
GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education

Regular Meeting – February 23, 2015

MINUTES

President Winstanley 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 Brian Metcalf indicated the presence of ***Board Members:*** Beverly Winstanley, Kim Mulvenna, Linda Wacyk and Jon Shiflett ***Central Office Administrators:*** Brian Metcalf, Andy George, Norma Schutzki, Mark Deschaine and Sonia Petterson ***Others in Attendance:*** Ariana Gibbs, Angela Lloyd, Angie Garfield, Joe Garfield, Zachary Garfield, Jamie Hillman, Dianna Mollitor, Jim English, Fred McPhail, Angela McPhail, Ben Lorson, Jean Boot, Randy Hubbert, Janeen Sanchez, Jason Dart, Joe McNeilly and Kim Manning

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Ms. Wacyk, seconded by Ms. Mulvenna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the February 23, 2015 Agenda Items, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Ms. Mulvenna, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the February 23, 2015 Consent Agenda Item, as presented.

Included on the Consent Agenda were the meeting minutes of the January 26, 2015 Regular Meeting, the February 9, 2015 Work Session and the February 9, 2015 Closed Session.

The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

A. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- a. **Capitol Connections Report** - In Mr. Bennett's absence, Ms. Wacyk read a report from Mr. Bennett reviewing the School Aid Budget that was presented last week.
- b. **Grand Ledge Parks & Recreation** – Mrs. Mulvenna advised the committee has not met, but wanted to note that City Council did approve purchasing duck feeders for the island. The feeders have been purchased and will be installed this spring. She reported that bread is not a good nutrition source for the ducks as it is not digestible and several local farms have offered to provide crack corn for the feeders at minimum cost.

B. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT –

Superintendent Metcalf commended our athletic teams for their outstanding season. He also reminded everyone that the drama production of Wizard of Oz begins on March 26th. He made note with regard to the Governor's budget pointing out that while it is being touted as a \$75 per pupil funding increase, what they don't advise voters is they are eliminating the performance funding, which was \$70 per student, they are reducing the best practice funding by \$25 per student. That is a reduction of \$95 per student in per pupil funding. Additionally, Grand Ledge Public Schools is still operating on \$5M less this school year than we operated on in 2008. He also noted that the House of Representatives just voted to redirect almost \$200M from the State Aid Fund into the General Fund. This is money that we could be using to educate students. In closing he remarked Michigan public school districts are not getting more money to educate students.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Shiflett read the guidelines for providing public comment to the Board of Education.

Community members Fred McPhail, Joe McNeilly, Jamie Hillman, Jim English, Jean Booth, Charleen Wagner and Janeen Sanchez all expressed their pointed concerns regarding the upcoming bond proposal including the development of an access road, development of athletic fields, technology purchases and the purchase in 2006 of 125 acres on property.

Superintendent Metcalf thanked everyone for coming and for being engaged. He provided information regarding the bond being brought back to voters and noted that he had held several presentations throughout the community to allow people to come and have their questions answered and to get the facts. He also provided information on the purchase of the 125 acres noting that, at the time of the purchase, the district was anticipating continued student population growth and were putting the district in a position to be able to expand to accommodate that growth. He affirmed that the decision to purchase this property the seven members serving on the Board of Education were working with the information they had and made the best decision they could with that information.

NEW BUSINESS

A. APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATION TO EATON RESA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Motion by Ms. Wacyk, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the recommendation of Sara Clark Pierson to be considered to fill the vacant position on the Eaton RESA Board of Education, as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT FROM THE AUDIENCE ON AGENDA ITEMS

There was no public comment.

COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD AND STAFF

Mr. George noted he feels privileged to work with this board and the administration as they all work to make the best decisions they can with the best information that is available to us. He asked the voters to do the same.

Mrs. Mulvenna addressed the community members advising that she was on the board when the land was purchased. She remarked that you need at least 100 acres to build a school. She commented that there was a lot of research done on the property to ensure the district could build on it. She advised the board was working to prepare for the district's future, but nobody saw the dramatic turn in our economy that was coming in 2008.

Ms. Wacyk confirmed in 2008 Michigan had a mass exodus of families due to the economy shift. If there had been a crystal ball the decision may have been different, but we had the best information from the best experts we could at that time.

Superintendent Metcalf pointed out that 54% of our student population is located in Delta Township. Property is being developed there. To be fiscally responsible, we must look 10-15-20 years down the road. Where will we put a school if we were to sell this property? Delta Township is expanding west and we must be prepared.

Mr. Shiflett thanked everyone for coming and expressed he loves to see the democracy.

Mrs. Mulvenna expressed her appreciation as well and echoing Mr. George that the board was acting in the best interest of the district with the best information we had from the best experts. She advised it is hard to judge where the district is headed because every time we turn around, the Governor and the legislature is deciding another unfunded mandate for public schools. She remarked our teachers have been hurt the most over the last 10 years. They have dedication beyond measure, yet they have to contribute more of their salary to their health benefits and their retirement costs. It keeps falling back on them. She remarked that she got an iPad six years ago and was resistant to it. Now, she doesn't know what she would do without it. As for our students and technology, she knows it is a costly expenditure, but technology allows us to quickly access weaknesses and strength of individual students. They feed into technology. They engage with technology. In closing she expressed her appreciation to everyone for coming out stating you don't have to agree, but to her integrity and the integrity of every member serving on this board as well the fiduciary responsibility of this district, keep in mind, this isn't an easy job. It doesn't pay well and there are no benefits. She loves a healthy debate as long as you don't resort to mud slinging and name-calling.

Mrs. Wacyk thanked everyone for coming. She advised the bond proposal on tomorrow's ballot reflects the needs of the district. This is what our students need and deserve. It would be wonderful if every parent could afford to buy their student an iPad, let alone breakfast. But that isn't the case and as such, we have to provide it for them. As a Board of Education, we have to ask the community help us with these costs of buses, safety and construction so that we can use all the per pupil funding received from the state to put toward the instructional process. We are never going to be done. We will never have everything we need. She noted this district has one of the lowest millage rates in the area, stating we are not swimming in debt. This is about school responsibility. This is what we want for our community and this is what our community told us they wanted for their kids during our Strategic Plan process.

President Winstanley closed noting she has been on the board for three years and she has learned that we have very dedicated staff members. We do this job because we have children's best at heart. We are not being wasteful. We don't see this bond proposal that way either. We want to give our students what they need. We are in the digital age and we need to plan for the future. Our staff and this board are dedicated to give opportunities to our students.

CLOSED SESSION – Negotiations

Motion by Mr. Shiflett, seconded by Ms. Wacyk for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to move into Closed Session at 7:00 pm for the purpose of discussing Negotiations Strategies, as per Section 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Boucher	<u>Absent</u>	Winstanley	<u>Yes</u>
Wacyk	<u>Yes</u>	Mulvenna	<u>Yes</u>
Clark Pierson	<u>Absent</u>	Shiflett	<u>Yes</u>
Bennett	<u>Absent</u>		

The motion carried unanimously.

RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

The meeting reconvened in open session at 8:34 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:

Linda Wacyk, Secretary

Beverly Winstanley, President