

Green Mountain Unified School District
Board Minutes
Tuesday, August 21, 2018
CAES Gymnasium
6:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER:

Board: Joseph Fromberger, Fred Marin, Jeff Hance, Deb Brown, Marilyn Mahusky, Kate Lamphere, Doug McBride (via phone), Kathy Muther, Michael Studin (via phone)

Staff: Meg Powden, Deb Beaupre, Lauren Fierman, Todd Parah, Cheryl Hammond, Katherine Fogg, Amanda Tyrrell, Amy Hamblett

Public: Shawn Cunningham, Wayne Wheelock, Deb Harrison

Ms. Mahusky called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

II. APPROVE AGENDA:

Ms. Hammond noted that they needed to add assumption of debt for the bond bank and the resolution for Peoples Bank to change the EIN. The policies also need to be deleted and warned for the next meeting since they haven't been warned for the requisite 10 days. Administrator reports will also be added to the end of the agenda. Ms. Brown **moved** to approve the agenda as amended. Ms. Muther seconded and the motion to approve the agenda as amended carried with no opposition.

III. APPROVE MINUTES:

A. June 12, 2018 Regular Meeting

Mr. Fromberger **moved** to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2018 minutes. Mr. Marin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Wilson advised that the meeting minutes will now be sent to the board members via google docs.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Public Comments

Ms. Harrison questioned the 1:1 computer agreements and the discussions about the program last year. She noted that last year they had discussed concerns that were put off until after the merge. There was discussion about this being an administrative issue and concerned parents meeting with Ms. Baker and Ms. Fierman regarding the concerns with the program.

John Hoyt, one of the Cavendish Library trustees advised that they are on the summer schedule with Monday and Friday being closed. After the start of school, they will shift to the winter schedule being open on Mondays and Fridays. However, due to concerns for student safety, Mondays will be closed to the public and the students will visit the library on Monday as agreed to by Ms. Welsh and Ms. Beaupre. He also noted that there is no cell service at the front of the school or the nearby at the post office or at the nearby green. As a result, he is seeking a resolution with the town, such as having cell phone equipment attached to the water tower behind the school. Ms. Beaupre agreed that this was a good idea for safety, and given the support that this proposal had received from various stakeholders, if this body also supported the idea, they could then bring it to the town. Mr. Hoyt will approach various appropriate cell phone providers. Ms. Mahusky suggested that he seek support of various people in the state government. There was discussion about this helping to support student safety.

Ms. Tyrrell questioned policy G14. Mr. Marin noted that this policy is essentially the policy that has been in place, with updates for the name of the school district.

B. Board Comments

Ms. Brown questioned if they could consider changing their regular meeting nights to Thursday. There was discussion about whether the board had the authority to change the date of the meeting. Ms. Brown noted that GMUHS used to meet on Thursday nights and that's why GMUSD couldn't meet that evening. Mr. Fromberger suggested allowing people time to review their calendar. Ms. Mahusky suggested that they could continue this conversation offline with the help of Ms. Moyekins to survey the board and administrators and then present that at the next meeting.

Mr. McBride noted that at CTES, there are a few parents that have organized to provide school supplies for the school. He noted that one teacher has contacted the parents of her class to ask for support in school supplies, though not required. He noted his concern with the budget cuts that are causing this need for fundraising and donations for school supplies. Ms. Mahusky questioned if there was a reason to be concerned. Ms. Powden didn't believe so, but asked the administrators. Ms. Fogg noted that at CAES they budgeted in a new third grade teacher, but not supplies for her classroom. She noted that the PTG also helps, but it seems like each year the supply line gets smaller in the budget. Ms. Beaupre noted that at the last CTES board meeting there was discussion about the budget cut. She noted that in the handbook, it is mentioned that 4th, 5th 6th graders should begin providing their own supplies to get them ready for middle school. She checked with those teachers and they have given it as a suggested list if people want to buy school supplies. She noted that some parents have been given lists of getting this item over that item, if a parent is getting something. She also noted that the school is always happy to receive donations. Ms. Brown suggested putting on the school websites the items that the school uses so if people would like to make donations they can.

Ms. Mahusky also suggested that they limit the meetings to 2 hours. Ms. Mahusky thanked Mr. Carroll for putting out news articles about the food service program. She also thanked Ms. Moyekins for helping to work on the Su and schools' websites. She also noted that GMUHS was recognized by US News and World Report as one of the top 12 high schools in the state and it should be listed on the website. She thanked the staff and administration for getting them to that status.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Committee Updates

Ms. Powden noted that Mr. Fromberger was elected chair of the transportation committee at their last meeting. The committee discussed the study that the consultant completed last year. They will go forward with an RFP for a transportation service to compare the current program with a contracted service.

The Cavendish bus is no longer able to be used and the bus dealership will give the district \$1500 for trade. The Plymouth bus is also worth \$3500 and there is a suggestion for GMUHS to purchase the Plymouth bus as a spare. The plan is for the transportation committee to meet when they have received proposals.

Mr. Fromberger noted that Mr. Marin and he have been reviewing the facilities needs with the maintenance supervisors in each of the three schools. They will then present a list of the needs/wishes to the board. They will break down the list by those that need capital investment versus annual support versus a short term loan.

Ms. Lamphere noted that the PR committee consists of her and there needs to be additional board members. Ms. Mahusky requested that at the next meeting they have a clean list of the committees and members to determine what committees need members. There was discussion about which committees are unique to each district and which ones are joint committees between GMUSD and LMHUUSD. For example the Policy committee is a joint committee. The PR committee could be joint. There was also discussion about the innovations in learning committee being an opportunity for a joint committee that also does individual committee work unique to their district.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Transition Funds

Ms. Mahusky noted that the TRSU board recommended that the administration bring this discussion to the individual boards for their review and decision. Mr. Fromberger noted that he reviewed the process and the only entity that was eligible for transition funds was GMUSD, not TRSU and not LMHUUSD. That has

been confirmed with Brad James of the AOE. He suggested that before this board makes decisions on how to spend these funds, they need to know how much money was actually spent on the transition by this entity thus far. He noted that there are several items that are needed in this district.

Ms. Mahusky noted that the TRSU board agreed to send the decision to the districts. Mr. Fromberger noted that the transition funds is solely GMUSD's funds. Ms. Powden noted that they are receiving contrary information from the AOE. She noted that Donna Russo-Savage directed her to a specific statute. Ms. Mahusky noted that she was just trying to give background.

She explained that the TRSU received funds for the transition and the TRSU board felt that these moneys belongs to the respective districts. She noted that Mr. Fromberger is questioning how much money was spent on each of the consultants for their various portions. Mr. McBride supported Mr. Fromberger's research and conclusion. He cited the statute that each school district formed out of Act 46 gets \$150,000 and GMUSD qualifies as a stand-alone basis to receive \$150,000 of these funds. It is a different question about whether LMHUUSD also qualifies for a separate \$150,000 and he doesn't feel that under the statute that they do and there is no requirement to share the \$150,000. He suggested that they should also not pay any of the LMH bills after they broke off from the GMUSD discussions. Ms. Lamphere questioned how he came to that conclusion—whether it was with consultation with the AOE or by his own research.

Ms. Powden noted that for the joint Act 46 work, there was Diane Watson and Steve Dale, both of which were prior to Ludlow and Mt. Holly splitting off. The subsequent LMH consultant was paid for out of the LES/MHS/U39 budgets. There was discussion about the \$90,000 remaining in transition funds. Ms. Mahusky suggested that they need to confer with counsel and get an opinion about whether both districts were entitled to the \$150,000. As such she suggested tabling discussion until they can get legal counsel and the full accounting from the business office. Mr. Fromberger suggested that they don't need to incur the legal fees when they can just get the information from the AOE itself. Ms. Mahusky noted that two people at the AOE are giving competing answers. There was discussion about Mr. Leopold being the representative for all three entities and therefore there might be potential conflict. There was a question about why the AOE sent the money to the TRSU when it belongs to GMUSD. Ms. Lamphere suggested that they need to get something in writing from the AOE regarding this decision.

Ms. Tyrrell questioned if there is a date that the board needs to take action on this topic. Ms. Mahusky noted that there isn't a deadline, but the district does have to account back to the state. Ms. Hammond will double check. Mr. Fromberger suggested that the board instruct the superintendent to consult with the AOE on this. Ms. Mahusky suggested that Mr. Fromberger forward the email to the board members and the superintendent. Mr. Fromberger felt that it shouldn't be open ended that the superintendent can contact legal counsel. The board consensus was to allow Ms. Powden to consult with legal counsel if she feels it is necessary after reviewing the information from the AOE.

B. Audit Committee

Mr. McBride suggested that the board consider having an audit committee who will thoroughly read the annual audits and report back to the board. He noted that the board has a responsibility to read the audits. The audit committee will also meet with the auditors to discuss the audit. He noted that most boards have an audit committee and they would be responsible for asking the difficult questions and ensuring that the audits accurately portray what they are supposed to. The board will discuss at the next meeting.

C. Safety Grant

Ms. Powden reported that in the last legislative session there were funds allocated for a safety grant and the principals had short notice to apply for the funds. The schools have received advance notice to proceed with the safety plans. There is also a VISBIT grant to be shared across the SU and the principals need to share their plans by the end of August.

Ms. Fogg reported that the CAES safety grant plans were focused on the front entrance—visibility and a double safety lock. The school has also been focused on traffic safety in the parking lot and this safety grant will help with a portion of the overall plan. There was discussion about the facilities committee being aware of the things included in this grant. The facilities committee will meet with Ms. Beaupre and Ms.

Fogg regarding these updates compared to other facilities projects. Ms. Fogg noted that these funds need to be spent by September of next year.

D. Appointment of New Board Member

Ms. Mahusky reminded the board of the loss of a long standing board member, Ms. Fleming. With the Unified SD, the select board needs to approve a new board member for this town at this board's recommendation. She shared the email received from Rick Alexander regarding his interest in the board position. There was discussion about whether he is aware of the difference between the TRSU and GMUSD boards.

Ms. Brown **moved** to appoint Rick Alexander as the Chester representative to the GMUSD board. Mr. Hance seconded. Ms. Lamphere questioned if they should wait on the decision until they are sure he understand what he has requested. Ms. Brown suggested that he could decline the appointment, but the board could approve him at this point so he could come prepared for the next meeting. There was discussion about him being appointed until the next election. The motion carried with no opposition.

Ms. Mahusky will reach out to him for the next meeting. The business office will set him up with a new TRSU email account.

E. Transportation from Mt. Holly & Ludlow to Green Mountain

Ms. Powden noted that earlier this month LMHUUSD met to discuss whether they will close as of 2020 or earlier. The board agreed to stay open until June of 2020. She wanted to begin discussion early to explore ways to welcome Ludlow and Mt. Holly students to GMUSD including providing transportation. Ms. Brown suggested that the transportation RFP should also include information on that portion. Mr. Fromberger wanted the information about the expense of running multiple busses to Ludlow and Mt. Holly compared to the incoming tuition funds.

Mr. Parah noted that if they will be considering that transportation, they will need to consider adding at least one other bus. Ms. Mahusky noted that it is important to encourage as many students to come as possible. As discussed during Act 46 conversations, the more students they have, the more opportunities they can provide, and may move the school from 12th in the state to 1st. Mr. Fromberger noted that ultimately it is the parents who will decide where their children go to school, not the other district. There was discussion about how much the current district is responsible for providing transportation for its students. Ms. Powden noted that once BRHS closes, the town is no longer responsible for providing transportation for their students.

Mr. Wheelock suggested that this school needs to also have a pitch for the LMH students to encourage those students to come here. Ms. Mahusky suggested that Ms. Fierman and possibly the PR committee work with LMH to show them the benefits of this high school.

F. Food Services

Ms. Powden noted that the food service committee recommended appointing Jack Carroll as the food service director for the entire district in light of unifying the food service programs. Ms. Hammond noted that there could be some savings with a singular entity. Mr. Fromberger noted that when he discussed this with Mr. Carroll, there were some obstacles to creating the food at a single location and transporting it. He suggested that before they appoint Mr. Carroll as the food service director, they need to outline his job description and his responsibilities. There was discussion about whether he would be replacing someone at CTES. Ms. Powden noted that at CTES, the food service director left last year and one of the people stepped up to her responsibilities, but that person would still be needed in the food service operation. Mr. Fromberger noted that Mr. Carroll has already realized some savings with some staffing changes. He was more concerned with a clear definition of the job responsibilities. The committee supported the idea of appointing Mr. Carroll for the continuity but wanted that clear definition of responsibilities. Mr. Fromberger noted that he is already doing joint purchasing.

Discussion is tabled until next month when the board will have the ability to review the job description. This would be considered an expansion of his current position, with a potential additional stipend. Ms.

Fogg requested that the food service committee meet again before the next meeting to discuss how the food service program will run with the reduced staffing and increased enrollment. Ms. Powden noted that the administration can have a conversation with Mr. Carroll to make this determination.

G. Nursing Services

Ms. Powden noted that last spring the nurses at that school worked with Dept. of Health nurses to set a model for nursing services. There would be two nurse leaders and one LPN and the nurse leaders would set the schedule. Since then, Ms. Roberts has resigned. Ms. Simmons has taken on the nurse leader role. They have looked into different ways to provide the services. They have looked at the two nurse/one LPN model and Ms. Powden recommends working with the two nurse model. There are approximately 640 students and the school quality standards indicate 1 nurse for 500 students. Ms. Lamphere questioned how travel factors into that decision given the distance between schools. There was discussion about how the schedule would be determined. Ms. Powden reported that the lead nurse would look at the needs of each school. There was discussion about the feeling that there weren't enough nursing services at CTES. Ms. Powden noted that she has always recommended the two nurse model, but as a result of public input there was a change to that recommendation. Ms. Powden noted that at LMH there is one nurse for all three schools and she trains health assistants (UAP's) to assist with the health needs.

Ms. Fogg noted that they are having a difficult time finding people to fill that position. She also noted that she is concerned with a two nurse model. She noted that there are high needs in CAES and felt that this is a direct service that the board felt that they shouldn't cut. She also noted that the two nurse/one LPN model is already a change and she felt that they should stick with that change for at least a year and assess. She explained that she would prefer to have 3 full time people in the district that are shared between the three buildings. Ms. Lamphere noted her concern that CTES, the smallest school in the SD, will receive the least coverage of the nurses. Ms. Powden noted that the coverage would be split based on the health needs in each school. Ms. Mahusky noted that the lead nurse would ensure equitable (based on health needs) between the 3 schools. There was discussion about the professional opinions and parent opinions. The board consensus was to follow the original plan. Ms. Beaupre noted that she participated in the interviews with Ms. Fogg and Ms. Simmons. She felt that it is an issue of equity, adequacy and timing. She noted that there is a concern about who will provide the health care when the nurse is not there. She noted that at CTES it is usually the administrative assistant, but what that means is that there is no one looking at the front door. She noted that having a nurse during recess is a necessity. Ms. Fierman noted that 2 full time nurses for 640 students is adequate, but they don't know what that looks like with the travel time. She felt that she would be more comfortable with 2 nurses and 1 LPN.

Ms. Powden noted that they will be recommending the RN for hire tonight. The board consensus was to continue with the approved model—the 2 nurse/1 LPN model. This will require the hire of an RN and a part time LPN.

H. Recommendations for Hire

Ms. Powden thanked Ms. Beaupre for heading up the search for the nursing staff during her first summer. She recommended that the board hire Beth Randolph contingent on Ms. Powden's interview with the candidate. This would be a full time RN position to be placed on the appropriate place on the salary scale. Mr. Marin **moved** to approve hiring Beth Randolph as the full time RN pending Ms. Powden's interview with her. Ms. Muther seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Powden recommended Kelly Gadouas as the .2 fte art position at CTES. Ms. Beaupre shared some of her background, including her work with helping day care providers teach art. She has also worked with the Cavendish

Ms. Lamphere **moved** to hire the Ms. Gadouas as a .2 fte art teacher at CTES with Salary commensurate with the salary schedule. Ms. Brown seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Powden noted that there is a full time math interventionist position available at CAES and a half time position available at CTES. Ms. Fogg is also looking for a long term sub until a suitable candidate is found.

I. Assumption of Debt

Ms. Hammond noted that the bond bank that holds the bonds for all the schools is asking that the GMUSD signs off on assuming the debt for the individual school districts. She noted that it is in the articles of agreement. Ms. Brown **moved** to approve that the GMUSD board assumes the debt of the individual boards. Mr. Marin seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

J. People's Bank Resolution

Ms. Hammond noted that because the GMUSD is a new entity, they will need to have their new EIN changed with the bank. Ms. Brown **moved** to approve the People's Bank resolution changing the EIN on the district accounts. Mr. Fromberger seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

K. Administrator Reports

Ms. Powden introduced and welcomed Deb Beaupre and Lauren Fierman as the new principals in the district. Ms. Powden reported that they will be hosting the state board of education on 9/19 at GMUSD. They will be touring Vermont Schools and discussing school districts that haven't merged yet. They will be meeting from 8:30am to 5:00pm. Mr. Parah reported that this will be in the auditorium based on the size of the audience. She reported that the administrative team had a great retreat. They also welcomed teacher leaders from each of the respective schools and have come up with great ideas moving forward. She also reported that Mary Moyekins is the new administrative assistant and will be working on PR as well. She will be working with the PR committee. Ms. Powden noted that she has been conducting several interviews for special educators.

Ms. Fierman echoed Ms. Powden's feelings on the administrative retreat. She reported that she has been meeting with staff members and some students. Some of the NHS students have met with her about a greater celebration for the start of the school year. She has also been meeting with the rotary and the community. She noted that the custodial work at the school this summer has been great. She reported that there are some new hires at GMUHS. They have a new guidance administrative assistant and a new flexible pathways coordinator. They also have a new administrative assistant in the office who has an extensive history at Springfield HS. They have also been working on revising handbooks and updating forms to be filled out online. The administrative assistant is also working on updating the school's website.

Ms. Beaupre shared information about his meetings with Mr. Thomson. She has also sent the students a letter with a stamped envelope and has been receiving responses from many of her students. She also attended Mr. Thomson's celebration. CTES has started a Facebook page and there is also a twitter feed for the school. They will be having a theme at the school of "we are family". She is working on various changes with the students on the mascot. She is also updating the website.

Ms. Fogg noted that the meeting this evening is in the gym because the library has been transformed into a new space with reading nooks. She invited the board to visit that room after this meeting. The board would still like to meet in the library regularly. She thanked Mr. Spaulding and his crew for all their work this summer. Adding the third grade class has changed several of the other classes. There has also been a bit of work on the playground and the build began yesterday. She thanked Mr. Meyer for his dedication to the playground build. She thanked Jamie Maloof, Niki Oleski and Jim Spaulding for their work on the playground project. They have received the \$50,000 promise funds for the playground. There will be a celebration Tuesday evening for school year's eve and a ribbon cutting for the new playground. She also thanked GE for its community service project. She also thanked the teacher leaders for attending the administrative retreat. Ms. Fogg reported on the PBIS training. The lunch schedule will change this year, including recess before lunch and more children in the lunch room at a time. This is part of the schedule change due to MTSS. She welcomed Kim Farrar, Niki Oleski, Blakely Gilmore and Laurie Birmingham as the new teachers. They have also hired 7 new para-educators this summer. There is also a new swing set out back and there will be eventual changes throughout the yard. Ms. Fogg noted that they have a large kindergarten class again this year (42 this year, 45 last year). There are 242 students this year. A few years ago there were 197. CTES has 95 students with 15 of them kindergarten students.

Mr. Fromberger noted that this room is not conducive to hearing the meeting content. Ms. Lamphere suggested that having a specialty presentation about the unique, creative, special things happening in the school. The board suggested that the school hosting the meeting could do the presentation. The board discussed the goals of learning where the schools are moving and how the board can support the administrators and educators in those goals. Ms. Brown suggested a written report—a quick snapshot of the school and its highlights—from each principal would be. There was a suggestion that the principals' reports also get added to the schools websites.

There was discussion about the website being difficult to navigate—particularly in relation to finding agendas and minutes. Ms. Powden suggested that if community members approach board members about the website that they direct them to Ms. Baker. Mr. Hance suggested that budget updates and unexpected issues should also be included in the principals' reports. The principals will also be working on a similar format.

VII. NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be Tuesday September 18 at 6:00 at GMUHS. The reason it is not on the regular night is because there is a VSBA regional meeting on the regular night. Ms. Mahusky invited board members to attend that meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Fromberger **moved** to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. Mr. Hance seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Wilson
Board Recording Secretary