

MASON BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting
December 14, 2015
Harvey Education Center
400 South Cedar Street
7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Mason Board of Education was held at the James C. Harvey Education Center on Monday, December 14, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Ralph Beebe, President.

Present: Ralph Beebe, Becky Brimley, Laura Fenger, Julie Rogers, Laura Cheney, Kurt Creamer, and Tom Curtis

Absent:

Also Present: Ron Drzewicki, Superintendent; Cheryl S. Wald, Chief Financial Officer; Matt Stuard, Curriculum Director; Rick Brooks, Director of Human Resources; Strategic Planning Task Force members; Facilities Improvement Steering Committee members; Mason staff and community members

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Julie Rogers made and Tom Curtis supported a motion to approve the agenda as printed. All yes. Motion carried 7-0.

PUBLIC REQUESTS/COMMENTS

Mr. Harley Vanorsdol of 4123 Shoals Dr., Okemos, MI addressed the board to represent his family and granddaughter. Mr. Vanorsdol asked the board to evaluate the bullying policy and shared his concern for the overall protection of our students. He claimed his granddaughter was assaulted by students whom she had considered her friends. He would like pro-active measures against bullying implemented at all grade levels. He asked the Board of Education to be pro-active at the jr. high and high school levels. Mr. Vanorsdol shared his concerns for social media bullying and for the lack of school representatives at a previously attended junior varsity sporting event.

Mr. Beebe stated the board takes public requests and comments seriously. Mr. Beebe thanked Mr. Vanorsdol for his comments.

SPECIAL REPORTS/COMMENTS

Strategic Plan Presentation -

Middle School Principal, Dan McConeghy presented the proposed Strategic Plan. He said he was proud to be a part of the process and serve on the Task Force. Mr. McConeghy introduced Task

Force members present in the audience and thanked Becky Brimley and Tom Curtis for serving on the team.

The formal process of developing a Strategic Plan began in December 2014 with support from Gary Rider from the Michigan Leadership Institute. The administrators and the Task Force liked the design of the plan document with district specific information on the top half and building/department information on the bottom half. Mr. McConeghy said he is “very proud of the process because it included everyone.”

A group of 50 students, staff and community members created the first draft of the plan in May of 2015. Each person’s perspective was heard during the process. It was an accordion strategy beginning with the Task Force to a Core Team and then to district staff. The Core Team finalized the wording. On the first Professional Development day this fall, all employees had an opportunity to participate and critique the plan. Feedback was gathered and returned to the Core Team. The administrators then took the plan back to their buildings and departments to vote on final wording, a mission and a brand promise. The plan was then finalized. Mr. McConeghy believes this will be an easy plan for individuals and departments to follow. The teams ask the Board of Education to approve the Strategic Plan.

Laura Cheney asked what each building discussed and voted on. Mr. McConeghy stated the middle school staff reviewed the presented plan and couldn’t find anything wrong with it. The middle school staff felt they could connect to the plan. Each building reviewed the plan in the same way.

Superintendent Drzewicki stated the plan is small enough to be on a placemat type document and will be displayed in all classrooms and departments. It is not a big binder that sits on a shelf. It will be easy to follow and provide direction. Every staff member will work on strategies that connect to the district goals and priorities.

Tom Curtis added that the process was productive and included a diverse group of people from every sector of the community.

Administration will continue to report back to the Board of Education indicating its level of success.

Julie Rogers asked if this would be the exact plan if the board were to adopt it. Superintendent Drzewicki indicated it would be the only Strategic Plan for the district.

Mr. Beebe thanked the members of the Task Force for their attendance and work on the Strategic Plan.

COMMUNICATIONS

Board members received follow-up information from Mr. Mike Botke of Child and Family Charities regarding the Ingham Teen Court program.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Julie Rogers made and Becky Brimley supported a motion to approve the consent agenda, including approval of minutes of the November 9, special meeting; November 9, regular meeting; November 9, closed session #1; November 9, closed session #2; November 23, special meeting;

November 23, closed session; Personnel Report No. 13; Financial Report No. 14; including payment of General Fund bills in the amount of \$1,381,358.85, Food Service Fund bills in the amount of \$112,809.94, Student Activities Fund bills in the amount of \$43,227.29, and Sinking Fund bills in the amount of \$22,978.50. All yes. Motion carried 7-0.

COMMITTEE AND SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS

Finance and Property

Kurt Creamer referred to the minutes from the December 7, 2015 meeting. The committee discussed the September and October 2015 monthly budget update. There was general discussion about report formats for the MDMEA. Cheryl informed the committee of the need to make a payroll adjustment for some employees due to an error in retirement withholdings on cash in lieu payments.

A revised 2015-16 budget revision was presented. Projected revenues over expenditures increased from \$207,345 to \$444,341 and the projected ending Fund Balance increased to 6.34% from 5.66%.

The committee discussed a motion to approve the summer rate tax request for the City of Mason, Alaiedon Township, Aurelius Township and Vevay Township.

An outside consultant has been hired to conduct an Ingham ISD special education program review. Most districts are participating in the audit. The cost to Mason will be \$2000-\$3000 and should begin in January.

Information from Westbay Drilling was shared regarding a proposal to drill just south of the High School.

Preliminary bond information was discussed followed by a closed session to discuss the purchase of property.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 4, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.

Summer Tax Resolution

Kurt Creamer made and Julie Rogers supported a motion to approve the Annual Summer Tax Resolution, as presented. All yes. Motion carried 7-0.

2015-16 Budget Revision

Board members reviewed the 2015-16 budget revision. Cheryl Wald highlighted significant budget changes. She indicated we are in a good position due to bringing in additional students. Additional costs were not necessary and late changes in staffing were favorable which created the increase.

Kurt Creamer made and Julie Rogers supported a motion to approve the 2015-16 Budget Revision, as presented. All yes. Motion carried 7-0.

Superintendent Drzewicki thanked the Board of Education for their hard work and tough budget decisions that were made in the spring. He thanked the staff that worked to cut expenses in the June budget and the financial staff. He is comfortable with what has been done. The budget is working for us and it will fund the Strategic Plan. Savings will continue to be captured and there are many people to thank for that.

Community and Staff Relations

Becky Brimley referred to minutes from November 16, 2015.

An online BoardBook was presented and the committee will continue to research the program.

Rick Brooks presented a 2015-16 staffing update with substitute teacher conversation.

Superintendent Drzewicki shared information regarding updating the website. He has completed staff presentations at each building and made visits to the Optimist Club and Kiwanis Club in October. Mr. Drzewicki was selected to serve on the Mason Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Preliminary bond information was discussed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 18, 2015 at 4:15 p.m.

Praise was given to the transportation department and bus drivers for covering all routes during driver shortages. Superintendent Drzewicki stated they play an important role in our district.

Policy and Curriculum

Laura Cheney referred to minutes from the November 23, 2015 meeting.

The committee discussed online BoardBook.

Carolyn Hyde proposed a more rigorous and aligned pre-calculus college algebra course. The committee recommends the new course offering for approval by the Board of Education.

A grant opportunity is available through Ingham ISD which addresses the attendance policy, discipline policy or class failure rates.

Matt Stuard provided an update on the GoMath! Curriculum implementation. There is still excitement about the program.

The committee reviewed policy #9730, Relationship with Associated Organizations. The committee recommends the policy to the Board of Education for first reading.

The committee reviewed a \$5,000 contribution from the Michigan Running Foundation for the purpose of covering registration fees for the 2016-17 seasons of the Middle School Cross Country Club. The committee recommends acceptance of the donation.

Preliminary bond information was discussed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15, 2015 at 4:00 p.m.

New Course – Pre-Calculus College Prep

Laura Cheney made and Julie Rogers supported a motion to approve the new course development request for Pre-Calculus College Prep, as presented. All yes. Motion carried 7-0.

Gifts/Bequests Donor Contribution – Michigan Running Foundation

Laura Cheney made and Julie Rogers supported a motion to approve the Michigan Running Foundation contribution, as presented. All yes. Motion carried 7-0.

Ralph Beebe thanked the Michigan Running Foundation for their contribution stating it is greatly appreciated.

Superintendent

Superintendent Drzewicki recommended approval of the Strategic Plan, as presented.

Strategic Plan

Becky Brimley made and Julie Rogers supported a motion to approve the Strategic Plan, as presented. All yes. Motion carried 7-0.

Bond Proposal

Chris Waltz spoke on behalf of the Facilities Improvement Steering Committee. She thanked the Board of Education for the opportunity to serve Mason Public Schools.

Superintendent Drzewicki, at the direction of the Mason Board of Education, assembled a committee made up of dedicated community members who truly care about our young people and the impact that Mason Public Schools can have on our community. This steering committee thoroughly and thoughtfully discussed the issues facing our district with a long-term view so as to best support the district's strategic plan. Systematic research and due diligence were conducted with open minds and with the best interest of our community in mind. She stated that it has been our pleasure to serve in this capacity, and we are both proud of and excited about the recommendation we bring to you tonight.

As chair of the Steering Committee, Chris Waltz expressed sincere appreciation to fellow committee members. Over 1,000 hours in total were spent together over the past five months and the process was sincerely enjoyed. She thanked them for expressing their opinions, for sharing their thoughts, challenging assumptions, and helping shape the committee to finalize tonight's recommendation. Mrs. Waltz said they are a fine group and she felt honored to have been given the opportunity to serve with them.

The Steering Committee identified very early on the main goals of:

- Facility upgrades
- Safety and security
- Technology

The committee stayed focused on these main areas throughout the process and had a goal of improving all three at each of our education facilities. Among other things, the committee's research included:

- Facility audit conducted by the Skillman Corporation
- Programing interviews with educational staff by GMB Architects & Engineering
- Staff and community surveys
- Parent advisory and community forums
- Reviews of current and projected student enrollment by building

It was readily apparent early on that the district is in need of additional elementary space and so the committee also focused on how best to address that need.

The steering committee proudly recommends to you that the district place a \$79.8 million bond on the May 2016 ballot to pay for facility, safety and security, and technology upgrades at Mason's schools. These funds are to be used for:

- Certain Improvements at each educational facility as deemed necessary by the facility audit including HVAC and lighting
- STEM, Woods, Robotics, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Athletics and Science additions and renovations at the Middle School and High School
- A new 4th-5th grade building
- Safety and security improvements at each school
- Technology upgrades at each school
- Buses
- Land acquisitions as necessary to implement the plan

The Steering Committee feels this is a solid plan that will set the direction for Mason Public Schools for many years to come. With a new building and significant upgrades at all schools, the district's students will experience a high quality educational environment from which to succeed.

Chris Waltz thanked the Board of Education on behalf of the Facilities Improvement Steering Committee for considering the recommendation.

Julie Rogers made and Becky Brimley supported a motion to authorize the Superintendent to work with GMB Architects-Engineers, The Skillman Corporation, H.J. Umbaugh & Associates, Certified Public Accounts, LLP, and Thrun Law Firm, P.C., to prepare a Preliminary Qualification Application for the contemplated bond project and meet with the Michigan Department of Treasury officials to finalize such Preliminary Qualification Application prior to it being submitted to the Board for their approval. All yes. Motion carried 7-0.

President Beebe thanked the community and said he is excited of the prospect. The Board of Education is listening to our community.

The audience applauded.

INTRODUCTION OF OTHER MATTERS BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Becky Brimley recommended board members review the ISOA minutes provided in the board packet.

Laura Cheney will attend lunch at North Aurelius Elementary on Wednesday, December 16, 2015.

Ralph Beebe asked the board members to continue to be flexible with scheduling of meetings as we move forward.

PUBLIC REQUESTS/COMMENTS

Mr. Beebe thanked those in attendance.

CLOSED SESSION – PROPERTY

Becky Brimley made and Julie Rogers supported a motion to enter into closed session for the purpose of property discussion. Roll Call Vote: Yes - Beebe, Brimley, Cheney, Creamer, Curtis, Fenger, Rogers; No – None. Motion carried 7-0.

The Board entered closed session at 7:52 p.m.

The minutes of the closed session are on file in the Superintendent’s office as provided by P.A. 167 of the Public Acts of 1976.

The Board returned to open session at 8:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Julie Rogers made and Laura Cheney supported a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m.

Laura Fenger
Secretary