrow, which we did not have to do this year and will probably not have to do again next year.

D. EATON RESA BOARD CANDIDATE

A detailed discussion among the members noted the last time the board met everyone was going to talk with family and friends and see if any had any candidates that would like to run for the Eaton RESA Board. It was noted a majority of the board would support of the member of our Board of Education serving on the Eaton RESA Board. It was determined Vice President DuFort would run for the open seat on the Eaton RESA Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

District employee Melissa Mazzola asked and was provided with a breakdown of the Sinking Fund expenses approved earlier in the agenda and asked for information regarding the budget update.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF AND BOARD

Mr. Gabriel thanked Greg Miller noting he took over this Robotics Coaching position very last second noting former one of our former technology coaches had been working on bringing this program to the high school and just it was gearing up to start, he left the district.

Mrs. Mulvenna expressed her support of a K-12 Robotics Program and thanked Mrs. Bell for her presentation and noted the goal is for all kids to be successful.

Dr. Gabriel noted robotics has been a discussion for the past two years and a big part of the discussion with regard to restructuring. He noted it is absolutely a goal of the district to implement K-12 STEM class offerings and he thanked the parents who really got the elementary/middle school robotics club off the ground.

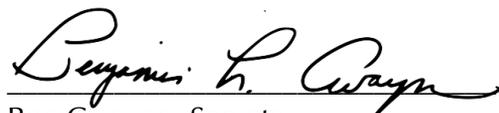
Ms. Clark Pierson noted the robotics presentation was great and explained her opposition to the increase in the sports fee was strictly because she remembers as a parent there were a lot of times the fees created a hardship for her family, but they just figured it out. Times continue to be tough for some families and to increase the fees without looking at the Athletic Budget just to keep pace with what other districts are doing didn't seem right to her.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m..

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:


Ben Cwayna, Secretary


Patrick McKennon, President