

**GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD
GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 20, 2018**

The school board of Grand Forks Public School District #1 held a regular meeting on Monday, August 20, 2018, at the Mark Sanford Education Center with President Bill Palmiscno presiding.

Board Members Present: Douglas Carpenter, Chris Douthit, Amber Flynn, Jacqueline Hoffarth, Shannon Mikula, Bill Palmiscno, Cynthia Shabb, and Matt Spivey.

Board Members Absent: Eric Lunn.

Others Present: Superintendent Dr. Terry Brenner, Associate Superintendent Jody Thompson, Assistant Superintendent Catherine Gillach, Business Manager Ed Gerhardt, GFAFB School Board Liaison/President Elizabeth Meihaus, GFEA President Amanda Weston Caillier, and Executive Secretary Cindy Johnson.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda. It was moved by Mikula and seconded by Hoffarth to amend the agenda by adding a general discussion about policy formats. Motion carried on roll call vote as follows: Aye: Douthit, Flynn, Hoffarth, Mikula, Shabb, Spivey, and Palmiscno. Nay: Carpenter. Absent: Lunn.

It was moved by Mikula and seconded by Hoffarth to add discussion about the process by which the cancellation of kindergarten at West Elementary School was approached. Board members discussed that adding this item now did not provide citizens or the board with enough notice or time to prepare questions. It would be better to discuss it at the next meeting along with the process and procedures in general. Motion failed on roll call vote as follows: Aye: Mikula. Nay: Douthit, Flynn, Hoffarth, Shabb, Spivey, Carpenter, and Palmiscno. Absent: Lunn.

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Spivey to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried with all board members present voting aye. Absent: Lunn.

Approval of Minutes. Mikula requested the minutes be corrected by adding comments she

made during discussion of the Bus Transportation Contract Update regarding whether anyone had done an open records analysis on the video recordings that would be the results of putting video cameras on the busses.

It was moved by Shabb and seconded by Spivey to approve the minutes as corrected. Motion carried with all members present voting aye. Absent: Lunn.

Citizen Comments (non-agenda items). Whitney Berry, 1701 Lewis Blvd., Grand Forks, ND, Bryan Safratowich, 2005 5th Ave. N., Grand Forks, ND, and Diane Duchscherer, 2630 6th Ave. N., Grand Forks, ND, addressed the Board concerning cancellation of this year's West Elementary School kindergarten class.

Discussion of Policy Formats. Mikula stated that it was typical for most policy manuals to have a standard format and that it is something that is lacking in the District's policy manual. The current policy format tended to be just paragraphs. Some have purpose in them, some have some definitions in them, and they are not organized in any real structure. She suggested the policy format should have a purpose, procedures, the policy part, definitions, and that the meaning behind the policy should stand out before reading the policy part. She hoped a consistent template could be developed for the policy review committees to work off so that when policies come before the Board they look similar and can be read and understood with ease.

Hoffarth agreed and added that consistent language and bullet formatting as well as professional-looking presentation are helpful in terms of being able to read a policy and understand it.

Mikula requested that Administration come forth with some recommendations for what they wanted to see as primary components for a standard policy format.

Dr. Brenner responded that Administration would look at the formatting templates that the North Dakota School Boards Association (NDSBA) recommends. He did not think there was too much departure from past practice but would take under consideration and advisement comments heard tonight and bring back

recommendations to the Board at a future meeting.

Hoffarth also requested information about a how much the separate subcommittees can access help from the state [NDSBA] and whether there is a process in place should a subcommittee need additional help or if it should be passed through the superintendent.

Dr. Brenner responded that Cindy is basically the main point of contact with the NDSBA so everything would pass through Cindy and the superintendent's office.

Consent Agenda. Palmiscno drew to the Board's attention a handout with eight additional names to be included in the teacher appointments so that contracts could be issued to all teachers to date.

It was moved by Shabb and seconded by Carpenter to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- Teacher Appointments effective August 20, 2018, as follows: Stephanie Albin (salary \$41,964), Kaitlin Ange (salary \$43,495), Kathryn Baker (salary \$41,200), Tammy Bellione (salary \$41,964), Kyle Cummings (salary \$41,200), Anita Klenner (salary \$49,669), Ashley Lackner (salary \$41,964), Joanne Miller (salary \$41,200), Tyler Okerlund (salary \$47,374), Christine Rokke (salary \$41,200), Heather Skogen (salary \$49,614), Ashley Stavnes (salary \$41,259), Jennifer Wittmayer (salary \$41,200), Karena Bergin (salary \$51,964), Melanie Faber (salary \$41,200), Kayla Kircher (salary \$41,200), Kyle Knutson (salary \$46,554), Kristin Kopff (salary \$41,200), David Pesch (salary \$45,844), Hailey Ryan (salary \$40,000), and Mare Thompson (salary \$50,707); and
- Resignations of Katrina Brekke and Stephen Lyman and Stephanie Sevigny for 60% of position effective June 1, 2018.

Motion carried with all board members present voting aye. Absent: Lunn.

Committee Reports.

- **8000 Series Policy Review Committee - First Reading of Policies 8100, 8110, 8111, 8120, 8340, and 8507.** Flynn reported the committee met on August 6 to review these policies. Some of the updates ranged from minor language adjustments to outdated information. The biggest change is proposed Policy 8111, which is new and adds up to two student members to the school board. Policy 8120 was revised to clarify the voting procedure when filling a school board vacancy. Also, references to 'his' and 'her'

were changed to 'they' in order to eliminate gender references.

In response to questions from Douthit regarding proposed Policy 8111, Dr. Brenner explained what the process for nominating a student to the school board would look like. The nominations would come from the principals to the superintendent and school board president, who then would review the criteria and build a matrix to evaluate and determine the strongest candidates to serve the school board and themselves as clients of the school district. Dr. Brenner added that the purpose and intent of this policy is to give students an opportunity to for a voice and choice and a pathway to speak on behalf of themselves and on behalf of the student population. With regard to the North Dakota High School Activities Association (NDHSAA), the student would be required to follow all the guidelines of the NDHSAA as if they were in a sport or activity with one difference - the discipline consequence would likely be a termination for the year rather than a suspension.

Hoffarth expressed concern for equity of opportunity across the high schools and asked why three students, one from each high school, was not an option. Specifically, she expressed concern about Community High School being left out of representation. Hoffarth also expressed concern for equity in terms of principals assigning a student. She stated that there are a lot of great [student] leaders in the school who do not get noticed by administration.

Brenner cited successes over the past 11 years with principals appointing nine student leaders to serve on the district's Educational Enhancement Committee and stated that he was not worried about under-representation. However, the School Board could further wordsmith the proposed policy.

Flynn clarified that there was nothing to prevent a teacher, student, or someone else from recommending a student for nomination to the principal. She added that the number of students did not necessarily reflect the number of high schools that would be represented.

Shabb questioned the use of the word "regularly," the requirement to "be seated at the Board table at all meetings," whether training would be provided to accommodate the requirement to "be bound by all rules and regulations within law which bind the Board," whether communication protocol should be spelled out, and whether an oath of office was necessary.

Flynn clarified that "regularly" means the student regularly attends school, is not tardy much of the time, and does not have a lot of

absences. "Be seated at the Board table" means that the student sits at the Board table as opposed to sitting in the audience. She suggested Dr. Brenner would have no trouble with an orientation about the rules and regulations for the student member. The requirement for an oath is similar to other school districts.

Hoffarth suggested clarification of the one-year term and whether a student can serve only one year in the event a student is nominated in both their 11th and 12th grade years. She also asked if the student's service to the Board could be viewed as credit for volunteer hours.

Hoffarth officially suggested that there be three student members rather than up to two student members in order to gain more diversity of thought from the students.

Douthit referred to the Rider Rope Program for volunteer hours and speculated that Grand Forks Central High School had a similar program. He reassured Board members that in his experience as an associate high school principal, when principals are asked to provide names for something, the lead principal would typically reach out to other associates and speak to counselors and other people. He stated that a single-person decision typically does not happen unless it is necessary.

Mikula asked if these policies, as they come out of committee, are being reviewed by the administrators who are going to be implementing or trying to follow them.

Brenner responded that they are in transition to be reviewed by the Cabinet Advisory Council, which consists of principals, directors, Human Resources, and the communications coordinator.

Mikula suggested as another option that three students, one from each high school, be elected to serve as a liaison to the school board and those three are responsible for conversing amongst themselves and only one of them has to be in attendance at each school board meeting. She suggested getting rid of the "regularly enrolled" and build in "good character" and "good standing," which are going to have to be defined by administration. She also suggested all acronyms be spelled out so that those reading the policy know what they mean. Mikula also requested that "including, but not limited to" be added to the provision regarding a student member not be provided with sensitive materials/information.

Hoffarth requested the word "control" be taken out of the provision regarding the school board's right to control/correct the student representative.

Mikula suggested the words "out of order" be taken out of the provision regarding the school board's right to control/correct the student representative.

Hoffarth suggested the Board consider having a behavior agreement that the student would sign.

Spivey supported the idea of student representation on the school board. He speculated that the student would likely be someone who is already involved in student government. He preferred that there be only one student member. He reminded board members that the student member is not a voting member and as such, he did not think it was necessary to dive into the legalese of communications of what they can and cannot do or say.

Palmiscno explained that all the policies presented herein could be accepted for their first reading and that proposed Policy 8111 be sent back to committee for consideration of changes as discussed. There were no comments regarding Policies 8100, 8110, 8120, 8340, and 8507.

It was moved by Hoffarth and seconded by Douthit to approve the first reading of Policies 8100, 8110, 8111, 8120, 8340, and 8507. Motion carried with all board members present voting aye. Absent: Lunn.

- 3000 Series Policy Review Committee - First Reading of Policy 3200. Palmiscno reported Policy 3200 is a new advertising policy that is proposed as a way to find a new revenue stream for the school district through advertising and sponsorships.

Mikula asked if the school district attorney had reviewed the proposed policy. She also expressed concern about free expression with this type of policy.

Palmiscno responded that the school district attorney's review would be the next step.

It was moved by Spivey and seconded by Shabb to approve the first reading of Policy 3200. Motion carried with all board members present voting aye. Absent: Lunn.

Palmiscno reported that Policy 3211 would be rescinded with the adoption of the advertising policy.

- Finance Committee.
Fire Thorn LLC Tax Increment Financing Assistance Application. Carpenter reported that the Finance Committee is recommending the school board approve the tax increment financing assistance application for Fire Thorn LLC at the full 80% for 15 years. He explained that no action would be taken at this meeting and that representatives from the City of Grand

Forks and the developer would be at the September 10 meeting to answer questions. Formal action is anticipated to be taken at the September 10 meeting.

Mikula referred to discussion as recorded in the August 9 Finance Committee meeting minutes and asked what gains the school district might have versus losses if the project did not go through.

Thompson reported that the developer would be at the next meeting to report on the land swap agreement.

Palmiscno responded that the school district would receive 20% of the taxes for the project, a renovated, lighted parking lot for Grand Forks Central High School, and a deli in the downtown Hugo's that would be available for students.

Mikula asked if there had been any information provided on what the square footage is that is devoted to the low-income housing.

Carpenter responded that he did not recollect the square footage of the residential units, but that the low-income housing is half of the total residential units. Twenty-five will be at full market and 25 will be at a reduced rate.

Mikula asked if the City had provided any projections on what the 10-15 year property values or development plan might look like to increase or enhance property values around the area as a result of this project.

Carpenter responded that the City did not give any projections about what they thought growth would be on value of properties. They did discuss that there are two other projects they anticipate would be coming forward, which are the JLG property on Demers and 4th Street and the St. John's block project.

Mikula asked if there was revenue in other places that would offset the lost revenue as a result of approving the application.

Palmiscno reported that the 2017-2018 budget ended better than projected, almost to a break even spot, so the burden has been eased to that point. More revenue would have to come from the state. He explained that he did not see this as losing money. He saw it as the school district gaining a parking lot and the 20% tax revenue, both of which would not happen if the project did not go through. He reported that in talking with the developers, the project would not go through without approval of the tax increment financing.

Spivey explained that he looked at the project as a way to generate revenue for the school district because if the project goes through, the district would get 20% tax revenue. Revitalization of the downtown and an increase in the tax base benefits everybody in the long run.

Hoffarth asked if data about the cost of a new parking lot and the projected increase in property taxes could be provided to Board members so that they had evidence in their hands that could be communicated to the public.

Flynn spoke about other benefits of the project that may not have a dollar amount to them such as academic or social partnerships for school groups such as DECA or jobs for students.

Douthit ask if the low-rent apartments would become standard rent apartments with the sunset of the 15 years.

Carpenter responded that the rent is tied to the length of the mortgage.

Mikula stated that in the consultant's report, the consultant specifically outlined some things that could be reduced such as deferring the development fee, increasing upfront equity, and increasing other project revenue. She wondered whether all alternative avenues have been considered before the tax increment financing option. Mikula stated that 15 years is a really long time considering the life of the loan that is on the 25 units is 20 years. She added that it is really only 5 years of property tax on the entire building, not just the value assigned to those 25 units or 80% of the building value. She stated that she would like it to be a little bit more reasonable in terms of timeline and asked if those scenarios have been played out to look at how it affects the debt ratio they are looking at.

Spivey responded that those would be questions for the developer. He added that his impression after meeting with the City is that the development will not proceed without this tax increment funding. One thing they talked about was that time is stretched already with this new committee and the legislative mandate about the process to consider tax increment financing applications. The developers have already considered themselves to be losing some money because building costs have gone up and tariffs on steel have been implemented.

Update on the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Financial Results. Palmiscno reported on the update on the 2017-2018 preliminary financial results prior to the audit. The loss at the end of the year is roughly \$100,000, which is an improvement of what was originally projected.

Board members had questions about expenditures for EL, the entities that the district pays rent to, equipment and furniture and its distribution process across the district, dues and fees, purchased services, and the per school allocation.

Gerhardt will follow up with detailed information to Board members.

Discussion of the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Budget and Tax Levy Including Three Mills for a Special Reserve Fund. Palmiscno reported that Committee members felt the statute regarding the three mills for a special reserve fund was very vague and hard to follow as to what it was really meant to do. They felt that because of the budget and possibility of a future bond issue for facilities, this is not the time to take the three mills. They also hoped the legislature would step forward and provide additional funding.

Mikula asked if the District has a process for legislative lobbying and a strategy going forward to approach the legislators. She also asked if there is a need for board members to participate in lobbying efforts.

Brenner explained that the District works with the Big 5 (City of Grand Forks, Grand Forks County, Grand Forks Park District, Grand Forks Public Schools, and Grand Forks Airport Authority). The District puts together a legislative position paper specific to its concerns and then collectively as Team Grand Forks. The District also hosts a pre-legislative forum before the legislative session begins. The District also works with the NDSBA (North Dakota School Boards Association), the NDCEL (North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders), and with legislators across the state. Administration also works through relationships and rapport with legislators.

Spivey explained that with past administrations, the Board receives legislative updates throughout the session. Administration leads the role in lobbying. Spivey added that he does casually visit with legislators when their paths crossed in the community.

Palmiscno referred to the pre-legislative forum hosted by the District and explained that Board members are invited to attend. A dinner is held at the forum, each agency speaks to their needs, and the groups come in conversation.

Shabb explained that she attends the Saturday morning briefings at City Hall that the legislators attend. She has spoken about District issues at these briefings. She has also casually visited with legislators in the community.

Palmiscno reminded Board members that there will be a presentation by the City on September 10 and that the School Board will vote at that meeting on the Fire Thorn LLC Tax Increment Financing Assistance Application. That is 30 days from the time the District received notice of this application. He informed Board members that if the District does not vote at that meeting, the City would automatically assume that the District approves to the application.

It was moved by Spivey and seconded by Mikula to accept the report of the Finance Committee. Motion carried with all board members present voting aye. Absent: Lunn.

Establishing School Board Norms.

Brenner discussed his entry plan and concept to establish working norms or working behaviors for the type of governance the Board wanted to have as a governing body and/or how Board members and Administration wanted to interact and behave at meetings. He requested that Board members review the sample materials provided in the agenda packet and identify any norms and/or attributes that they feel should be a working norm for the Board.

Board members pointed out the following attributes:

- To serve as advocates for public 9-12 education.
- Value and respect for each other, the superintendent, and staff.
- Be prepared ahead of time.
- Not ask questions that are difficult for administration to answer because they do not have the information.
- Take away the element of surprise.
- Thoughtful deliberation and conversation.
- Balance the agenda items at one meeting based on priority or timeline.
- Not have a lot of heavy agenda items at one meeting.
- Behave as if we are in a classroom of students.
- Recognize that we see the schools are properly run, not to run them. Let administrators do their work. Work through the superintendent, not over or around him. Entrust the day-to-day operations to the professionals. Know the role of a board member.
- Use respectful language about other board members to the general public.
- Be advocates for the students. Everything the Board does has to be most important for the students.
- Consider staff and District capacity in resources so we are not overburdening with questions when we get the Board packet.
- Lead by policy and not get into the minutia of daily operations.
- State what happens if the norms are not working or if someone is not adhering to the norms.
- Help community members and stakeholders in following the chain of command.
- Keep the community at the heart of decisions as well as students.

- Time management process - an overall expectation of Board members who may be late or absent for a meeting.

It was moved by Douthit and seconded by Hoffarth to refer the suggestions for School Board norms to Administration for compilation. Motion carried with all board members present voting aye. Absent: Lunn.

Announcements. The following announcements were made:

- DPI-sponsored ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) Continuous Improvement Workshop, September 13, in Grand Forks. Board members interested in attending should inform Cindy in the Superintendent's Office.
- Superintendent's Keynote, August 21, at the Red River High School Performance Hall. Child Nutrition Program-sponsored breakfast at 7:15 a.m., Keynote at 8:15 a.m.
- Open House Schedule (provided in agenda packet).
- First day of school for Grades K-9 is August 27.
- First day of school for Grades 10-12 is August 28.
- Board members are invited to the Global Friends Coalition Community Picnic, Sunday, September 9, 5-9pm at University Park.
- Kudos to the District for new Grand Forks Public Schools app.

Board Requests for Future Consideration. Hoffarth requested information on the per school allocation.

Mikula asked whether the citizen's comments at the last meeting regarding cyber bullying should be referred to the appropriate Policy Review Committee. Brenner reported that he has invited the citizen be a part of the District's anti-bullying committee and she has accepted.

Mikula requested someone present to the board and reiterate what the open meetings laws mean to the Board.

The meeting was recessed from 8:03 to 8:06 p.m. in preparation of the Book Study.

Book Study. Board members divided into three groups with administrators and proceeded with the book study from 8:06 to 8:29 p.m.

Hoffarth left the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

Adjournment. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

APPROVED _____
(Date)

Bill Palmiscno, President

Edwin J. Gerhardt, Business Manager