

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education

Regular Meeting – October 23, 2023

MINUTES

President Smith 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 Bill Barnes indicated the presence of **Board Members**: Jarrod Smith, Nicole Shannon, Denise DuFort, Ben Cwayna and Ashley Kuykendoll. **Board Members Absent**: Toni Glasscoe. **Central Office Administrators**: Bill Barnes, Steve Gabriel, Julie Waterbury, Wendy Seida, Kelly Jones, Mark Deschaine, Martez Warren and John Ellsworth. **Others in Attendance**: Brenton Bell, John Piper, Sally Jo Nelton, Jan Seeger, Ashleigh Lore, Kim Laforet, Tim Totten, Rickie Kuykendoll and Kim Manning

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Ms. Kuykendoll, seconded by Mr. Cwayna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the October 23, 2023 Agenda Items, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the October 23, 2023 Consent Agenda Items, as presented.

Included on the Consent Agenda were the October 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes, Closed Session Minutes and the Teacher Hiring of Melissa Allen.

The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

A. Capitol Connections Report

There was no report in Dr. Glasscoe's absence.

B. Eaton RESA Report

Mrs. DuFort noted at their last meeting the Eaton RESA Board reviewed their Audit, approved travel requests, a pilot of an app that will connect data with the need for tutoring services for students and 118 slots for the Great Start Readiness Program. She took time to remind everyone about the RESA's upcoming ballot proposal on November 7th and shared information regarding the many services the district receives from and through the Eaton RESA.

C. Grand Ledge Education Foundation Report

Ms. Shannon advised the newest fundraiser for GLEF just closed, the Board is finalizing the review of the teacher grant applications and the announcements of the winners will be made in the near future.

D. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Report

Ms. Kuykendoll and Mrs. DuFort noted at the last meeting the committee reviewed the position postings and how to get those postings out to a broader audience and received updates on staff trainings.

E. Governance Committee Report

Ms. Shannon advised the committee did not meet, but they will be continuing policy review.

F. Bond Update

Bond Supervisor John Piper provided an update with regard to bond projects throughout the district.

G. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Barnes thanked Mr. Piper noting he does a great job for the district overseeing the many construction projects going on. He went on to remind the board of this year's schedule of ensuring the board receives updates from a learning standpoint but noting it is important that they understand what the Central Office Leadership Team does in each of its departments as well.

a. Human Resources Presentation

Director of Human Resources Kelly Jones shared information regarding her department including the role of the department, responsibilities of the Human Resources Department, past practices, current practices, and the direction of the Human Resources Department in the future.

Dr. Barnes thanked Ms. Jones noting she does a great job leading the Human Resources Department and he is very comfortable with the work of the department. In closing he reminded the board the first school presentation will be in November with the High School and sharing the artwork in the hallway will align with the building presenting to the board.

H. Ongoing Discussions

Superintendent Barnes advised these are items / topics board members or public have asked about. He noted the Human Resources Department is working to ensure the FMLA process is streamlined and included on our website, naming of new facilities is waiting until the board implements their new NEOLA policies in January, and work continues on code of conduct with regard to suspensions and expulsion noting we are currently following the information as it is laid out in our student handbooks.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Shannon read the rules for addressing the board.

Brendan Bell shared his concerns that the new cell phone policy was not being enforced at the high school, questioned exactly how many students were served by the Eaton RESA and why so little was spent on CTE transportation. He further questioned the money spent on Sexual Health Education Training noting he does not know what that is. In closing he commended the district for looking at ways to employ local veterans.

Kim Laforet addressed the transparency and demeanor of the board meetings this past year but requested that committee meetings be open to the public. She further questioned why we bought the farm land noting it is not buildable, but only tillable and questioned why the district would lease it as opposed to selling it.

Tim Totten commented students have been negatively impacted by the “transgender stuff” going on and parents are having a “heck of a time” getting them back on track. He supported the transparency of EDI Committee and commented on quite a bit of teacher professional development that advocates secrecy and turning students against their parents and having teachers keep things from the parents.

NEW BUSINESS

A. FARM LAND LEASE AWARD

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Shiflett, for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to award the four-year Farm Land Lease to Shady Lodge Farm, LLC, as presented.

Superintendent Barnes noted background information was included in the board packet noting the lease was up on the property so the district followed the legally prescribed process for a new lease. He advised the district does have the ability to exit the lease by giving notice to the farmer.

Mr. Shiflett noted he was happy to see this brought to the board. The purchase of this property was done before any of the current members were on the board but it was bought due to population growth in the district at the time and the thought the district may need to build another high school. He shared the current board has contemplated the sale of the property but nothing formally. He remarked the property is more valuable to hold onto than it is to sell for the financial outlook for the district looking forward.

Dr. Barnes noted the land is buildable land, but is currently in a tillable state.

The motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF AND BOARD

Communication Director John Ellsworth shared that the Michigan Schools Public Relations Association (MSPRA) recently awarded Eaton RESA Communication Director Micky O’Neal as this year’s outstanding school communicator. He commended the award noting he can’t think of a more deserving person and that he is glad she represents our county.

Dr. Barnes expressed his appreciate for the feedback regarding cell phone policy enforcement noting we will continue to work on this and he will pass the concern along to Dr. Wright. He further explained the special education funding received through the RESA noting there is a specific formula used to set the allocation of funding for transportation services. He explained the Sexual Education Health Training is the required training of staff who teach those mandated classes. Dr. Barnes went on to note that the district has historically not had board committees open to the public as all of the board’s committee serve in an advisory capacity and have no authority to make decisions outside of the full, seven members of the board. He shared his recommendation for this to be a discussion and decision the board makes at their Organizational Meeting in January. In closing, he noted that he and Dr. Gabriel are responsible for all the professional development in the district and at no time have teachers ever been told to keep information from parents, commenting parents are our partners in educating their students.

Mr. Cwayna asked to have a discussion item added to the next agenda regarding Board Committees being open to the public.

A detailed discussion among the members noted Dr. Barnes will reach out to legal counsel, MASB and other districts to see how they handle Board Committees and bring this information back to the board for the start of the discussion at the November 27th meeting.

Mrs. DuFort commended our staff for pulling together in light of the recent tragedy out in Wacousta noting our district did a wonderful job of being there to support that community.

Ms. Shannon reiterated Mrs. DuFort recognizing that the district was extremely supportive not just of students, but staff as well. In closing, she commended Mr. Bell for bringing his concerns to the board.

President Smith remarked he does not believe the district is being more transparent than it has been in the past, but we continue to work to find more ways to make the information more readily available and that is always the goal.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Mr. Shiflett, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to move into Closed Session for the purpose of conducting the Superintendent's Annual Review, as Per Section 8(1)(a) of the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Mrs. DuFort	<u>YES</u>	President Smith	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>	Ms. Shannon	<u>YES</u>
Ms. Kuykendoll	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Shiflett	<u>YES</u>

The motion carried unanimously at 7:04 p.m.

RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

The meeting reconvened in Open Session at 8:51 p.m.

President Smith announced the consensus of the Board. The Board conducted Dr. Barnes's annual evaluation using the MASB Superintendent Evaluation Tool which is approved by the Michigan Department of Education. All Board members are trained in the use of the tool.

Dr. Barnes provided the Board with regular updates on the evaluation metrics. The Board reached a consensus rating of "effective." This does impact Dr. Barnes's eligibility to progress on administrative salary steps. This score was based on the following:

- Governance & Board Relations: 4
- Community Relations: 3.83
- Staff Relations: 3.86
- Business & Finance: 3.6
- Instructional Leadership: 3.9
- Student Growth: 3
- District Goals: 4

Total component weighted score: 3.52 for a total score of 88%. "Effective" is the rating for evaluations resulting in a score of 75% - 89%.

Motion by Mr. Shiflett, seconded by Ms. Kuykendoll for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to adopt the completed year-end evaluation for Dr. Barnes.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ms. Kuykendoll YES
Mr. Cwayna YES
Mrs. DuFort YES

Mr. Shiflett YES
Ms. Shannon YES
President Smith YES

The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Nicole Shannon, Secretary

Attest:


Jarrod Smith, President