

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
**Board of Education**

Virtual Meeting– June 22, 2020

MINUTES

President DuFort called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. She led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call by Interim Superintendent Dave Chapin indicated the presence of **Board Members**: Denise DuFort, Jarrod Smith, Jon Shiflett, Sara Clark Pierson, Kim Mulvenna, Patrick McKennon and Ben Cwayna **Central Office Administrators**: Dave Chapin, Steve Gabriel, Bill Barnes, Nancy Rasinske, Sara Holding and John Ellsworth. **Others in Attendance** Amanda Garza, Angie Bennett, Anita Mills, Caroline de Mauriac, Denise Clarity, Ellie Darnell, Erica Ledesma, Jacqueline Freeman, Jessica Cornman, Kelly Smith, Kim Abed, Kyle Dymond, Leanna Agheneza, Margo Susnjar, Megan Spedoske, Melissa Mazzola, Nicole Shannon, Ranjit Singh, Shannon Bauer, Tamela Jones, Traci Gentilozzi, Wendy Dill, Ann Paquette-Lukens, Bill Albrecht, Christin Sandell, Dave Logel, Dawne Velianoff, Denise Green, Erica Deters, Greg Almy, Jacqueline Freeman, Jeremy Babcock, Julie Boruta, Shelby Logel, Tim Marsh, Cathy Fox, Karen Batterham, Pat St. George, and Kim Manning

TRUTH IN TAXATION / TRUTH IN BUDGETING HEARING

Motioned by Mr. McKennon , seconded by Mr. Cwayna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education OPEN the Truth in Taxation / Truth in Budgeting Hearing.

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Cwayna	Yes	Mr. Smith	Yes
Mr. McKennon	Yes	Mr. Shiflett	Yes
Mrs. Mulvenna	Yes	Ms. Clark Pierson	Yes
President DuFort	Yes		

**The motion carried unanimously at 6:08 p.m.**

Chief Financial Officer Nancy Rasinske led the board in the Truth in Taxation / Truth in Budgeting Hearing reviewing the district’s millage rates noting non-homestead millage rate at 18 mills, the debt millage at 5.63 mills, the total outstanding debt of \$84.6 millions, the total “taxable value” of the district at \$1.59 billion, annual principal / interest payments of \$8.21 millions and the millage rate calculated for bond payments of 5.63 mills. She further reviewed the history of the district’s debt millage, a comparative debt millage rate for districts within the Capital Area Activities Conference noting even after passing both bond proposals, Grand Ledge Public Schools still has the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest debt tax rate of those districts. She noted

the district's sinking fund millage is .7944 mills noting this fund was approved at .8 mills for 10 years, the levy was reduced to .7944 due to the Headlee reduction and is set to expire in December 2021. She advised there is no change in the non-homestead and debt services property tax rates but the Capital Improvement tax rate decreased .0024 mills. She reviewed the general fund noting a projected State Aid reduction of \$650 per pupil as a result of declining revenues from COVID-19 pandemic closures. She noted the 2019-2020 estimated final revenue for the district at \$53,846,692, estimated final expenditures of \$54,634,858 for an operating deficit of \$788,166 with the ending, June 30, 2019 fund balance of \$5,864,096 or 10.7% of expenditures. She reviewed the projected per pupil foundation grant reduction of \$650 per pupil noting the state budget deadline is June 30, 2020, but there could be an extension from the State. She noted the district is anticipating a projected enrollment decrease for 2020-2021 of 100 students using enrollment forecasts continue to project a decrease in pupil enrollment for the State of Michigan and effects from the COVID-19 pandemic. She provided a summary of the 2020-2021 district revenue noting base revenues of \$53,846,692, a decrease in state aid revenue of \$1,225,000 and a decrease in revenues received from the Eaton RESA of \$850,000 for a total 2020-2021 adopted revenue of \$51,596,058 which is a decrease in income of \$2,075,000. She reviewed projected 2020-21 expenditures noting an increase of \$200,000 in wages and fringe benefits, a decrease of \$200,000 in staffing, a decrease of \$200,000 in Capital Outlay and a decrease of \$100,000 in miscellaneous grants both state and local for total adopted expenditures of \$54,337,674 noting this reflects reduced costs of \$300,000. She further reviewed the district's 2020-21 budget summary noting a beginning undesignated fund balance of \$5,864,096, total revenues of \$51,596,058, total expenditures of \$54,337,674 for an operating deficit of \$2,741,616 noting an estimated ending undesignated fund balance of \$3,122,480 or 5.7%.

President DuFort opened the floor for questions from the audience.

District Employee Jeremy Babcock questioned if staff would see a reduction in salaries due to the budget projections.

Chief Financial Officer Nancy Rasinske advised the district will honor all bargaining agreements in place noting steps are calculated into the budget presentation presented.

**Motioned by Mrs. Mulvenna, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to CLOSE the Truth in Taxation / Truth in Budgeting Hearing.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<u>YES</u>	<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<u>YES</u>
<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<u>YES</u>	<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<u>YES</u>
<b>President DuFort</b>	<u>YES</u>	<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<u>YES</u>
<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<u>YES</u>		

**The motion carried unanimously at 6:54 p.m.**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS**

**Motion by Mr. Smith seconded by Mrs. Mulvenna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the June 22, 2020 Agenda Items, as presented.**

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>President DuFort</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>		

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**APPROVE ON CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

**Motion by Mr. McKennon seconded by Mrs. Mulvenna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the June 22, 2020 Consent Agenda Items, as presented.**

Included on the Consent Agenda were the May 11, 2020 Virtual Meeting Minutes, the June 5, 2020 Special Virtual Meeting and Closed Session Meeting Minutes, the June 8, 2020 Virtual Meeting and Closed Session Meeting Minutes and the Administrative Contract Renewal.

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>President DuFort</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>		

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**REPORTS**

**A. Capitol Connections Report**

Mr. Smith noted we, like all other school districts, are waiting on the budget and what is going to be proposed. He referenced the budget presentation and the projections included in that presentation. He advised the Governor has extended the ability for boards to continue to meet via Zoom through July 31, 2020. Supplemental state budget changes include \$18M on a per pupil basis, plus an additional \$25M for devices and providing online learning to help students catch up following the pandemic. He noted HB 5482 would implement the Save Our Students Act which will require the addition of the Suicide Prevention Hotline number on all student I.D. cards. He also referenced legislation that would suspend the requirement for certain property taxes to be paid, which will impact school districts and the state aid act. These bills are being discussed as municipalities want to help reduce the burden on their residents, but this could have a detrimental impact on school districts.

**B. Eaton RESA Report**

President DuFort advised the RESA conducted their Truth-in-Taxation / Truth-in-Budgeting Hearing and the 2020-2021 budgets were approved. They discussed possible changes based on a legislative standpoint. They further reviewed the facility use agreement with Potterville Public Schools that will allow for two Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) classrooms to be housed at their facilities. The board further received a COVID update reviewing the impact it had on special education and CTE programming, continuing online learning for next year, continuity of learning plans and planning to reopen district facilities under the new COVID restrictions.

**C. Grand Ledge Education Foundation Report**

President DuFort noted the Foundation Board met and received an update from the treasurer noting even though the Foundation was unable to hold their biggest fundraiser this year, they are still in a position to offer teacher grants for the upcoming school year. Applications will go out in September with applicants being notified in October. The Night of Stars, where they award the grants will be held in November. They also discussed asking recurring sponsors to make a donation to the Foundation and they have begun developing their website.

**D. Governance Committee Report**

President DuFort advised the committee has not met since the shut down, but would like to get a meeting scheduled before the July meeting and will work toward that.

She advised she met with Dr. Chapin last week and discussed several different issues, one of those being the Confederate Flag.

**E. Interim-Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Chapin introduced himself noting his contract is on the agenda later in the meeting for board approval. He noted conditions that led him to this moment are conditions that he is not pleased about nor comfortable with. However, he is looking forward not backward and is here and ready to support the district and assist through these difficult times. He advised he is interested in hearing from staff, students, parents and community members. He advised he is aware of the Confederate Flag issue and has sought input from district legal counsel noting he is not looking for a confrontation and is very comfortable with the district's position and creating a teachable moment. He noted at the July 20, 2020 Board meeting he will present a policy recommendation for our student handbooks while allowing our administrators and faculty members to build on the moment. He commented public school districts across the state and nation are taking a deep introspective look at protocol, looking for signs of systemic racism. He remarked he understands this is a difficult conversation but he looks forward to working with the board and district. He expressed his appreciation to Nancy Rasinske for her work with the budget and preparing a very conservative budget, noting he has experience with budgets during difficult times and this is certainly a difficult and unprecedented time. He gave a shout out to Grand Ledge High School Principal Ken Wright for developing a commencement ceremony for the Class of 2020 noting he did a wonderful job choreographing things. He complimented the central office staff of Steve Gabriel, Bill Barnes, Nancy Rasinske, Sara Holding, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth for assisting him in getting up to speed providing him with a lot of detail. He expressed

he is confident they represent the thinking across a much broader audience. He also advised he met with the Eaton RESA Superintendents and will be working closely with them on the reopening of schools and a number of other issues districts are facing. He closed advising he asked Dr. Gabriel and Dr. Barnes to provide updates to the board with regard to Bond Projects and the Continuity of Learning Plan.

**F. Bond Update Report**

Dr. Gabriel thanked Dr. Chapin noting he is glad to have him on board steering the district during these difficult times.

He went on to advise the district is in a 10-year bond process that is broken down into three phases. Phase one prepares the district to move to its restructuring plan beginning in the 2021-2022 school year. Work has begun at Holbrook noting most of the demolition has been completed at that building. He referenced he has been having great conversations with our neighbors at Holbrook regarding the retention pond and how we can make it work as it's supposed to while making it more environmentally friendly. He thanked community member Tiffany Harmon for reaching out and being a part of these conversations. Conversations on the retention pond are beginning with Clark Construction. He further noted the playground equipment has been removed to make room for construction. Most of that playground equipment has been donated to Eagle Park and the flag pole was donated to the American Legion.

Beagle is also under construction noting the earthworks has been completed and the building is being separated for demolition later in the week. All internal work has been completed to make this happen. Again, the playground equipment has been removed as donated.

Phase 2 of the bond proposal deals specifically with the pool and track. The track is no longer there as it had to be removed to accommodate the work being done on the Beagle building. It will be rebuilt on the 22-acres closer to M-43. A meeting with Clark Construction is taking place later this week to look at designs and then the project will go out for bids on the work to be done.

**G. Continuation of Learning Update Report**

Dr. Barnes thanked the staff for all the work they did to provide for food for our students and implementing our Continuity of Learning Plan. He noted we did a great job and he is proud of the work everyone did. Going forward he remarked he is not certain what the state is going to ask us to do, but we are going to do what it takes to ensure we bring our students and staff back to a safe learning environment. He reviewed some of the learning our staff has been participating in on restorative practices, trauma informed instruction, youth mental health and first aid last week, focusing on how we can support our students, and each other, in the fall. He noted as the district looks ahead to the fall, we are engaging staff and other stakeholders creating implementation teams. The district will be sending out a Professional Development survey, partnering with Michigan Virtual to provide online and blended learning, assessment and instruction. We will also be surveying parent and staff to ensure we have thought of everything we need to be thinking about for the fall, gather

their expectations for the fall and gathering feedback from our Spring Continuity of Learning. He further noted all of the administrative team and teacher leaders have participated in an MSU Forum focused on leadership and racism in school. Resources have been purchased for use over the summer and in the fall. He noted the Grand Ledge Kiwanis Club recognized some of our student leaders at Beagle and Delta Center recognizing students who went above and beyond providing them recognition bags. He expressed Dr. Chapin is an outstanding addition to our team, a great thought partner and noted he is glad he is here. He expressed the conversations centered on the Confederate Flag noting we have a responsibility to use these lessons to help students, to help heal the harm, to learn what that means and why it is harmful. In closing he expressed he is excited to move forward and he is appreciative of the staff and this team noting it is pretty incredible the mountains we have moved knowing there are more in front of us, but this team has what we need to make sure we move forward in a safe and healthy way in the fall.

Mrs. Mulvenna asked about summer start up programs for children that may have fallen behind.

Dr. Barnes advised we have received from grant funds and are moving forward in conducting our Comet Camp that helps struggling readers in Kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Planning for the program is underway ensuring we are working within the state guidelines.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Community Member Tiffany Harmon expressed her thanks to the Board and Dr. Gabriel for their willingness to discuss options for the retention pond at Holbrook noting she is gathering more information for Dr. Gabriel.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- A. APPROVAL OF FINAL 2019-2020 BUDGET AMENDMENT RESOLUTION  
Motion by Mrs. Mulvenna, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the 2019-2020 Budget Amendment Resolution, as presented.**

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>
<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>
<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>	<b>President DuFort</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>
<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<u><b>YES</b></u>		

**The motion carried unanimously.**

- B. APPROVAL OF FINAL 2020-2021 DEBT SERVICE & GENERAL FUND BUDGET RESOLUTION**

Motion by Mr. Shiflett, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the 2020-2021 General Fund, Food Service, Community Service, Student Activity, School Store, Technology Capital Projects, Capital Improvement / Sinking Fund, Debt Fund and 2019 Proposal 1 and Proposal 2 Bond Funds, as presented.

**Roll Call Vote**

Mr. Shiflett	<u>YES</u>	Mrs. Mulvenna	<u>YES</u>
Ms. Clark Pierson	<u>YES</u>	President DuFort	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Smith	<u>YES</u>
Mr. McKennon	<u>YES</u>		

The motion carried unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Approval of 2020-2021 MHSAA Membership Resolution**

Motion by Mr. McKennon, seconded by Mr. Smith for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education approve the 2020-2021 Michigan High School Athletic Association Membership Resolution, as presented.

Mr. Shiflett noted he still questions the fact the district has to pay to be a part of a group so our students and compete against other students.

Ms. Clark Pierson noted she understands Mr. Shiflett's position advising this membership allows us to participate in conferences. She does, however, question why we charge students to attend student sporting events noting she understands asking others to pay to enter, but it is a student sport and she feels they should not have to pay to support their fellow students.

**Roll Call Vote**

Ms. Clark Pierson	<u>YES</u>	President DuFort	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Smith	<u>YES</u>
Mr. McKennon	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Shiflett	<u>YES</u>
Mrs. Mulvenna	<u>YES</u>		

The motion carried unanimously.

**B. Approval of Funding to Preserve Educational Services for Children Resolution**

Motion by Mrs. Mulvenna, seconded by Mr. McKennon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education approve the Funding to Preserve Educational Services for Children Resolution, as presented.

Secretary Shiflett read the resolution.

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<u>YES</u>	<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<u>YES</u>
<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<u>YES</u>	<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<u>YES</u>
<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<u>YES</u>	<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<u>YES</u>
<b>President DuFort</b>	<u>YES</u>		

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**C. Approval of Interim-Superintendent Contract**

**Motion by Ms. Clark Pierson, seconded by Mrs. Mulvenna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education approve the Interim Superintendent Contract, as presented.**

Ms. Clark Pierson advised this contract can go up to one year but it can be terminated at any time noting the district is still in the interim period where Dr. Metcalf still has his right to a due process hearing. She advised no one should make any assumptions this contract will last one year. She advised the contract is for a salary of about \$102,000 plus some of the normal benefits employees of the district receive. She noted the district is also still paying Dr. Metcalf as he is on administrative leave. She expressed she is very pleased with this contract, and very pleased with Dr. Chapin's willingness to serve, noting the salary is considerably below what districts of this size pay. In closing she reiterated she is pleased with this contract, very pleased to have Dr. Chapin with us.

Mrs. Mulvenna noted the community needs a lot of healing. She expressed she has spoken with Dr. Chapin about what has been going on and he has been very receptive to the needs of our community. She expressed she believes Dr. Chapin will be a great facilitator who has the respect of all the administrators and welcomed him to the district.

Mr. Cwayna also welcomed Dr. Chapin and thanked him for his willingness to assist.

Mr. McKennon advised he knows Dr. Chapin to be an excellent facilitator noting this is what our district needs right now. He commented the district is in very good hands with respect to what it is dealing with on its own and at a state-wide level. He thanked Dr. Chapin for his willingness to serve the district and our community.

President DuFort noted it has been a good start with Dr. Chapin advising she has talked with him on the phone and met in person recently. She provided him with information about the district and spent many hours with him at the graduation ceremony. She expressed the district is ready to move forward.

Mr. Smith expressed his thanks to Dr. Chapin for how quickly he jumped in with both feet. He noted he understands the urgency and became a part of the team within days.

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<u>YES</u>	<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<u>YES</u>
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Mrs. Mulvenna	<u>YES</u>	Ms. Clark Pierson	<u>YES</u>
President DuFort	<u>YES</u>	Mr. Cwayna	<u>YES</u>
Mr. Smith	<u>YES</u>		

**The motion carried unanimously.**

Dr. Chapin reiterated some of his remarks from early noting he understands his role as an Interim. He expressed he is all in until he is told he is not. He advised there is a lot ahead and a lot to put behind. He expressed his appreciation to the board and administration for their comments and noted he is honored to serve the Grand Ledge Public Schools district and community.

**D. Discussion of Creation of Ad Hoc Board Committee regarding Equity, Diversity & Inclusion**

President DuFort advised Ms. Clark Pierson asked for this to be on the agenda and advised she is looking for more board discussion on what is the best avenue to pursue. She expressed her thoughts noting the issue of the Confederate Flag must be handled immediately and will be addressed very clearly in the student handbooks, however, she feels the issue is larger than just that. She noted she feels it would be best to appoint three board members to work with Dr. Chapin to develop a plan, bring in experts, map out goals, and bring the bigger picture to light. With that, she opened the floor to discussion among the members.

Ms. Clark Pierson noted just like the confederate flag, which is really a discussion that teed off from discussions in the Special Board Meeting. She advised she didn't know a lot about the Confederate Flag issue, but the issues are bigger than just that and it is time to change the culture and climate of the district. This is not just an administrative issue, this is a community issue and the community needs to be involved. She agrees the tone starts at the time, starts with the board. The way we treat people, or just the fact the board didn't know and people didn't think to tell us. She advised she envisions a board member has to be involved in immediately early planning, talking to experts, those of color, disability; both physical and mental, students, parents, faculty. She wants to see something comprehensive, possibly smaller groups that look into the hiring policy, how we address the opportunity gap, discipline of students. There are a lot of areas and she doesn't want this to be a let's have some teacher professional development days, a day here and there for students. She believes it has to a larger group broken down to include people helping us in every phase of it. We must include people from the outside.

Mr. Smith expressed he agrees with every Ms. Clark Pierson had to say and he believes the committee must operate with a lot of guests, for lack of a better word. We must bring in the expertise. Our goal for setting our vision is to help the administration to set policy and goals; a top down approach. The committee(s) should be reporting to the full board on a regular basis, but we need to make sure the group stays on task.

Mr. Cwayna agreed noting he believes the committee needs three things: a cross section of community member, not just board members. Experts. It needs teeth, specific, clear goals. And the board needs feedback. In a constructive manner to guide us through what we are missing, to ensure we are capturing all the pieces. In closing he noted a lot of information

has not gotten to the board and now that it has, the board and district can do something worthwhile, constructive, and lasting.

Mr. McKennon noted Dr. Barnes made a good point in that we are educators and this is a great opportunity, not to punish, we are here to teach. We need to educate the students on why this is offensive. We must step outside ourselves and put ourselves in someone else's shoes. He noted the seven white members of the board can't do this on their own, they don't have what is needed. Community members, students, MSU faculty. We will need help and updates must be given to the board weekly.

Mrs. Mulvenna agreed with everything everyone is saying noting it is a nice culmination of ideas. She expressed the board didn't know the Confederate Flag was an issue. She asked her son, who graduated 10 years ago and he said it was predominate back then. The question is, why didn't it get to us? It goes stopped somewhere in between. We need to ensure the community knows we are here and open to hearing their concerns and comments.

Ms. Clark Pierson remarked the failure is not the communities, the failure is the board's.

Mrs. Mulvenna agreed, but noted we are here now. She agreed with Mr. McKennon that the seven white members of the board can't do this and we must ask for help, a lot of different people and groups must be included.

Mr. Shiflett noted we have a model of how we do this, noting we didn't pass a bond just sitting back. We were educated by our students, parents and community and we put that plan in motion. Aside from this, he agrees with what everyone has said.

President DuFort advised she would like to create a three-member board committee to work with Dr. Chapin to bring in the experts that can guide us, to create sub committees that include our community, parents, students and a diverse population. She noted that by starting with three members of the board, she feels it will ensure more than one board member is hearing the concerns, hearing the guidance and bringing it back to the board. She would charge this committee with developing clear goals and a plan to move forward with the sub committees. She understands this committee with ebb and flow as it develops but would like to ask that Sara Clark Pierson, Jon Shiflett and Ben Cwayna serve as the three-members of this Ad Hoc committee to get things rolling.

Ms. Clark Pierson noted she is happy to serve noting this is just the seed and she foresees this will require work from every single board member.

Mr. Cwayna expressed he is happy to serve.

Mr. Shiflett agreed to serve as well.

President DuFort officially created the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education Committee regarding Equity, Diversity & Inclusion appointing Sara Clark Pierson, Jon Shiflett and Ben Cwayna members of the committee to work with Dr. Chapin. She asked for a report

back from this committee be added to the July 20, 2020 Board Agenda and remain a regular item on the agenda going forward.

Mrs. Mulvenna expressed she would like to see a regular rotation of board members on this committee to ensure it is more inclusive.

Dr. Chapin noted there is urgency associated with this and he would like to establish who is going to call the first meeting.

Ms. Clark Pierson will chair the committee and will contact Dr. Chapin in the morning to get a meeting on the calendar.

President DuFort thanked the board for the candid discussion and sharing of ideas and expressed her hope the community recognizes that the board members are all committed to addressing this for our community.

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

Community Member Denise Green congratulated the board on hiring Interim Superintendent Dr. Chapin noting he has an outstanding reputation of integrity. She encouraged the board to include parents as a part of the initial group and thank Dr. Barnes for a smooth transition.

Community Member Dawne Velianoff welcomed Dr. Chapin, expressed she believes the board is making the committee way more difficult than it needs to be but it needs to be more than just reading a book or educating yourself.

Lisa & Ranjit Singh congratulated Dr. Chapin and thanked him for joining the community. They expressed their concern the board did not know about the Confederate Flag issue and asked the board work hard to alleviate the systematic racism in the district.

Community Member Ellie Darnell thanked the board for the steps they are taking to move the district forward. She welcome Dr. Chapin and expressed appreciation for him taking this role. She expressed she hopes the board will have an expansive committee, not just one student, but a diverse committee.

Community Member Margo Susnjar noted she feels for the first time the board has heard the concerns of this community and hopes this is a genuine commitment noting the community is going to hold the board accountable.

Community Member Nicole Shannon noted she is excited about what she heard today. She remarked the district got a star for a bargain in Dr. Chapin. She noted people are motivated and now is the time to harness that motivation.

Former Student Wendy Dill expressed she is excited to see what the board can bring to the community and the schools. She is happy to see the Confederate Flag is being addressed immediately. She advised the board to keep in mind when you are asking students and parents of color to participate that they still have fear of retaliation. Think about that and how you are going to protect people of color.

Taylor Dill expressed his concerns over the length of time the Confederate Flag has been an issue within the Grand Ledge Schools and advising the district must be clear in the lesson you want students to take away with regard to the Civil War.

Community Member Megan Spedoske thanked the board for the steps they are taking expressing she feels like the community is being heard. She encouraged the board to keep the lines of communication open with the community. She agreed with Ms. Dill in the board must put protections in place to ensure our families of color know this is a safe place.

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

Dr. Gabriel thanked President DuFort, Dr. Chapin, Ken Wright and all the administrators and teachers who represented Grand Ledge at the graduation ceremony noting the event really showed what Grand Ledge was all about.

Mrs. Mulvenna congratulated the Class of 2020, thanked the people who are holding this board and this district accountable noting it is work that needs to be done. In closing she expressed her hope that everyone continues to stay involved.

Mr. Cwayna thanked Dr. Chapin for being here noting you can tell when someone has a spark in their soul and he believes Dr. Chapin is one of those individuals. He thanked Principal Wright for an excellent graduation ceremony for the Class of 2020 noting he has heard a lot of good feedback from parents and students. He noted he is a history buff and he thanked Mr. Dill for his comments about teaching on a historical basis. He noted for a long time the board has delegated too much to the administrative team and may not have exercised the proper oversight the board should have been providing. However, he has learned throughout the past several weeks and looks forward to moving forward in a positive way.

Dr. Chapin expressed he believes this public comment piece is really important but he understands at times it can be difficult. He noted it may seem personal at time, but the reality is so much about transparency and what good school systems do. He noted he can be a little protective of his profession and public schools, but he is also committed to public comment and open commentary that allows us to move forward. He expressed he wants to be clear that he is all in and he wants to be a part of solving a very clear issue, but it is not an issue just in Grand Ledge; it is across the nation. Those that don't hear the commentary are the ones that will be lost in the shuffle. He noted there is a lot of enthusiasm in Central Office and he believes there are a lot of good thinkers throughout the district remarking we are not in this to stumble, we are in this to succeed.

Ms. Clark Pierson agreed it is important to hear from people. She noted she understands that the Confederate Flag is a historic symbol, but it was used for intimidation and when people use it that way, we have to say we won't stand for it. It is time for a culture shift. She noted she has had several hours of conversations with members of this board and all want to move forward. She noted the board was stunned by the many hours of public comment they heard on June 5, 2020, but the board has taken it to heart. To the people who wouldn't speak publicly due to fear, we must find a way to make them comfortable, however, the board won't learn unless they are willing to speak.

Mr. Smith noted it is unfortunate that people feel they need to say they are going to hold us accountable. You should. However, he hopes they won't feel like the community has to say that after the board shows this isn't lip service. He noted the community should expect this board to act to the satisfaction of the people who elected them. He noted this is a tough balance we have and swift action is wanted, but this is a marathon, not a sprint. He noted if the board can provide legislative updates regularly then the board can certainly report on how we intend to make our students feel safe at school.

Mr. Shiflett thanked everyone for joining the meeting noting it takes courage to speak to the powers that be, and we have to make this a place where everyone feels comfortable speaking and know they are being heard.

President DuFort echoed the same thoughts as her board colleagues noting the board need to make sure everything we do shows the community we want them to stay involved, hold us accountable and talk to use about their concerns. She noted she believes that all seven members of the board have made the commitment and the board is making that statement publicly to each of you. We have an opportunity here to discuss this, look an anti-racism. In closing she asked the students, parents and community to stay involved, work with the board, noting we are stronger together.

**CLOSED SESSION – Negotiations**

**Motion by Mr. Shiflett, seconded by Mrs. Mulvenna for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to move into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Negotiations Strategies, as per Section 8(c) of the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976.**

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>Mrs. Mulvenna</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Ms. Clark Pierson</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>President DuFort</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. Cwayna</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Smith</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>	<b>Mr. McKennon</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>
<b>Mr. Shiflett</b>	<b><u>YES</u></b>		

**The motion carried unanimously at 9:03 p.m.**

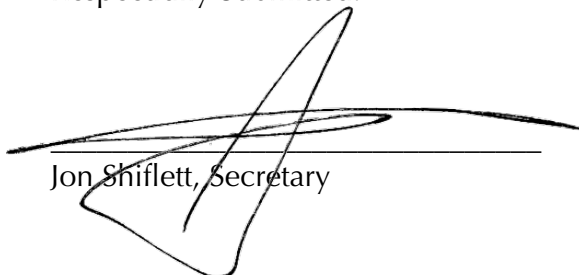
**RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

The meeting reconvened in Open Session at 9:36 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

  
Jon Shiflett, Secretary

Attest:

  
Denise DuFort, President