

Green Mountain Unified School District Board
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 18, 2018
GMUHS Library Learning Commons
6:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER:

Board: Joseph Fromberger, Fred Marin, Jeff Hance, Deb Brown, Marilyn Mahusky, Kate Lamphere, Kathy Muther, Michael Studin, Rick Alexander

Staff: Meg Powden, Deb Beaupre, Lauren Fierman, Todd Parah, Cheryl Hammond, Katherine Fogg, Alan Garvin, Brett Mastrangelo, Venissa White, Jim Spaulding

Student Representatives: Raleigh Thomas, Laurel King

Public: Shawn Cunningham, Wayne Wheelock, Naomi Johnson, Sharon Huntley, Chris Meyer, Jordan Bergeron, Miles Garvin, Lee Gustafson, Deb O'Brien, Trish Parrity, Jill Bruning

Ms. Mahusky called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. She introduced the new board members and the student representatives. The board members introduced themselves.

II. APPROVE AGENDA:

Mr. Marin **moved** to approve the agenda with the addition of discussion of the oil bid and recommendation for hire under new business, and the student report under the board comments. Ms. Muther seconded and the motion to approve the agenda as amended carried with no opposition.

III. EDUCATION PRESENTATION:

Mr. Garvin and Mr. Mastrangelo reported on the summer hike. They reported on all of the students who participated, including some people from Black River high school. They hiked out west this summer for about 2 ½ weeks and covered about 200 miles. Not only did they hike the Pacific Coast Trail, but they also visited the Pacific Ocean and Crater Lake. They noted that many of the people who participated hadn't been out west before this trip. They presented information on the hike and entertained questions from the board and the audience. They noted that the terrain is very different from what the students are used to here.

Ms. Mahusky questioned how the trip came about. Mr. Garvin noted that the program is called the Outdoor Leadership program and is designed to have the students develop leadership skills and make decisions they wouldn't normally be exposed to. They aim to have the students make decisions that are safe, ethical and aimed toward leadership. Mr. Mastrangelo noted that with the Wilderness program already in place at the school, much of the equipment is already owned by the school. There were 6 students and 3 chaperones this year. There was discussion about how the group replenished their supplies during the trip. Mr. Garvin explained that this year the cost was more than in prior years because of the cost of flights. They also had the expense of renting a couple cars to see some of the touristy location. The individual cost was about \$550 to \$600 for 2 ½ weeks. They are looking at doing the Long Trail again next year. Another parent noted that she can't wait until her children are old enough to participate in the program. Laurel noted that it was an amazing trip doing something she loved with other people doing something they love. Miles reported that he got to learn a few things and be with people he hadn't been with before. There was discussion about the terrain. There was discussion about how the group "gets the word out" to the students. Mr. Garvin explained that they put out announcements to the students in the spring, as well as during the first school year

assembly. They also post fliers around the school. There was discussion about the group doing smaller hikes throughout the year to build interest. Mr. Garvin reported on the hikes done by the Wilderness Program students as well as some of the other various hikes. The group thanked the board and the administration for the opportunity.

IV. APPROVE MINUTES:

A. August 21, 2018

Mr. Marin **moved** to approve the minutes as corrected. Ms. Lamphere seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

V. COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Public Comments

None.

B. Board Comments

Mr. Studin noted that he had sent out an email about the communications regarding the CAES issues and how it will be communicated to the public. He explained that while board meetings are great, they should also consider public forums to share information and answer questions. Ms. Mahusky noted that this might be a good opportunity to revive the PR committee and engage that group in the communication with the community. She noted that the administration was very diligent in communicating with teachers and families but it is a bit more difficult to get the message out to the community. Ms. Mahusky noted that she had sent out an email asking if the board wanted to hold a special meeting but only received 3 responses. Mr. Studin suggested not doing this communication in a board meeting, rather a public forum where the administration answers questions and shares information.

Ms. Fogg noted that the problem that she was facing was that she didn't have information about the project. She noted that before school meeting the information was difficult to hear. There was discussion about the information unfolding so quickly that the administration is not able to get the information out as quickly as it changes. Mr. Fromberger noted that while a public forum would be useful, the administration communicating with the community at large (not just parents) would be also helpful. He noted that in addition to reporting on the things they do know, it is also important to report on the things that they don't know.

Ms. Mahusky noted that they were putting out information on Facebook and Twitter, as well as sending out a press release on Friday May 14. She noted that email messages began being sent out to families on August 24. She also explained that the administration has been working very hard to deal with the crisis at hand and then to communicate with the parents about where their children would be. She thanked the administration for working very hard to keep people informed. She also thanked the GM staff for arranging their classrooms not once, but twice. She thanked the community for their help with that as well. She noted that the students adjusted very well, and the parents had the hardest time. There was discussion about why the students were sent to the church prior to the space being tested. There was discussion about the students being able to use the playground.

Mr. Studin noted that there is some concern about the elementary school teachers not having access to the high school during after school hours. Ms. Fierman noted that it is a possibility, but it isn't just making a spare key. They have swipe keys and codes. She noted that that process is a great deal of effort. She explained that if the teachers can tell Mr. Parah when they need access, he will make it available to them. Mr. Parah explained how the security system and swipe keys work. He noted that the staff has been accommodated. The board discussed giving some of the

staff that access. Mr. Parah noted that not all of the GM staff has full time access to the building. The swipe card costs about \$17-20 per card. Ms. Fierman noted that the preference would be to set up some special hours for outside school hours. Ms. Fogg will check with the CAES staff and see if the concerns can be addressed.

C. Student Representatives

Laurel reported that there are a lot of new kids at the school and there are a lot of changes that the high school students have undergone for the community. The students are adjusting to a new schedule with 4 80-minute classes each day with an A & B day. They have also switched over to proficiency based grading. This past weekend was a busy weekend with the Sale on the Green and the Josh Cole tournament. Both the boys and girls teams scored third overall in the tournament. The fall play is Dracula and rehearsals have started. Cross Country and Rock Climbing teams are working. There was discussion about having other representatives cover the Cavendish meetings.

VI. ADMINISTRATORS' REPORT:

A. CAES Issue

Ms. Mahusky reported that the Dufresne Group has prepared plans for the water line work needed at the school as well as the electrical work needed. Ms. Johnson reported that the 4" water line and one hydrant built in the 1950's will be replaced by an 8" line and 2 hydrants under the plan. M&M Excavating submitted a bid for the work and is the only company that did, even though there were 5 companies requested for bids. She reported on some of the electrical work needed as well as the damage under the 5/6 classrooms. She explained that they can fill the voids and can provide suggestions for companies to do that work. She also explained that they can give a list of names of electrical engineers for the electrical repair work. There was discussion about the ductal iron replacement pipe. Mr. Alexander questioned if Dufresne Group will be designing the electrical work. Ms. Johnson noted that the electrical design will be provided by Doug Perry from HB Electrical. Saday Radvar from the Dufresne Group will be reviewing that work to make sure that it is appropriately priced and complete. There was discussion about the electrical work that will need to be done, but that is the next step in the process. Ms. Mahusky noted that phase 1 would be laying the conduits with the water line, as well as replacing all of the damaged electrical components internal to the boiler room as well as the lines feeding the panels in other parts of the school since they were water damaged. Phase 2 would include replacing the other panels. Phase 1 is all that is needed to open the school.

There was discussion about M&M being able to complete their work by October 5. There was discussion on the timing of the electrical work being about 6 weeks. That work needs to be reviewed by an engineer and then approved by the board. The board discussed whether this work needs to be concurrent or consecutive. There was also no timing yet for the repair of the void under the 5/6 classrooms. The 6 week estimate is from the master electrician. There was discussion about the other work that can happen during that same time. Once the electrical panels are back up, then the boilers can be put in place, but not before. There was discussion about the 6 weeks being an ambitious timeline. The water line will be tested right away. There was discussion about the lifespan of the water line being at least 20 years, but more likely 100 years. The electrical design information will be provided on Monday and there will need to be a board meeting before the 6 week timeline for electrical work begins. There was discussion about all the work needing to be done in a small space and what jobs can be done at the same time and what jobs need to wait for other jobs to be complete.

Ms. Johnson requested that the Chester Planning Commission will be having a public meeting about the town plan. They have a section on schools and would appreciate the board's input.

Ms. Powden reported on the history of the events at CAES. Ms. Powden explained the history of the events at CAES, on 8/24, one of the custodians discovered water pouring out of the sump pump. Mr. Spaulding explained that the first custodian in checks the boiler room for water or oil leaks. There were about 4 ft. of water in the boiler room. The Chester Fire Department pumped it out quickly. There was discussion about the potentially deadly situation since the power was still on. A bolt on the flange of the pump had been stripped. Mr. Spaulding called in a plumber and an electrician to help. On the Monday before school there was a test of the water system that subsequently caused a flood in the 5th/6th grade classrooms (the water pipe goes under the school). The town lines are 8" pipes while the lines running to the school are 4" pipes. The water and dirt from the blown line flooded the 5/6 classrooms. Ms. Brown questioned who was conducting the water test. Mr. Spaulding noted that in order to test the line in the boiler room, they had to charge the water line which caused the flood. Mr. Studin questioned if the school was aware of the town having gone to 8" pipes. Ms. Mahusky and Ms. Powden met with Mr. Pisha and Mr. Holden from the town. She reported that the Dufresne Group had done an engineering report for the town that showed that the pipes were too small, but the town never provided the school board with that information. She noted that it is a concern that the board wasn't made specifically aware. At the time there were two priority projects—the GMUHS pump station as well as the CAES service.

Mr. Studin questioned if the other businesses in town have the same concern. Ms. Mahusky noted that the only property in town that needs to be addressed is the CAES building. Mr. Spaulding noted that the town shifted to 8" in the early 2000's. The board discussed the town's water upgrades over the past several years. There was discussion about there not having been a pressure test prior to this event. Mr. Spaulding noted that the pipes were put in the ground in 1954 and over time, the pipes will deteriorate regardless of commercial or residential. The board discussed how much pressure was put in the pipes for the test.

Mr. Spaulding reported that with the initial flooding, there was so much water in the boiler room that it destroyed 2 boilers, a water heater and 3 electrical panels. All needed to be replaced. She explained that people were brought in to address the situation and begin to help making plans. She explained that they need to design a new water system for the building. On Monday, 8/27 the administrators met to determine what could be done to start school for the elementary students. They determined that they wanted to keep the younger students near the elementary school for the playground and consistency. Many churches in the area offered help. The school opted to send the K-1 students to the Baptist Church and the 2-6 students to the high school. There was some mustiness in the Church and they had the space tested, but after the students had started school there. Because of the historical mold, they needed to close school for the K-1 students and work on a transition to another school. The GM teachers and the district staff have worked hard to make room for the additional students. Ms. Powden noted that Ms. Fogg has worked tirelessly to find safe learning environments for the elementary school students. She noted that the high school teachers have had to shift their classrooms and they have graciously done so. The first day of K-12 went well.

Ms. Fogg noted that the parents were able to visit the school to see where their space is. She noted that all of the students are in the same area of the school. The space is tight, but they are making it work for the students. She also explained that some of the high school classes will be working with the elementary classes on sharing content which will be great for both groups. She noted that Mr. Gustafson and Mr. Meyer have been working very hard to rally the community to help with the transitions. She explained that the students are doing great and the students are being bussed to the elementary school playground. The students are eating in a separate space from the older students. Mr. Meyer noted that there are not many school districts in VT that

could have handled this sort of transition for over 200 students. Mr. Gustafson noted that this is a great opportunity for the community and staff to come together.

Trisha Parrity questioned what the impact of the late start does to the timeline for the students for the end of the school year. Ms. Powden noted that there are discussions and Ms. Powden will be seeking a waiver from the state board of education to forgive those first 5 days of missing school. She noted that with the K-1 students not having school during the 2 days, that shouldn't count as a missed day for the school as a whole since more than 65% of students were at school. Ms. Fogg was grateful for the parents for stepping up. Ms. Powden noted that they may have a public information meeting for the parents and the whole community.

Ms. Mahusky reported that the facilities committee met before this meeting and made a recommendation to ask the board to approve the M&M Excavating proposal to put in the water line (as well as an electrical conduit in the same trench). The board will also be getting quotes on a clerk of the works. Jill Bruning questioned that Ms. Powden, Ms. Fogg and Mr. Spaulding are managing this project. This is taking their time away from their regular work. She encouraged the board to hire a clerk of the works. She also was surprised that there hasn't been a facilities committee meeting before now nor had there been special meetings before now. She encouraged the board to meet as quickly as possible to make decisions about expenditures. Ms. Bruning also questioned if CAES has been declared an emergency site to allow them access to emergency funds.

Ms. Powden explained that she has been in contact with the Secretary of Education, Dan French. Mr. French brought it to the cabinet and to the governor. They discussed having portable classrooms to keep the students at the school. She noted that she didn't ask that question specifically but thought that if they were going to consider it they would have. She will follow up with Mr. French to see if it can be considered as such. She explained that they will have access to some emergency funds, up to 30% of the costs not covered by insurance.

Ms. Mahusky introduced VSBIT representative Jordan Bergeron and asked if there were questions about the insurance coverage. Ms. Parrity questioned the communication with the parents and noted that there is still some confusion about where the students should be and when. She felt that is important to have this communication for the parents to help their children with the transition.

Mr. Bergeron reported on the notification of the loss to VSBIT. They have had adjusters come to the building and do research and take photos. They have been working with the administration on the insurance coverage. Mr. Bergeron noted that the boiler and electrical panels are covered by the policy. There are some exclusions such as causes of loss that are age related, such as the flange bolt that stripped over time. That means that they don't pay for the flange and the bolt, but the resulting damage from the flooding is covered. The pipes under the school flooding damage aren't covered, but the resulting damage to the carpets and walls from the flooding will be covered. The coverage is replacement cost coverage subject to a \$2500 deductible. Mr. Alexander questioned if the wires to the other 7 electrical panels throughout the school (that got wet) would be covered. Mr. Bergeron noted that the wires in Phase 1 would be covered, but the replacement of the panels themselves would not be covered. There was discussion about the damage caused under the slab by the water leak would not be covered, but the carpets would be. He noted that he couldn't commit until they reviewed the scope of the work, but it sounds like the filling of the void under the slab would be covered. They would also need to determine how big the void is under the 5/6 classrooms.

Ms. Mahusky noted that Ms. Hammond sent out RFP's to 5 companies and the only one that responded was M&M Excavating. They submitted a proposal for \$79,556 which includes installing the new water line as well as electrical conduits in the same trench. The work will begin this Sunday if approved and will be completed by October 5. The existing pipe is buried in a different location and will likely not be removed. This will include the excavation, laying the pipe and conduit, covering it back up and paving. The line is not covered based on it being specifically excluded from the policy. There was discussion about whether the town has coverage that will cover this expense. It was noted that the town's responsibility ends at the road. There was discussion about the town not having advised the board or administration of the need to update the lines. Ms. Mahusky noted that there was a concern about the size of the water line voiced previously, but that was more in relation to the response for fire suppression. The new hydrants would be connected to the 8" line. There was discussion about the Dufresne Group making a plan to fix the problem.

Mr. Fromberger noted that the facilities committee recommended that the board approve the M&M Excavating proposal for \$79,556 to install the water line and the electrical conduit. Mr. Studin **moved** that the board approve the M&M Excavating proposal for \$79,556 to install the water line and the electrical conduit. Ms. Brown seconded. Ms. Lamphere questioned the town's responsibility in this situation. Ms. Powden noted that the town's responsibility ends at the valve on the road. Ms. Mahusky noted that Arne Jonynas, who has served on both the CAES board as well as the select board and the board was made aware that they would need to replace the pipe, but there wasn't any major urgency at that time. Ms. Bruning questioned the hydrant not working out front of the school will be addressed. Mr. Studin noted that if they used the hydrant prior to now due to the size of the pipe it would have collapsed.

There was discussion about how the school will pay for this. Ms. Hammond noted that they will have access to the emergency funds from the state what will cover 30% of up to \$100,000 of uncovered expenses. If they go over \$100,000 they will need preapproval as well as a clerk of the works and a performance bond. There was discussion about the majority of the phase 1 work being covered by the insurance. Ms. Hammond noted that she will have to review the budget to find places to cut from to cover this expense. There are currently \$30,000 in capital improvement funds available. They also need to do this work and then determine where they will get the money after, including possibly seeking loans. They will be getting more information regarding the electrical work necessary. The board will have to hold another meeting and Ms. Hammond can then compile the expense list. The motion carried unanimously.

This will obviously affect the opening of the school. They will have to wait until the electrical work is done—estimating approximately October 24. There was discussion about the electrical plans getting reviewed by the Dufresne Group before the board meets again. The board will tentatively meet again on Tuesday evening 6pm at GMUHS.

Ms. Beaupre recognized Ms. Emery's 15+ years of service to CTES. Ms. Powden welcomed the CAES students and will be welcoming the State Board of Education to the school tomorrow. She shared the administrative council's leadership retreat work with the board. She also shared the written opinion of Mr. Leopold regarding the transition grant funds.

VII. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Policies, 2nd Read/Approval

Mr. Marin noted that these draft policies were fairly straightforward from the prior approved policies with the addition of some gender neutrality. Ms. Lamphere noted that the committee had

had concerns about the volunteer policy and whether they needed to be screened. There was discussion about the online criminal record check for employees, but not for volunteers. Mr. Marin explained that volunteers are supervised and cannot be unsupervised with students. Mr. Studin noted that if the person was not fingerprinted for the offense that they were charged with it won't show up in the criminal record check. He suggested seeking information from wherever they were from. Ms. Lamphere noted that she wanted the policy to specifically state that volunteers will be screened or that the volunteers will be supervised. Mr. Studin suggested also clarifying "supervision". Ms. Mahusky suggested pulling that policy out and review it next month.

Ms. Muther **moved** to approve policies A1, D18, E1, F25, F26, F26:003, F27, F28, F30, F30:001, G1, G2, G9, G11, G12, G13, G14 and H7. Ms. Lamson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Food Services

Ms. Powden noted that the board discussed naming Mr. Carroll as a food service director for the entire district. She approached Mr. Carroll and he has provided a 10 item list of things that will need to be addressed. She suggested holding off until next budget season. There was discussion about the quality of food versus the cost if they were to contract for other food service providers. Ms. Muther noted that they current budget reflects cuts that Mr. Carroll made at the request of the board. There was discussion about the food service provider in Ludlow/Mt. Holly. The new proposal is priced per-plate. The district has to pay about \$7000 if the company doesn't make a certain amount. Ms. Hammond discussed the reimbursement and the commodities. Ms. Powden will share the information with the board regarding the items addressed in Mr. Carroll's suggestions. Further discussion was deferred until the budget discussions.

C. Committee Appointments

Ms. Mahusky distributed the committee assignments. Ms. Brown will join the PR committee. Mr. Alexander will join the facilities committee, food service committee and the transportation committee. Ms. Fleming was removed from the Finance committee, Ms. Mahusky from the Food Service committee and Ms. Brown from the Policy committee. There was discussion about Mr. McBride's suggestion of seating an audit committee. The board will discuss that at the next meeting. The board discussed the recent committee meetings.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Regularly Scheduled Meeting Change

There was discussion about the doodle poll to determine the date of the meeting. The consensus of the board is to move the regular meeting to the 3rd Thursday of the month. The next regular meeting will be at CTES, but the next special meeting will still be at GMUHS since all September meetings are at this school.

B. Board Retreat

Ms. Mahusky noted that the TRSU board will be meeting on the first Thursday next month with a VSBA consultant on a more formal visioning process and then developing a strategic plan from there. Then all the boards can be included. The goal would be to revise the current vision statement for each of the districts.

C. Oil Bid

Ms. Hammond noted that in June they received 1 bid for \$2.70 per gallon. The current bid is from Irving for \$2.593 per gallon. This is based on a variable rate and is based on the rack rate plus 8.5 cents. This rate varies with the market. She explained that this is a fixed rate for these

schools. Mr. Studin **moved** to accept that bid as presented. Ms. Muther seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Recommendation for Hire-Steam Coordinator

Ms. Powden reported that she is recommending Lisa Holderness as the Steam Coordinator. She would be .4 fte and have a salary of \$29,500 based on the master agreement. She reported on Ms. Holderness' educational and teaching history. Ms. Powden noted that she has worked in various science roles throughout the state. There was discussion about the number of candidates for this position. There was also discussion about this being a one-year position with an option to extend the contract. Mr. Studin requested that the board have access to the resume of the recommended party. There was discussion about the statute that the superintendent makes a recommendation to the board for hire of professionals. Ms. Powden suggested that anyone interested could serve on the search committee. Ms. Mahusky noted that there is a screening committee that winnows the candidates down for interview with Ms. Powden. Ms. Beaupre reported on the search process, explaining that this candidate is far and away better than the other candidate that was considered. She reported on Ms. Holderness's work with children who need alternative education due to behavior concerns. There was discussion about the makeup of the search committee and that it should include a board member. Mr. Studin suggested that as a compromise, the board should be presented with the information that the superintendent is using to make that recommendation. There was discussion about there being 47 people hired throughout the SU this year. Mr. Marin suggested that an email be sent to board members regarding the need for participation in the hiring committee. Ms. Mahusky noted that there needs to be consistency.

Ms. Lamphere **moved** to hire Ms. Holderness as recommended. Ms. Lamson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

IX. NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be a special meeting tentatively on September 25 at 6:00 p.m. at GMUHS. The next regular meeting will be on October 18 at 6:00 p.m. at CTES.

X. ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Lamphere **moved** to adjourn at 8:32 p.m. Ms. Brown seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Wilson
Board Recording Secretary