

Green Mountain Unified School District
Board
Tuesday, April 10, 2018
CAES Library
6:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL/CALL TO ORDER:

Board: Joseph Fromberger, Deb Brown, Doug McBride, Jeff Hance, Kathy Muther, Kate Lamphere, Erin Lamson, Fred Marin, Tonia Fleming, Mike Studin
Staff: Meg Powden, Cheryl Hammond, Pam O'Neil, Amy Hamblett, Wendy Schultz, Amanda Tyrrell, Courtney Knowles, Alice Harwood
Other Board Members: Wayne Wheelock,
Public: Shawn Cunningham, Sara Stowell, Trevor Barlow, Christine Balch

Mr. Fromberger called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. The board introduced themselves.

II. APPROVE AGENDA:

Ms. Brown **moved** to approve the agenda with the addition of discussion about the public high school choice program under old business. Ms. Lamson seconded and the motion to approve the agenda carried with no opposition.

III. APPROVE MINUTES:

A. March 21, 2018 Regular Meeting

Mr. Marin **moved** to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2018 regular meeting. Ms. Brown seconded. The board noted a correction to Ms. Lamson's name and the removal of Ms. Hammond's name from the roll call. The motion to approve the minutes as amended carried unanimously.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS:

A. Public Comments

Ms. Tyrrell introduced herself and questioned if this would be the appropriate time to discuss changes to the budget proposal. Mr. Fromberger noted that the finance committee will be making a recommendation to the board about the budget later in the meeting and that would be the appropriate time.

B. Board Comments

Mr. McBride noted that the board has been questioned about the need for teacher input, but he was surprised that there aren't more teachers present during this discussion. Ms. Schultz introduced herself and wondered if there were any conflicts of interest from coming to a board meeting as a teacher, perhaps giving the perception that teachers are promoting their own agenda. Ms. Hamblett introduced herself and noted that adding a meeting to a long day is a struggle. Ms. Knowles noted that 75% of the public here tonight work in the schools. She agreed that it is difficult to have an objective conversation about the programming when it has a direct impact on her taxes and her employment. Ms. Fogg noted that before the Act 46 work several teachers participated in various meetings and she felt that it would pick up again when the hectic transition work comes to a close. Ms. Powden noted that the GMUHS board discussed the educational presentations and perhaps continuing them at the GMUSD board. Ms. Tyrrell also noted her perception of a lot of teachers fearing repercussions by coming to the board meetings. Mr. Thomson noted that at the CTES committees there are teacher committee reps who take notes and report to the board. Ms. Fleming noted that there can also be apprehension

Ms. Harwood noted her confusion about which board meeting to attend with all the transition work and multiple meetings going on. Mr. Fromberger shared that feeling but noted that by the end of the June, the individual boards will go away and the one GMUSD board will meet.

Mr. McBride questioned if the numerous board meetings are posted. Ms. Powden noted that they are posted where they are legally required, in addition to various postings at the school and electronically. Mr. McBride questioned if the administration is open to teachers attending meetings. The administration noted that they encourage it, but the teachers also have a long day and it shouldn't be construed to be lack of interest when they don't attend.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Public School Choice

Ms. Powden noted that each high school board needs to decide how many students they will allow in and how many they will allow out. It was noted that the GM board approved allowing 25 students in and 10 out through the public school choice program.

Ms. Brown felt that now that BRHS is going to be closing, they should open up the school to any BRHS student who wants to attend. She noted that she understood that they wouldn't get their tuition money these two years, but they would already be in GM so the tuition money would follow them once BRHS closed. Ms. Powden wasn't sure if the tuition would follow since the student was already enrolled in the public school choice program. Ms. O'Neil noted that the memorandum also includes provisions that protect them from allowing out more than the minimum 6 students or 10% of the student body. There was discussion about the flexibility available to this board. Ms. O'Neil noted that there are protections in place to protect this school from having to accept too many students since no money follows the students and too many students might add costs to the receiving school.

Ms. Powden noted that BRHS has already set their limit of the number of students they allow out at 6 students. There was discussion about the difference between the public high school choice and the limited school transfer program. There was discussion about the students who have been turned away through the limited school transfer program. Ms. O'Neil noted that GM has not had to turn away students coming in through school choice, but some of the other schools might have a lottery about which students they allow out. There was discussion about the school not hitting the 25 student limit currently. Ms. O'Neil discussed the students coming into the school. She noted that adding 25 10th graders would be a major shift for the school. There was discussion about the school choice process being closed for the upcoming year, but the question is raised to the board each year before the applications go out to the students. Ms. O'Neil noted that GM has not turned anyone away. Other schools have said the students can't leave or the students have changed their mind. Ms. O'Neil suggested that if they reached a point where they would have to turn away a student, the administration could bring the question to the board.

B. Committee Updates

i. PR Committee

Ms. Fleming noted that the PR committee met and they will plan to hold a meeting shortly before the new budget vote in order to get the information out to the public.

ii. Food Service Committee

Ms. Muther reported that the food service committee met and they are still talking about the options they have. The committee has been discussing the changes Mr. Carroll had proposed. The proposed cuts were not included in the budget proposal.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Vision & Finance Committee update

Mr. McBride reported that the vision committee worked through ideas to put into this budget as well as the larger question of the overall direction of the school system. These two ideas were competing and overlapping. Some of the ideas that were discussed were foreign language programming throughout the grades, elementary in particular; an apprenticeship program which might be too much to take on right now; and a focus on STEAM programming. At the end of the meeting the committee asked the administration to make a recommendation based on the input from the board, committees and public and then there will be a retreat to further define the future direction of the district.

Mr. Fromberger noted that the finance committee met yesterday and again today. He noted that the committee approved recommending a budget proposal to the board in the amount of \$12,615, 070. This represents the originally voted upon budget changed by the recommendations from the administration and the finance committee. This budget reflects about \$67,000 more than the first budget. The proposal reflects an additional 3/4 classroom teacher at CAES, an increase in the flexible pathways coordinator from .5 fte to 1.0 fte, a PBIS Assistant at CAES, a .4 fte STEAM coordinator and a .2 fte world language coordinator and a .4 fte math interventionist at CTES. Mr. Studin explained some of the process used to get to this recommendation. He noted that this proposal addresses the current and the future needs.

Ms. Fleming questioned the addition of the 3/4 teacher because the enrollment has ebbed and flowed and she wanted to make sure that the recommendation for the additional teacher was made looking forward. Mr. Studin noted that there is a large kindergarten class currently and a large one coming in. Ms. Fogg noted that adding that teacher now allows them flexibility to move that additional teacher up with the "bubble". Ms.

Tyrrell noted that she felt that the 3/4 combination isn't necessarily a good mix developmentally. Ms. Harrison questioned the "coordinator" positions and if they are teachers and if they will be working with students. Ms. Powden noted that they are proposing the world language coordinator position is a teacher coordinator. She noted the use of the coordinator term is to evaluate current programming and make recommendations to the administration. She noted that the STEAM coordinator would be k-12 and should have a background in STEAM. There was discussion about the \$1830 reflecting the increase from .17 fte already in the budget to .2 fte. There was discussion about the number of students in grades 3 and 4 both this year and in the coming year.

There was discussion about the food service positions that Mr. Carroll suggested reducing. This would drop the proposed budget to \$12,590,032. There was discussion about the new GM principal being less than the current GM principal, but more than what was budgeted for that position. Ms. Stowell questioned if something similar will happen with the CTES principal. She noted that there was the request to remove the interim title on the principal position at that school. There was discussion about some interim principals wanting to apply to get experience or perhaps stay. Ms. Powden noted that it is too late to remove the interim title since that would be a different candidate pool. She discussed the rationale for having the position be an interim position so they can look at school structures and make an appropriate plan for next year.

Ms. Lamphere suggested that they wait until after Thursday's TRSU vote on the SU budget. Ms. Brown felt that the TRSU budget will likely go down. Mr. Studin **moved** to approve a budget of \$12,590,032 for the 2018-2019 school year. Ms. Brown seconded.

Mr. McBride remained committed to level funding this budget based on a cost per student basis. He noted that several districts are coming in at 1%. He reminded the board that they promised modest savings with the Act 46 process and this is an increase of about \$500 per pupil. He noted that the special education budget comprises about 20% of this budget and he doesn't fully understand why they are paying that much. He felt he doesn't understand what that amount reflects—how many students it means and what services it means. Ms. Powden noted that in the format that he was looking for would have violated confidentiality rights. Mr. McBride noted that he understood that some items would have to be discussed in executive session, but he felt he couldn't conduct his job as a board member without the information. Ms. O'Neil felt that where a student is from shouldn't matter since this is one board and there is identifying information. Ms. Lamphere felt that the board was bound by confidentiality. Ms. Stowell noted that the board doesn't need that level of information. What they need is what types of disabilities they are talking about and what services can be offered in house and what services they absolutely can't offer in house. Ms. Fleming noted that the district has special education professionals who are looking at the students and can make those recommendations as experts in that area. She also noted that there are auditors that verify appropriate spending of funds. Mr. Studin noted that he suspected that Mr. McBride is looking for efficiencies not deficiencies. Mr. McBride noted that he acknowledged that they have hired professionals to conduct that work but his job as a board member is to review their work.

Ms. Stowell noted that this is the board that asked the TRSU to open their budget and she appreciates the work that has gone into this budget proposal, but it doesn't make sense to approve a budget prior to the TRSU having reviewed the budget this group asked them to reopen. She suggested waiting on the vote until the special meeting on Tuesday.

There is a special meeting tentatively scheduled for Tuesday April 17, at which time they could vote on the budget. This would allow the TRSU work to have made a decision on their budget. Mr. Fromberger noted that they are running very close to not having a budget if the budget is not adopted by the voters. He noted that they need to have enough time to present the information to the voters and warn appropriately. Delaying the vote will have the board not vote on a "worst case scenario" budget and instead vote on an accurate budget. There was discussion about whether there would be a quorum next Tuesday. Ms. Powden suggested that the administration can come with a proposed warning that the board can approve at that time as well.

Ms. Schultz noted that the "increase World Language Coordinator to .2 fte" should be explained that it is a start to the proposal and it should be listed as teacher/coordinator at the elementary level so the public knows that students will benefit from this work immediately.

Mr. Studin withdrew his motion because it makes sense to delay the vote until after the TRSU meeting. Ms. Brown withdrew her second as well. There was discussion about how the board members who may not be present could participate electronically. There will be a special meeting of this board on 4/17 at 6:00 p.m. at the CAES library.

B. Assign RVTC Technical Center Rep

Mr. Fromberger noted that Ms. DesLauriers was the RVTC rep so they need a replacement. There was discussion about if the representation could be flexible and if there could be alternates. Ms. Lamson noted that she would be interested in the position, but she would need to check her logistics.

The consensus was to appoint Ms. Lamson as the RVTC rep pending review of her schedule. If she is unable to do it, the board will reconsider the position.

VII. ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS:

A. Principals

Mr. Thomson reported that the school continues to work on PBE and all the elementary teachers were there and it is moving forward well. The 4th and 6th graders went to Montpelier last week and learned how the democratic process worked and visited a historical museum. He also reported that the school has been working on getting snow guards in place in front of the library entrance.

Ms. Fogg echoed Mr. Thomson's comments about PBE. She also reported that she and a few teachers went to the multi-tiered support system training. She reported that they go a lot of new information about how to implement the supports and they will be making some changes. She explained some of the creative ideas that they will be working on. She also reported that the crisis team met with the PD and FD and they will have a planned evacuation drill on May 14 and follow all the protocols. There was also a game warden who visited the school and will be participating in the drill.

Mr. Thomson reported that CTES also had representatives sent to the MTSS training and it will be an SU-wide initiative. Mr. Ferenc reported on the article he distributed to the board. He noted that GM is a good school but they can be great. They will need to address the gap areas to become great. Mr. Ferenc reported that the school work liaison has received his accreditation. He gave information about the work that Mr. Donarum has been doing creating partnerships with area businesses for work experiences and internships. He also reported that there are students currently in France and they are participating in an immersion program for a couple weeks. He also reported that spring sports have begun. SBAC testing is beginning. He also reported that the game warden visited GM as well.

B. Superintendent Report

Ms. Powden noted that there will be a public forum at CTES to discuss the candidates for the interim principal position at CTES tomorrow evening. Those present will get the opportunity to meet the principal candidates. There will be middle school and 9th grade babysitters available. The candidates will be interviewed by the board on 4/17. She reported that Ms. Lamphere and Mr. Hance served on the hiring committee. Ms. Lamphere reported that the two candidates were all that the hiring committee interviewed for the position.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mr. Studin **moved** to enter executive session at 7:45 p.m. to discuss non-bargaining staff negotiations inviting Ms. Powden and Ms. Hammond. Ms. Brown seconded. Mr. McBride questioned the citation of the title I. Ms. Powden noted that the board has to acknowledge that the executive session is required so as not to put the board or the staff at a disadvantage. There was discussion about training the board about executive sessions. Ms. Powden suggested that part of her superintendent report could be board training including letting the board know that executive session is confidential. The motion carried unanimously.

The board returned from executive session at ____ p.m. [action taken]

IX. NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be a special meeting on April 17, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at CAES. They will discuss the budget and interview CTES principal candidates. The May regular meeting will be at GMUHS, and the June meeting will be back at CTES.

X. ADJOURNMENT:

_____ **moved** to adjourn at ____ p.m. _____ seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Wilson
Board Recording Secretary

