

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS *Board of Education*

Committee of the Whole / Work Session – April 11, 2022

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 Superintendent Marcus Davenport indicated the presence of **Board Members Present:** Jon Shiflett, Nicole Shannon, Jarrod Smith, Denise DuFort, Ben Cwayna and Toni Glasscoe. **Board Members Absent:** Sara Clark Pierson. **Central Office Administrators:** Marcus Davenport, Steve Gabriel, Bill Barnes, Julie Waterbury, Sara Holding, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. **Others in Attendance:** Gail Kosel, Bernie Johnson, Richard Johnson, Melissa Mazzola, Sally Jo Nelton, Jason Devenbaugh, Tim Totten, Cheryl Heriford, Karlee Ruedisale, Chelsea Ruedisale, Ashley Oneil, Kim Laforet, Mary Moore, Kari Smith, Marlene Promer Kyle Dymond, Greg Almy, Melissa Burke, Jon Wise, Lana Gallagher, Ashley Kuykendoll, Julie Tadgerson and Kim Manning

PUBLIC COMMENT

Secretary Smith provided an overview for making public comment to the board.

Tim Totten addressed the board to express his concerns regarding transgender mandates and requested answers regarding board policies that will protect his daughter and other girls from this “deceptive and destructive transgender car”. He further requested the district dismiss a teacher stating he feels she is a leading proponent of transgender and stating he will hold Superintendent Davenport to his word to hold open discussion and meetings (town halls) to discuss the specifics of the EDI administrator’s duties.

Kim Laforet addressed the board on why she is running for the board of education and sharing statistics on the district’s student test scores available on the district website under MiSchool Data. She questioned the new TRAILS program being implement in the district and noting that social issues must stop until we can teach our children how to read, write and be critical thinkers.

Kari Smith addressed the board regarding the district’s participation in the MASA Beyond Equity program, implementing social justice through EDI and questioning if we really want to transform the district. She too questioned the implementation of the TRAILS program and stated the district is accepting grant funds to use cognitive behavioral therapy on children expressing her belief this is practicing medicine without a license and sharing the website trailstowellness.org. She referenced the Michigan PTA website claiming it is full of CRT, EDI and LGBTQIA+ noting she is very concerned by this. She claimed the district is failing the children and encouraged the return to reading, writing and arithmetic and stop the indoctrination.

Ashley Oneil addressed the board regarding a fight that broke out last week at the high school claiming no adults were there to break it up right away. She stated school safety has been a topic of discussion as well as the lack of hall monitors. She stated this should be a top priority or the school might face liability lawsuits. She expressed concerns over the district’s participation in the

Schools of Choice program for the 2022-2023 school year, the district's plan to not replace retiring teachers and teacher assistants. She addressed that she was told a student was pulled from class to move their vehicle in the parking lot due to an emblem that offended someone. She asked for the rules and guidelines of which "this offends me" will be addressed. She claimed the district is not preparing our youth for the real world claiming students need to be taught life is not all rainbows and sunshine and how to have a discussion if an emblem offends them.

Ashley Kuykendoll addressed the board expressing her thanks for tonight's presentations noting data driven decisions are key. She thanked MASB Consultant Kacie Kefgen for leading the board in the Strategic Planning discussion. She again asked what the process is for parents and community members to elevate questions and/or concerns and to receive a prompt response. She reminded everyone that successful collaboration and partnership between the board, parents, administration, students and community members hinge on effective communication. She addressed the budget noting the first priority must be on the education of our children and asked the board and administration to keep this in the forefront during the discussion.

Jason Devenbaugh addressed the board noting he believes some members of this board pick and choose who to reply to, noting a communication from President Shiflett regarding remarks he made at the February 17, 2022 meeting. He stated the board works for the community and they need to address our issues when they are brought forward. He clarified his remarks about why he thought Dr. Davenport was hired was to push EDI and CRT. He does not agree that Dr. Davenport was the most qualified candidate. He referenced a May 28, 2021 email from Ms. Clark Pierson and asked for clarification of her remarks.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. STRATEGIC PLANNING)

MASB Consultant Kacie Kefgen led the board in a detailed discussion regarding what they would like to see in the newest Strategic Plan. She reviewed the input sessions she has conducted to date and shared that she will hold a Community Input Session on Wednesday, in-person, at the High School Auditorium and a second one, via Zoom on Monday, April 18th. Both these community sessions begin at 6:00 p.m. She shared a short presentation on the process and then noted she will ask four questions, the same four questions she has asked each of the input groups. She shared a Strategic Plan is the process of determining what an organization wants to be at some point in the future and how it will get there. What can we do to collaborate with our community, parents, students, staff? How do we work together to develop those priorities and turn them into the day-to-day, month-to-month, and year-to-year plan? She noted this is the preplanning phase, the second phase will be the analysis of the input, the data; emphasis on student performance, contextual data, census data, unemployment rate, comparison districts, etc. Then at a Special Meeting of the Board of Education on May 14, 2022 the larger group will look at all the data and develop the preliminary plan, the goals. Then she will work with the administration on the implementation and planning phase. Once that is established, the full plan will be brought back to the board for consideration and approval. She stated the work on the 14th will ensure that the goals of specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-based. She encouraged everyone, if they haven't already, to provide input through the survey posted on the district's webpage: glcomets.net/input.

Mrs. Kefgen then led the board in a broad discussion of the prompted questions.

Prompt #1 – What do we celebrate? What are we most proud of?

A detailed discussion among the members references, extra-curricular activities, community elementary schools, amazing parent/teacher organizations, genuine care for the students by the staff and visa-versa, wide array of resources and opportunities for students including but not limited to CTE, robotics, advanced courses, strong community support, hometown pride, top-notch facilities thanks to the support of the bond by the community, being good neighbors to other districts, wonderful fine arts and athletic programs, national merit scholars, post-secondary relationships, institutional history of the staff, devoted and flexible employees.

Prompt #2 – What are the opportunities, what needs our attention? Points of pain.

A detailed discussion among the members referenced money and have to create a budget before we know what the state is going to allocate for the per pupil foundation, attracting and keeping great staff, enhancing services to our students, adding counselors and mental health professionals, providing mentors for new staff at all levels, increasing reading scores, implementing reading specialists at every level instead of just one for the entire district, more early interventions, implement the check & connect district wide, documented systems and processes, revising policy, building back trust, finding what unites us rather than what divides us, student achievement is the core of everything we do, mending fences, getting everyone on the same page.

Prompt #3 - What are the barriers that exist to improvement?

A detailed discussion among the members referenced money and again the fact that public schools have to create a budget before it is know what the state per pupil foundation allowance will be, student achievement focus, staffing in an era of a national teacher shortage, changing the thinking instead of doing what we do because that is how we have always done it, a multitude of students with varying needs and ensuring we are meeting all those needs in the same way across each level (elementary, intermediate, middle school and high school), fidelity, and never dealt with the effects of a pandemic, a new superintendent, and all the construction, while all good things, can be seen as a barrier as well.

Prompt #4 - What is your vision for the district? What do we want our district to be known for in 5-10-15 years.

A detailed discussion among the members referenced academic excellence for every student, meeting the students where they are with adequate personnel to support their needs, providing appropriate support for whatever is next for our graduates (military, trades, college), ensuring that every student isn't put in a box and preparing them for whatever comes next in life, ensuring a blend of student achievement and student engagement, creating critical thinkers and problem-solvers, increasing partnerships with LCC, MSU and Davenport to bring programs to this area and setting the example of how it is done – like with the implementation of facility dogs, making Grand Ledge Public Schools one of the best places to teach and learn where there is waiting list for not only students but staff, producing well rounded students for whatever their future is at their fullest potential, bringing everyone back together to eliminate any barriers for our students' learning.

Mrs. Kefgen then provided the board with a handout of possible comparison districts to gather quantitative data. Five relatively like districts with enrollment, budget, student populations, household income. Districts that our students leave to attend and districts that their students come to us. In a cursory look, she suggested Holt, Lansing or Waverly, Haslett, Grandville (Kent County), and then Anchor Bay or Bedford would add a nice state-wide context.

A detailed discussion among the members noted Haslett is significantly smaller but there could be some value from the comparisons, Waverly would be more beneficial than Lansing and Anchor Bay over Bedford. Mrs. Kefgen said she would work with Dr. Davenport to confirm the comparison districts with this feedback in mind.

B. STUDENT SUPPORTS

Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services, Dr. Bill Barnes noted that in his recent presentation of the 98B data, he shared that the MSTEP and SAT were not required last year. He stressed it is important to keep this in mind noting the most recent reliable data on these scores was from the 2018-2019 school year.

He then went on to share information with the board regarding Student Supports at Grand Ledge Public Schools including results from a November 2020 parent survey on the virtual plan, results from an October 2021 survey regarding high reliability schools, results from a November 2021 survey on ESSER, data from the ENGAGE Program dashboard on levels of participation for the current year, MICIP data, universal supports including counselors in every building, facility support dogs, ReThink Ed, PBIS, Capturing Kids Hearts, Trauma Informed training districtwide, Trained restorative circle facilitators, student center initiatives including clubs, classes and initiative, Engage MI, Deans of Students. He further reviewed targeted supports including a Student Success Coordinator at Beagle Middle School, Partnerships with ERESA for social work support, Partnership with ERESA for behavior support, Partnership with Ele's place for grief support and Individual Behavior and Support plans based on student needs. In closing he shared the next steps for the district including the continuation of data collection on the effectiveness of programming, ensuring a welcoming environment for all learners, employees and families and exploring additional partnerships and enhancing current partnerships.

When asked what Dr. Barnes needs from the Board, Dr. Barnes advised tonight was just for awareness. Noting as we move forward and think about programming and budgets, we want to ensure we continue to support our students, and staff. This was just an opportunity to share with the board to ensure you have an understanding.

C. 2022-2023 Budget Discussion

Dr. Davenport noted the administrative team has spent considerable time reviewing and planning for the 2022-2023 budget with the goal of ensuring the continued focus on student achievement without creating chaos. He noted every position within the district was looked at following a very adventurous year for all educators. He asked the board to focus on utilizing our ESSER funds and 11t funds during the discussion. He expressed his thanks to his team especially Dr. Barnes who focused on ensuring not a single staff member was displaced and Mrs. Waterbury for being united with him in that effort.

Chief Financial Officer Julie Waterbury led the board in a detailed discussion regarding the 2022-2023 budget planning process including revenue projections based on the Governor's proposed foundation allowance increase of \$435 per pupil and a reduced student count by 112 students based on a statewide decline in birthrate, expenditure projections including current labor agreement compensation rate increases, and proposed adjustments to address the projected 2022-2023 operating deficit to include not replacing a total of 29 projected teacher resignations and 17 teacher aide resignations and developing a plan for the use of Section 11t one-time funds, considering stakeholder feedback as provided by the District's recent ESSER III survey, to replace general fund expenditures noting these are one-time funds. In closing she noted incorporating the proposed adjustments with the revenue and expenditure changes would provide the district with a fund balance of 9.4% on June 30, 2023. Bringing forward for awareness and seeking feedback.

A detailed discussion among the members referenced that using one-time money is never where anyone wants to be, but the money is available and we need it for our students and it is appropriate to utilize the funds available. Questioning how many teachers we can lose without having to replace them, how many teachers' assistance we can lose without having to replace them. Noting that 80% of the district's expenditures is people. Questioning if there is going to be larger class sizes would it be more beneficial to increase teachers' assistants, would it be more valuable at a lower cost? Questioning how much the district spends on transportation and Mrs. Waterbury advising the district spends approximately \$3.2M per year on bussing.

Mrs. Waterbury stressed this will be a fluid process up until June when the board must adopt its budget. The projections are built upon a decrease in student enrollment with no factoring in for kindergarten registration or Schools of Choice students. She shared the district will have a better understanding as we get closer to June as Kindergarten enrollment will be primarily established and the Schools of Choice window will close. If our enrollment numbers go up, our revenue will increase as well.

It was asked for a budget update on each agenda going forward up to the final 2022-2023 budget presentation in June.

ACTION ITEMS

A. APPROVAL OF MARCH 14, 2022 REGULAR MEETING AND CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Cwayna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve March 14, 2022 Regular Meeting and Closed Session Minutes, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

B. APPROVAL OF TIMBER SALE

Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Ms. Shannon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Timber Sale to Bourdo Logging for 31 Black Walnut Trees in the amount of \$23, 300, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

C. BID AWARD – HS FINE ARTS / ATHLETIC ADDITION - LANDSCAPING

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education approve the Proposal 2 Bond Bid Award to Twin Lakes Nursery in the amount of \$84,000 for the Grand Ledge High School Fine Arts / Athletic Addition Landscaping, as presented.

Mr. Smith clarified Twin Lake Nursery did provide the lowest qualified bid noting the lower bid on the spreadsheet was not a complete bid and was disqualified.

The motion carried unanimously.

D. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF CAPITAL FUNDS INVOICES

Motion by Dr. Glasscoe, seconded by Mr. Cwayna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Capital Funds Invoices in the amount of \$105,526.79 as presented.

Mr. Smith noted these are invoices related to the bond for the High School Fine Arts that are payable through Capital Funds.

The motion carried unanimously.

E. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF SINKING FUND INVOICES

Motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Dr. Glasscoe for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of a Sinking Fund Invoice in the amount of \$15,511.90, as presented.

Mr. Smith noted this invoice is for the installation of LED Lighting at Hayes Intermediate School noting the lights were donated by Farm Bureau and thanking them for the donation.

The motion carried unanimously.

F. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF PROPOSAL 1, SERIES 1 BOND INVOICES

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Proposal 1, Series 1 Bond Invoices in the amount of \$64,171.64, as presented.

Mr. Smith noted this represents trade invoices for Beagle punch list items.

The motion carried unanimously.

G. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF PROPOSAL 1, SERIES 2 BOND INVOICES

Motion by Mr. Cwayna, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Proposal 1, Series 2 Bond Invoices in the amount of \$6,816.08, as presented.

Mr. Smith noted this is for the planning of Delta Center construction and the new building at Wacousta.

The motion carried unanimously.

H. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF PROPOSAL 2, SERIES 1 BOND INVOICES

Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Proposal 2, Series 1 Bond Invoices in the amount of \$636,577.69, as presented.

Mr. Smith noted this represents work on the Beagle Pool and noting the pool is just about ready for inspection.

The motion carried unanimously.

I. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF PROPOSAL 2, SERIES 2 BOND INVOICES

Motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Dr. Glasscoe for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Proposal 2, Series 2 Bond Invoices in the amount of \$706,119.49, as presented.

Mr. Smith noted this is for invoices related to the track surfacing.

The motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF AND BOARD

Mrs. DuFort thanked Mrs. Waterbury & Dr. Barnes for their presentations, encouraged the community to attend one of the upcoming community input sessions and take a moment to complete the online input survey and sharing her experience in attending the Skills USA program noting this is a wonderful program.

Dr. Glasscoe thanked Dr. Davenport and Dr. Gabriel for an amazing tour of five of the district's school buildings, noting the new pool at Beagle is amazing and she enjoyed her conversations with staff members and students. She also shared that Grand Ledge, and specifically Dr. Barnes, got a shout out at the P20W Advisory Board for the State of Michigan acknowledging the district's MICIP plan and the execution of the plan.

CLOSED SESSION – Per Section 8(1)(e) of the Open Meetings Act

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to move into Closed Session for the purpose of receiving a confidential Attorney/Client Update, as Per Section 8(1)(e) of the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976 – Estate of Malachi Williams versus Grand Ledge Public Schools, File Number 99670.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ms. Shannon	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Smith	<u>YES</u>
Ms. Clark Pierson	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mrs. DuFort	<u>YES</u>

Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>
Dr. Glasscoe	<u>YES</u>
President Shiflett	<u>YES</u>

The motion carried unanimously at 8:15 p.m.

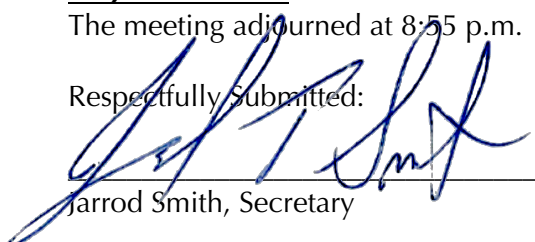
RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

The meeting reconvened in Open Session at 8:55 p.m.

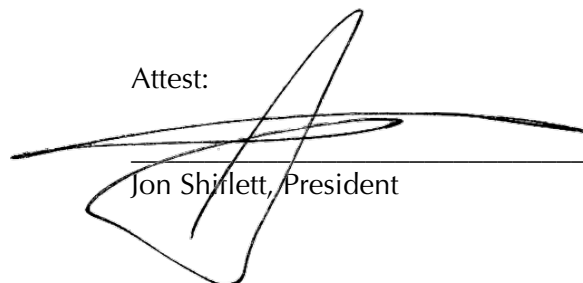
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:


Jarrod Smith, Secretary

Attest:


Jon Shiflett, President