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## GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS *Board of Education*

Regular Meeting – September 24, 2018

### MINUTES

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

#### ROLL CALL

Roll Call by President Shiflett indicated the presence of **Board Members**: Ben Cwayna, Denise DuFort, Beverly Winstanley, Kim Mulvenna, Patrick McKennon, Sara Clark Pierson and Jon Shiflett. **Central Office Administrators**: Brian Metcalf, Mike Johnson, Steve Gabriel, Nancy Rasinske, Sara Sutherland, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. **Others in Attendance**: Melissa Hatfield and Kim Manning

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

**Motion by Mrs. Mulvenna, seconded by Mrs. Winstanley for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the September 24, 2018, 2018 Agenda Items, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

**Motion by Mrs. Winstanley, seconded by Mrs. Mulvenna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the September 24, 2018 Consent Agenda Item, as presented.**

Included on the Consent Agenda was the August 27, 2018 Regular Meeting and September 10, 2018 Work Session meeting minutes and the continued employment of parapro Lisa Bentley following the district being notified of her felony conviction.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

#### REPORTS

**A. Audit Report** – Zach Skrzyniarz from Maner, Costerisan provided the board with a detailed overview of the 2017-2018 Independent Audit his firm contacted. He reviewed the implementation of GASB 75, which is a government accounting standard and the district's move to a self-insured provider. He noted it is the Auditor's position the district presented fairly and commended the district on a clean audit report. He noted Grand Ledge Public Schools is very fiscally responsible holding a fund balance of 11.7%. He reviewed the 2017-18 financial statements noting Grand Ledge Public Schools has made a lot of tough choices in order to maintain a fund balance while still maintaining a top-notch education for its students. He reviewed the district's millage rates advising they are incredibly low as the district continues to look for avenues to save its taxpayers money. He noted the district's Sinking Fund monies have quite a few restrictions but Grand Ledge is always in compliance with these restrictions established by the state. He reviewed the state continues

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to underfund the MiPSERS retirement system (Michigan Public School Employees Retirement Systems), which then creates an added cost to public school districts. In closing he expressed his thanks and appreciation to the business office staff, and all those who have a part in providing information to support the audit of the district's finances. On behalf of Maner Costerisan, he expressed the firm's appreciation for the opportunity to provide auditing services.

Mrs. Clark Pierson thanked Mr. Skrzyniarz and the Maner, Costerisan firm noting a clean audit is a big thing. She point out the district does, in fact, separately audit the financial payments that go in and out. It is not a random selection of accounts, it is a thorough audit to ensure the fiscal integrity of the district.

Mr. McKennon asked if the pension liability of Grand Ledge Public Schools looked similar to that of other districts of similar size to which Mr. Skrzyniarz advised it is. Mr. Skrzyniarz advised there is a free report on the ORS website that provides a good overview.

- B. Capitol Connections** - Mrs. DuFort advised the Michigan Association of School Boards' Annual Leadership Conference is taking place in November and will focus on student success.

President Shiflett advised this is the time of year when the people who set policy and funding for public education are walking through neighborhoods, holding town meetings, etc. He noted this is a good opportunity for community members to talk and meet with these candidates and encourage them to keep the importance of public education in mind.

- C. Eaton RESA Report** – President Shiflett read the Eaton RESA Report provided by Board Representative Jay Bennett noting Director of Business, Janet Yachim, will be retiring effective March 1, 2019. Southridge renovations are nearing completion and an open house/ribbon cutting will take place on Wednesday, October 19, 2018 followed by the Eaton RESA regular monthly board meeting. The Packard building has been undergoing renovations and improvements in lighting, security, carpeting, furnishings, painting, etc. There is also some anticipated HVAC work that will commence in 2019. The Eaton RESA authorized CTE program agreements with Davenport for classes, in Business Academy, Game Design, and Medical Assisting Academy. Eaton RESA was awarded a federal grant from the CDC to provide additional supports for sex education and HIV prevention. Work will focus on a consortium of "priority" districts (Grand Ledge, Dewitt, Lansing, Holt, Eaton Rapids and possible Waverly). And in closing, he noted Kathleen Szuminski has been hired as the Assistant Superintendent for CTE.

- D. Grand Ledge Education Foundation Report** – Mrs. DuFort advised the teacher grant applications are out and due Friday, October 12 by 4:00 pm. This year's Night of Stars, to award this year's grants will be held at Grand Ledge High School on November 8 at 7:00 pm.

- E. Superintendent's Report** – Superintendent Metcalf recognized the work of Chief Financial Officer Nancy Rasinske and her staff noting it is comforting to know when we go to Nancy she has the history and provides extremely accurate data, stating it is a "pleasure to work

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with Nancy and her team.” He advised he and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Gabriel continue to present information on the upcoming bond proposals noting the district will be hosting community presentations this Wednesday, September 26, as well as on October 2 and October 4 at the Sawdon Administration Building in the conference room. Each of the presentations will begin at 6:00 pm and anyone within the Grand Ledge Public Schools community is welcome to attend. He also noted the district has been invited to present this information to the Grand Ledge City Council on October 8 as well, and the community is welcome to attend that meeting also.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

There was no public comment.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

##### **A. Approval of 2017-2018 Audit**

**Motion by Mrs. Clark Pierson, seconded by Mrs. Winstanley for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the 2017-2018 Audit, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mrs. Mulvenna congratulated the district on, once again, have a good audit but more importantly noted the district’s financial stability in that this is the first time in 20 years the district has not had to borrow money to make payroll while waiting for the first state aid payment.

Mrs. DuFort also applauded the work of CFO Nancy Rasinske and her team noting she had previously served on the Board Audit Committee, which was out of her comfort zone, but Nancy was a great resource and teacher and taught her a lot.

Mrs. Clark Pierson noted this is her comfort zone. She expressed her appreciation and commended Mrs. DuFort for taking the initiative to get more background on how a school district is funded and what it takes to ensure the fiscal vitality of the district. She noted while it seems like an audit is no big deal, it is. It requires a huge effort by staff and the board is responsible. She noted the Eaton RESA Board was under the impression they had a great audit when, in fact, they had a failed audit with many findings. But, because no one took a real interest in it, it went unnoticed for too long. Again, she commended Mrs. DuFort noting it can seem very dull, but this district has practices in place to ensure we are good stewards of our taxpayers’ money and she appreciates her taking that extra step.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **A. Communication Action Plan – 2018 Bond**

Communications Director John Ellsworth provided the board with an overview of the plan to ensure information regarding the bond proposals on the 2018 ballot reach staff, parents and community members. He advised shortly after the board acted on August 13<sup>th</sup> to place the ballot proposals on the November 8 ballot, the district established a page on its website: [www.glcomets.net](http://www.glcomets.net), dedicated to provide information on the bond proposals. This webpage is updated regularly with the most current information we are sharing. Dr. Metcalf and Dr. Gabriel began Face-to-Face Presentations at buildings and for all employee groups early on

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and have also presented to local organizations as well. We also scheduled four community presentations. Informational fliers were distributed during elementary open houses and are available at school offices and locations throughout the community. These fliers were also included in student Friday Folders two times. Information on the bond proposals was shared in the Fall Insider and Dr. Metcalf began submitting columns to the GL Independent. In addition, we are sharing information through informational advertisements in the Lansing State Journal on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays for six-weeks. Mass mailings to district residents include an informational pamphlet that was mailed on September 19 and a voting reminder will be send on October 30. He noted last week bond boards with conceptual visuals were put on display at school buildings and communication locations, and were added to the district webpage. In closing he noted a social media campaign also began shortly after board action that has included sharing information and most recently sharing the informational videos.

A detailed discussion among the members suggested implementing Leadership Parents from each classroom that could reach out to the other parents within the classroom, orchestrating the PTO's, comments on social media that our math is incorrect and pointing out the proposal 1 bonds are being taken out in stages which allows for the rate to remain low, reaching out Delta Township and businesses within Delta Township to hold community forums, Board Secretary McKennon holding Facebook live living room interviews with different people from the community (parents, former students, realtors, small business owners) highlighting how the bond might affect them, going out and showing the people what the pick-up line looks like at Delta Center at 4:00 pm and what the proposed improvements are and how that will impact the parents, the importance of the one-on-one communications make, continuing to really stand up and shout our message.

Mr. Ellsworth thanked the board for their suggestions noting the role he plays is very different from the role of a board member or the Superintendent. School employees cannot advocate for the bond - only share information. He noted we have worked very closely with our legal counsel to ensure we maintain the boundaries as outlined under Campaign Finance rules and regulations and have our counsel approve all communications. In closing he commended GMB Architects and Engineers for their hard work and dedication on the video and on behalf of the district.

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

There was no public comments.

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

Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services Steve Gabriel welcomed the group of students from Lohne Germany. He advised this exchange has been in place for 37 years noting a group comes from Lohne for two weeks and on opposite years, our students travel to Germany.

Chief Financial Officer Nancy Rasinske thanked the Board and Dr. Metcalf for their comments regarding the audit and she expressed thanks to her staff. She noted they work very hard to bring this all together within the three-week timeframe. But, they meet the challenge and they are a big part of how this all comes together.

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Mr. Cwayna commended Dr. Gabriel on his bond presentation at Willow Ridge, thanked Mrs. Rasinske and her staff and noted Communications Director John Ellsworth is doing a great job.

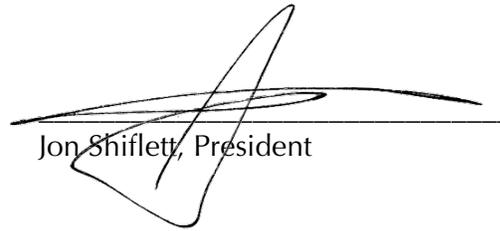
**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:

  
Patrick McKennon, Secretary

  
Jon Shiflett, President