

GRAND LEDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Board of Education

Regular Meeting – December 13, 2021

MINUTES

Vice President Jarrod Smith called the meeting to order at p.m. He led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call by Superintendent Marcus Davenport indicated the presence of **Board Members:** Jarrod Smith, Nicole Shannon, Jon Shiflett, Denise DuFort, Patrick McKennon and Ben Cwayna. **Central Office Administrators:** Marcus Davenport, Steve Gabriel, Bill Barnes, Julie Waterbury, Sara Holding, Mark Deschaine and John Ellsworth. **Others in Attendance** Anthony Beattie, Pat St. George, Mary Boucher, Patrick St. George, Dave Trakul, Dan Kludt, Ron Proch, Melissa Mazzola, Jason Devenbaugh, Jill Ford, Tara Kopietz, Greg Almy, Tim Totten, Marlene Promer, Katherine Palmiter, Lucas Palmiter, Joni Henretty, Jayden Roesch, Kim Laforet, Jeff McNeilly, Tiffany Organek, Michele Hill, Dawne Velianoff and Kim Manning

APPROVAL OF AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the December 13, 2021 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 December 13, 2021 Consent Agenda Items, as presented.

Included on the Consent Agenda was the November 8, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes and the Hiring of James Husmann, Adrienne Carson, Andrea Hayes and Jacquelynn Cosgrove.

The motion carried unanimously.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS – CHECK PRESENTATION

Members from the Knights of Columbus Council 7311 presented a check to the Special Education Department in the amount of \$1,619.72. This is the result of their recent Tootsie Roll sales and the donations given to this worthy cause by member of the Grand Ledge community.

REPORTS

A. Capitol Connections Report

Mr. Smith provided an update regarding legislation that could impact education include student scholarship, financial literacy and budget proposals.

B. Eaton RESA Report

Mrs. DuFort provided an update from the November 17, 2021 Eaton RESA Board meeting sharing information on reports received from Relevant Academy, Instructional Services Department from Eaton RESA including the district and school improvement team, early

literacy team, mathematics, Positive Behavior Intervention & Support (PBIS). In closing she noted the board approved adding a full-time Autism Spectrum Disorder Consultant.

C. Grand Ledge Education Foundation Report

Ms. Shannon reported the foundation received a donation from Meijer in the amount of \$5,000. She noted this mirrors the amount of money the Foundation was able to award in Teacher Grants this year. The teacher grants provide an opportunity to add things to the classroom that would not be covered by the district. She advised most of this year's grant recipients have received their products and are implementing them into their classrooms. She expressed her thanks to Meijer for their generous donation noting this will allow the Foundation to continue their work to provide opportunities to our students that otherwise wouldn't be possible.

D. Governance Committee

There was no report as the Governance Committee has not met.

E. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Mr. McKennon advised the committee had a short meeting to look at next steps with regard to the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Student Supports including what the position is going to look like, how it will work hand-in-hand with the EDIC and the student services the position will provide.

F. Bond Update

Dr. Gabriel noted the end of Phase 1 in the bond projects is nearing the end with Beagle and Holbrook. Beagle does have two different parts and the second portion is the construction of the competition pool on the north end of the building. That work is also wrapping up with an anticipated open date of March 1, 2022. He noted the hallway that connects the main building to the band room will be completed following the holiday recess. He reviewed the construction of the athletic project on M-43 and noted that work has begun on the Fine Arts section at the High School which will carry through the 2022-2023 school year. In closing he advised we are in the early planning stages for work at Delta Center to add additional classroom to eliminate the need for portables and designing the new Wacousta Elementary School.

G. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Davenport thanked the Knights of Columbus Counsel 7311 for their generous donation, congratulated our Varsity football team for being name the All-State Academic Team, shared we are continuing to improve our academic success despite the many obstacles we have faced, thanked the district's Chief Financial Officer Mrs. Waterbury for her work to utilize our ESSER funds seeking out resources for our students and staff with regard to mental well-being, thanked Dr. Barnes and the curriculum leaders for creating coding activities for elementary students and noted the administration will begin providing academic updates to the board in February 2022 as we prepare for our spring testing season. In closing he noted how valuable the staff is to our district and how fortunate we have been to have maintained in-person instruction providing a consistent learning environment for our students due to the constant adaptations the staff have had to make. He then welcomed the Willow Ridge Team to present.

Willow Ridge teachers Erin Snyder, Greg Almy, Katie Grass and shared several good things that are taking place at Willow Ridge Elementary Schools including the Hero Squad which is a group of 4th graders who volunteer their time to help at the school, their recent 12-days of giving that supported the Food Pantry, paying tribute to our veterans with poppy art work as well as making cards to send to the VA hospitals, Makerspace, the climbing wall, Salmon in the Classroom, blanket making for student in need across the district, and the Fall Family Fun Festival. In closing, Jill Ford and support dog Alfie thanked Dr. Barnes and the board for approving the implementation of these dogs in our schools through K-9's for Change and shared the many ways the dogs help our students and staff alike.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. McKennon read the rules for addressing the board.

Kim Laforet addressed the board thanking and congratulating the Willow Ridge staff, expressing concerns about transparency, the difficulty she experiences navigating the district's website and flags in the classroom.

Anthony Beattie addressed the board thanking them for their time and service and expressing his concerns regarding safety and security in the district in the wake of the Oxford tragedy.

Dawne Velianoff addressed the board regarding flags in classrooms and asking when they are going to get answers to their questions commenting she has gotten answers to some of the questions, but what about the bathroom policy, why is one school celebrating holidays and others not, why was their no statement put out regarding the vandalism at the high school?

Jeff McNeilly addressed the board noting they have gone months without questions being answered, opposing the mask requirements, questioning bond projects, flags in the classroom and questioning the plans and procedures or training for an active shooting situation.

OLD BUSINESS

A. COVID-19 MITIGATION DISCUSSION

Dr. Davenport led the board in a detailed discussion regarding the district's continued COVID-19 mitigation strategies noting that the continued goal is to maintain in-person instruction each day of the school year. He expressed he understands not everyone supports wearing masks, but he believes this has been one of the main reasons the district has been able to maintain its in-person instruction. Further discussion included waiting until after the holiday recess to remove masks, providing more time for more kids to get fully vaccinated, masks being a parent's choice, the virus is not going away and have to find a way to live with it.

Motion by Mr. Cwyana, seconded by Mr. McKennon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to rescind the mask mandate, effective upon the return to school on January 3, 2022.

The board discussion continued including, but not limited to, the rate of infection within the schools, how many teachers are out, hospitalization rate, upgrading to the HVAC systems district wide, updated cleaning protocols, family travels over the holiday break, what is best for all students and staff and the community as a whole, keeping everyone safe, our actions

impact those around us and not just us as an individual, recommendations from the Barry Eaton District Health Department noting these are not mandates, but recommendations, the board's intent is not to frustrate parents but to keep everyone as safe as possible, having something behind the decision to remove the masks, reviewing the active cases, confirmed cases and probable cases in the district that is posted on our website, the community infection rate, questioning what needs to be behind the decision to remove the masks, reiterating the district is succeeding because we are keeping kids in the classrooms, making the move to remove the masks when it will not impact this success, and the availability of test to stay.

The motion failed 1 to 5.

B. SAFETY & SECURITY DISCUSSION

Dr. Davenport shared current safety measure currently in place throughout the district and safety enhancements he is exploring.

A detailed discussion among the members noted tragedy can happen anywhere and expressed thanks to the community for the passage of the bond proposals that included redesigning entryways into our buildings.

Dr. Davenport noted this will be a continued topic of discussion on future board agendas.

NEW BUSINESS

A. APPROVAL OF MIDDLE SCHOOL & GRAND LEDGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK ADDENDUMS

Motion by Mr. Shiflett, seconded by Ms. Shannon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Addendums to the Middle School and Grand Ledge High School Student Handbooks addressing Tardies and Attendance and the use of Zoom for the Distance Learning Program, as presented.

Dr. Barnes noted the tardy and attendance policy currently established in the middle school and high school handbooks does not adequately represent how tardies and attendance is handled for student enrolled in the distance learning program. The new addendum will accurately reflect how these are handled with virtual students. Additionally, he noted the implementation of a policy that reflects the use of Zoom for the Distance Learning Program.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF SINKING FUND INVOICES

Motion by Mr. McKennon, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the Annual Summer Tax Resolution, as presented.

It was noted this is an annual resolution that allows the district to collect taxes from Delta Township and the City of Grand Ledge during the summer months.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

The motion unanimously.

C. APPROVAL OF HAYES LIBRARY SHELVING PURCHASE

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the use of Technology Capital Project Funds in the amount of \$23,880 for the purchase of library shelving from Demco, Inc., as presented.

Dr. Gabriel noted the district's intent was to relocate shelving from Neff but the maintenance staff did not feel the shelving would be sturdy enough to hold the weight of the library books following the disassembly and reassembling of the shelving units.

The motion carried unanimously.

D. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF FOOD SERVICE INVOICES

Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Food Service Invoices in the amount of \$8,910.75, as presented.

Mr. McKennon noted this is for work in the Beagle kitchen that was outside the scope of the bond.

The motion carried unanimously.

E. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF CAPITAL FUNDS INVOICES

Motion by Ms. Shannon, seconded by Mrs. DuFort for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Capital Funds Invoices in the amount of \$67,932.90, as presented.

Mr. McKennon noted this is for work in the fine arts project outside the scope of the bond.

The motion carried unanimously.

F. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF SINKING FUND INVOICES

Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Ms. Shannon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Sinking Fund Invoices in the amount of \$158,629.88, as presented.

Mr. McKennon noted this is for supplementals to bond items not covered.

The motion carried unanimously.

G. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF PROPOSAL 1, SERIES 1 BOND INVOICES

Motion by Mr. McKennon, seconded by Mr. Shiflett for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Proposal 1, Series 1 Bond Invoices in the amount of \$1,399,162.74, as presented.

Mr. McKennon noted this is for finish work at Beagle and a very few items at Holbrook.

The motion carried unanimously.

H. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF PROPOSAL 2, SERIES 1 BOND INVOICES

Motion by Mr. Shiflett, seconded by Ms. Shannon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Proposal 2, Series 1 Bond Invoices in the amount of \$771,951.44, as presented.

Mr. McKennon noted this is for work on the pool at Beagle.

The motion carried unanimously.

I. APPROVAL OF THE PAYMENT OF PROPOSAL 2, SERIES 2 BOND INVOICES

Motion by Mrs. DuFort, seconded by Ms. Shannon for the Grand Ledge Public Schools Board of Education to approve the payment of Proposal 2, Series 2 Bond Invoices in the amount of \$1,475,447.60, as presented.

Mr. McKennon noted this is for work at the M-43 complex.

The motion carried unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF AND BOARD

Director of Communications John Ellsworth shared information he found on the MDHHS website regarding masks and noted he will follow-up with the health department to see if their guidance has changed.

Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, Dr. Steve Gabriel, commended the cast and crew of the recent musical production of Legally Blonde, congratulated all those involved in the recent Collage Concert, and thanked Grand Ledge Police Department's Comet Pride Officer Chris Chester noting how lucky the district is to have Officer Chester and the position that acts as a liaison for us with all the different jurisdictions that support Grand Ledge Public Schools.

Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services, Dr. Bill Barnes recognized the Grand Ledge High School Student Council for spearheading a support banner signing for Oxford Public Schools noting this was a great show of support in a very difficult time.

Mr. McKennon agreed the play was very impressive, commended the football team, noted the volleyball team had a great season, recognized the tragedy at Oxford and noted Dr. Davenport is on the right track looking at how we can audit ourselves and improve the safety and security of our district. He went on to thank the staff who served as supports to our student following the Oxford tragedy and commended the age-appropriate conversations. In closing, he noted he applied for a position with the district at Grand Ledge High School and has been offered that position. As such, he will not be able to continue to serve as a member of the board of education so he will be submitting his letter of resignation effective January 9, 2022. He thanked the administration and his fellow board members for the last five years noting his time on the board has made him a better person.

Ms. Shannon expressed his disappointment in losing Mr. McKennon as a member of the board but congratulated him on his new position. She reiterated this is a tough time and it has been a

tough couple of years but there was a lot of good news shared tonight and an appropriate meeting to close out 2021.

Vice President Smith thanked everyone for coming and wished everyone an enjoyable holiday break.

ADJOURNMENT

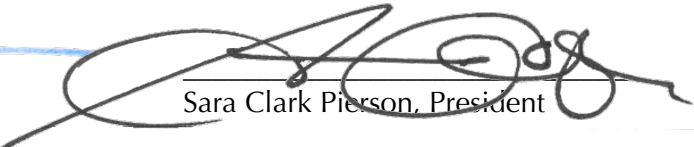
The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Attest:



Nicole Shannon, Secretary



Sara Clark Pierson, President