

## GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS *Board of Education*

Work Session – March 12, 2018

### MINUTES

President Jon 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 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**: Steve Gabriel, Mike Johnson, Nancy Rasinske, Sara Sutherland and Mark Deschaine. **Others in Attendance**: Jen Bouck, Melissa Mazzola, Kevin Garthe, Cindy Zerbe, Elizabeth Bellet, Emily Justice, Kelci Lavgal, Lisa Koons, Jamie McKennon, Jeff Sewick, Beth Johnston, Greg Almy, Lisa Klingbiel, Jen Deja, Meghan Joseph, Jennifer Short, Kellee Auge, Jenny Kish, Lesley Simon, John Ellsworth, Jessica Schultz, Julie Rollis, Marlene Promer, Lynsee Phillips, Jenny Waybright, Erica Deters, Danielle Nelson, Garrett Brown, Dana Schueller, Sharmon Black, Colleen Price, Jennifer Soria, Nancy Lonberger, Erika Rothwell, Jamie Viecelli, Emily Williamson, Dave Zerbe, Kristy Merignac, Jill Darrow, Abbey Schaefer, Kelly Lambet, Stacey Dohm, and Kim Manning.

*President Shiflett read a prepared statement addressing the balanced / extended calendar, the bottom 30%, and noting the district must look for ways to improve student achievement. He reminded everyone the school calendar is a negotiated item and the board will not make further comment on the issue.*

#### PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

District employee and parent John Ellsworth expressed his frustration with President Shiflett's remarks and the balanced calendar.

District employee and GLEA President Greg Almy addressed comments made by a board member regarding negotiations at the last meeting and sighting the MASB website and the roll of the school board. The point being, seven members make up the board of education, which is the ultimate authority of this school district.

District employee Jen Bouck implored the administration to survey the community with regard to a balanced calendar and expressed her concerns that citizens are not permitted to eMail individual board members via the district website.

District employee Melissa Mazzola spoke to the board and presented research regarding the achievement gap and options to address the bottom 30, specifically Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs).

Parent Danielle Nelson addressed the board regarding the extended calendar noting she feels the public conversation has just begun while the plan has been in play for over three years. She continued that she does not believe an extended calendar is the best way to serve the bottom 30%.

Parent Megan Bower stated everyone here, parents, teachers, board members, administrators, wants the same things – what’s best for all kids. She noted she understands addressing the bottom 30% but not at the cost of the other 70%. She encouraged continued communication.

Community member Kevin Garthe expressed his concerns with the national student walk out scheduled for this week noting he feels – 1094 St. Johns Chase – student walkout scheduled for this week. Manifestos of other local school district. Not political – do ask for the infringement. Political demonstration during school hours. Any students attending would receive absences. Teach that taking a stand has consequences.

Parent Lynsee Phillips expressed her thoughts on the balanced calendar noting she feels the teachers’ input and opinions of the community are not being valued. She asked for more common sense and transparency in the process.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

##### **A. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF SINKING FUND INVOICES**

**Motion by Mrs. Winstanley, seconded by Mrs. Mulvenna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Payment of Sinking Fund Invoices in the amount of \$9,063.14, as presented.**

Mrs. Winstanley advised the invoices covered the abatement of asbestos at the high school and noted they were reviewed and approved to be brought forward by the Board Bond Advisory Committee.

**In accordance with MCL 380.4203, member Sara Clark Pierson abstained from the vote.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

##### **B. APPROVAL OF BUS PURCHASE**

**Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Mrs. Clark Pierson for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the purchase of three 77-passenger conventional school buses from Capital City Bus in the amount of \$271,026, as presented.**

It was noted these new buses will replace aging buses that are in need of repair to meet state safety standards. The age of the buses, the cost of the repairs, and the time the repairs would cover, it is not fiscally responsible to waste money on the repairs versus purchasing new buses.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**DISCUSSION & PRESENTATION ITEMS**

**A. BOARD POLICY GP 206 – 1<sup>st</sup> READING**

President Shiflett noted this is simply adding a Meeting Attendance section to the already adopted Governance Policy 206: Board Meeting Agenda that states board members must attend board meeting in person to be considered present or in attendance and that only members who are physically present will have voting rights. It further defines that members may access meeting remotely but in doing so surrender the authority to vote or deliberate about agenda items and will be marked absent for that meeting.

Mr. McKennon asked for the inclusion of language to include special meetings to keep the language clear.

Mrs. Mulvenna expressed her support of this addition to policy GP206.

Mr. McKennon also expressed support.

Mrs. Clark Pierson expressed her support of the language inclusion for our district, but noted there are districts and ISD's – for instance in the Upper Peninsula – due to the sheer span of the district and the weather, if members were not allowed to Skype in, they would never get a quorum.

This item will be brought back for Board Approval at the March 26, 2018 meeting, with language to include Special Meetings.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Ellsworth noted the board could help with transparency by reading the attendance policy.

Mr. McKennon read the attendance policy under GP 206.

Mr. Garthe noted he was under the impression that the district had abated asbestos in the bond several years ago.

Assistant Superintendent Mike Johnson advised that asbestos abatement was only completed in areas that were being disturbed. This abatement was for the installation of new drinking fountains and the pipes were wrapped in what appeared to be asbestos.

**COMMENTS FROM STAFF AND BOARD**

Mrs. Clark Pierson thanked everyone for coming and reviewed the concerns she heard from the staff and community. She noted the board has not taken any position on what students might do this week, the board has a negotiations process wherein they choose a negotiators, the teachers choose a negotiator but the board does not as a negotiator. She advised she receives all eMails sent to the board, but shared her eMail address and phone number stating people are free to contact her. She noted there is a difference in the bottom 30% and failing

but shared information from the 2016 Annual Report that is on the district's website noting that in English 45% of our students are partially proficient expressing this is not what she wants to see out of students from our district. In closing she remarked what we are doing is not working and she would be happy to hear other ideas.

Mr. McKennon noted it is illegal for the district to hamper or support an type of political statement. He expressed that he agrees with the administration and the rest of the board that the status quo is not an option and he is doing research and he is coming up with similar numbers to what Mrs. Clark Pierson noted throughout similar districts, which shows this is not just a Grand Ledge Public Schools' issue. He advised he has been in communication with Davison Public Schools and they have shared an 85-page document of everything they did to implement a balanced calendar that shows the importance of the process.

Mrs. DuFort thanked everyone for coming noting she believes it is imperative the board have the ability to hear the voices of the community. She thanked Ms. Mazzola for her specific, strong recommendations. She noted she has contacted MASB and knows the board is not able to talk specifics of negotiations but can have a broader discussion. She encourages further the balanced calendar discussion while continuing to look for options.

Mrs. Mulvenna commented she is very sorry if anyone feels the board is not accessible. She provided her eMail address and phone number and noted that people have come to her front door or even come up to her while she is out gardening.

Mrs. Winstanley provided her eMail address.

Mrs. DuFort gave her eMail address and phone number.

Mr. Cwyana provided his eMail address and phone number.

Mr. McKennon gave his eMail address and phone number.

President Shiflett provided his eMail address and phone number and thanked everyone for coming.

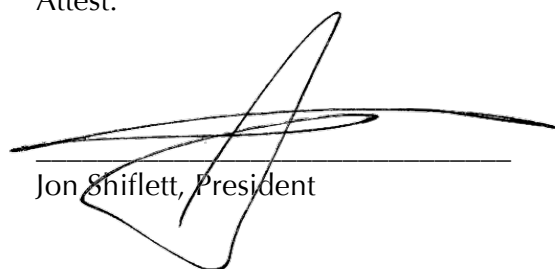
**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:

  
Patrick McKennon, Secretary

  
Jon Shiflett, President