

**GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD  
GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
May 26, 2020**

NOTE: Per Governor Doug Burgum's executive order, all North Dakota school districts, including Grand Forks Public Schools, are closed until further notice. This is a precautionary measure against the transmission of COVID-19. This meeting was held via Zoom.

The Grand Forks School Board met in regular session on Tuesday, May 26, 2020, with Bill Palmiscno presiding.

**Board Members Present:**

Bill Palmiscno, President/Voting Member  
Amber Flynn, Vice President/Voting Member  
Doug Carpenter, Voting Member  
Eric Lunn, Voting Member  
Jeff Manley, Voting Member  
Shannon Mikula, Voting Member  
Cynthia Shabb, Voting Member  
Matt Spivey, Voting Member

**Student Board Members Present:**

Riley Thoreson, Non-voting Member

**Board Members Absent:**

Jacqueline Hoffarth, Voting Member

**Student Board Members Absent:**

Oliver Wolfe, Non-voting Member

**Others Present:**

Dr. Terry Brenner, Superintendent of Schools  
Scott J. Berge, Business Manager  
Jody Thompson, Associate Superintendent of Elementary Education  
Catherine Gillach, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education  
Melissa Buchhop, Vice President, Grand Forks Education Association  
Cindy Johnson, Executive Secretary

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

**Celebrating Success.** Chris Douthit, Interim Principal at Schroeder Middle School, announced Milly Lafferty, who was also in attendance, as the Classified Employee of the Quarter. He and Chris Arnold, Director of Buildings & Grounds, spoke highly about Ms. Lafferty's job performance.

Darin Walters, Associate Principal at Red River High School, announced Mrs. Emily Parrill as the Certified Employee of the Quarter. He also spoke highly about Mrs. Parrill's job performance.

**Approval of Agenda.** It was requested to add the topic "Graduation Planning Update" as a discussion item. It was moved by Spivey and seconded by Carpenter to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

**Approval of Minutes.** It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Lunn to approve the minutes of May 11, 2020, as written. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

**Citizen Comments (non-agenda items).** None.

**Review School Board Norms.** Flynn read the school board norms.

**Graduation Planning Update.** Gillach explained that graduation planning was based on three goals. 1) to ensure student, family, and community safety, 2) to celebrate and honor each student, and 3) to provide for family involvement. She continued with a detailed discussion of the plans for a drive-up ceremony and stage presentation of diplomas at Grand Forks Central and Red River High Schools and a parking lot ceremony and stage presentation of diplomas at Community High School.

**Demographer's Report.** Rob Schwarz, owner and principal planner of RSP & Associates, presented an overview of the district's enrollment projections and demographics, building capacity, and development opportunities. He noted that things would change post-COVID-19. Overall, elementary enrollment is stable, middle school enrollment is expected to increase slightly, and high school enrollment is expected to decrease slightly.

**Self-Assessment Committee Report.** Carpenter reported on the May 18, 2020, meeting of the Self-Assessment Committee at which the responses to this year's school board self-assessment survey were reviewed. He thanked everyone for completing the survey and noted there was 100% participation, including the participation of the student board members. He said that all survey areas were rated as satisfactory and reviewed some items that were mentioned for future discussion.

**Consent Agenda.** It was moved by Shabb and seconded by Carpenter to approve the consent agenda as follows: Appointments of Allison Dyer (salary \$42,445), Jordan LaPlant (salary \$42,445), Lauren McMillan (salary \$48,806), Kyah Nettum (salary \$42,445), Olivia Schreiner (salary \$42,445), Anna Mariah Sjol (salary \$51,114), Amanda Warzecha (salary \$46,273), and Kelsie Wiens (salary \$42,445) effective August 18, 2020; and Resignations of Katie Boorman, Bailey Gander, Bridget Ryberg, and Cassandra Thomte effective May 29, 2020. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

**General Fund Financial Statement.** Berge explained that for the period of July 1, 2019, through April 30, 2020, total general fund

revenues were \$92,522,017 and total general fund expenditures were \$80,918,954 resulting in an excess of revenues over expenses of \$11,603,063. He reported the general fund balance has decreased by \$6.4 million in the last two years with a significant amount of that related to construction expenditures. Year-to-date revenue growth is at .4% as compared to the budget of 1% and expense growth is at 5.9% as compared to the budget of 3%. Construction Services is a \$1.38 million increase from last year and is 69% of the \$3.65 million annual budget. The end-of-year general fund balance is projected to be around \$10 million depending upon the timing of construction expenses and CARES Act funding. Berge said \$10 million is one month's expenses.

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Spivey to approve the General Fund Financial Statement for the period July 1, 2019, through April 30, 2020. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

**Renewal of Community High School Lease for the Term July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.** Berge explained the lease proposal. The lease amount of \$9.25 per square foot per annum is the same as the previous lease period. Upon the expiration of the initial term, the lease may be renewed annually until June 30, 2025.

It was moved by Shabb and seconded by Lunn to renew the lease with the State of North Dakota for space used by Community High School in the North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind building located at 500 Stanford Road for the period from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

**CARES Act Funding.** Thompson reported the district is eligible to receive \$2,100,205 through the CARES Act, specifically the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund. A committee was formed to review the funding requirements and is proposing that the funding priorities are technology, COVID-19 incurred expenses and supplies, and expenses that are dedicated to offsetting the general fund deficit.

Eric Ripley, Executive Director of Career and Technology Education and Technology, explained the proposal to substantially invest in technology and bring the district to a true 1:1 district by providing an iPad for all students in grades K-2 and a Chromebook for all students in grades 3-12. He said there is a recommendation to not share equipment in the current environment and this investment would also allow the district to transition back to a remote learning environment if needed. Teachers' laptops would also be updated as part of their regular rotation and hotspots for students would be provided if needed again.

It was moved by Shabb and seconded by Manley to approve the ESSER Fund Priorities List for \$2,100,205. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

**Resolution Providing for Public Sale of up to \$995,000 General Obligation Special Assessment Prepayment Bonds, Series 2020A.**

Berge explained that interest rates were again favorable for the district to prepay its special assessments with bonds and that the district could save \$180,000+ in interest costs over the life of the bonds (14 years).

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Shabb to adopt the resolutions required for Providing for Public Sale of up to \$995,000 General Obligation Special Assessment Prepayment Bonds, Series 2020A. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

**Resolution Providing for Public Sale of \$2,770,000 Taxable Limited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 2020B.**

Berge explained that interest rates were again favorable for the district to pay its old debt with bonds and that the district could save \$240,000 in interest costs over the life of the new bonds (13 years).

It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Shabb to adopt the resolutions required for Providing for Public Sale of \$2,770,000 Taxable Limited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 2020B. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

**Policy Review Committee Report: First and Second Readings and Rescinding of Policies.**

Shabb reported on the May 13, 2020, Policy Review Committee meeting and continuation of its work toward the adoption of the NDSBA policy templates.

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Lunn to complete the second reading as written of Policy AACA – Section 504 Dispute Resolution Policy, Policy FCAF – Concussion Management, Policy FFB – Attendance & Absences, Policy FFD – Carrying Weapons, Policy GCC – Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment & Third-Party Research on Students, and Policy IDC – Data Protection & Security Breaches and adopt each one as an official policy of the district. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Manley to complete the first reading as written of Board Regulation AAC-BR – Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedure and adopt it as an official policy of the district. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Manley to rescind Policy 5633 – Concussion Management. Motion carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Manley to complete the first reading as written of Policy ACBB – Significant Contagious Diseases, Policy ACDA – Acceptable Use, Policy DBBA – Drug and Alcohol Testing Program for Employees, Policy DEAA – Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace, Policy FDD – Education of Pregnant and Parenting Students, Policy BDD – Compensation for School Board Members, Policy FF – Student Conduct & Discipline, and Policy FFK – Suspension & Expulsion.

Lunn explained that although he thought board members were markedly under-compensated, he had concerns about the timing of increasing board member compensation (Policy BDD) amid the COVID-19 situation, and he wanted the full board to discuss it.

It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Carpenter to amend the motion and separate

Policy BDD – Compensation for School Board Members. Amendment carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

The original motion as amended carried unanimously. Absent: Hoffarth.

Discussion continued on Policy BDD – Compensation for School Board Members. Shabb reported the committee discussed that increasing the compensation for board members might help increase the diversity and demographic of future candidates. Lunn said the increase should happen but not this year. Carpenter said that there is never a good time to increase compensation and that one could always find a reason to decrease it. He reminded the board that they took a step back a few years ago and that compared to other districts’ compensation and the amount of time that board members have spent over the last couple of years, an increase is something that should happen.

It was moved by Carpenter and seconded by Manley to complete the first reading as written of Policy BDD – Compensation for School Board Members. Motion carried on roll call vote as follows: Aye: Carpenter, Flynn, Manley, Shabb, and Spivey. Nay: Lunn, Mikula, and Palmiscno. Absent: Hoffarth.

**Announcements.** None.

**Board Requests for Future Consideration.**  
None.

**School Board Norms - How Did We Do?** Flynn reported the board did a good job of following its norms.

**Adjournment.** There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

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Bill Palmiscno, President

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Scott J. Berge, Business Manager