

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HELD FEBRUARY 28, 2011

A duly called Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Great Falls Public Schools was held at West Elementary School at 1205 1st Ave NW in the gym on the 28th day of February, 2011.

Chairman Erwin commented that prior to the Board Meeting; the Board had a chance to do a walkthrough of the building and enjoyed it very much.

ROLL CALL: Ernie Jean took roll call and Trustee Alicia Thompson was absent.

Trustees Present: Steve Erwin, Chairman
Ann Janikula
Jan Cahill
Jeff Gray
Greg Oswood
Laura Vukasin

Trustee Absent: Alicia Thompson

Others Present: Cheryl Crawley, Superintendent; Ernie Jean, Interim Business Manager; Tom Moore, Assistant Superintendent 7-12; Ruth Uecker, Assistant Superintendent K-6; Chris Olszewski, Curriculum Director; Tammy Lacey, Director of Human Resources; Sally Mathers, Supervisor Federal Programs, and Sharon Lindstrom, Director of Student Services. Also present was Cathy Kuntz, Representing GFEA and Dawn Beal, liaison from Malmstrom Air Force Base. Steve Erwin also announced that we have two Legislators attending this meeting, Ed Buttrey and Cleve Loney.

At 7:00 p.m., Chairman Steve Erwin called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees, Great Falls Public Schools and asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance. (Flag presentation was done by Leadership Team at West Elementary).

SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

Ruth Uecker, Assistant Superintendent thanked everyone at West Elementary for having their building open for tonight's Board Meeting and introduced Michelle Meredith, Principal at West.

Michelle Meredith welcomed everyone to West Elementary and thanked all of her staff for helping put together tonight's presentation. She introduced the PTA Officers at West and introduced students Paige Peters, 6th grader, and Stephanie Rollins, 5th grader who will MC the rest of this portion of this meeting. Paige and Stephanie gave a power point presentation on the Success for All Students begins with smaller group settings; Hands-on and Real Life Applications; Caring Staff and Families with Community Partnerships; with a focus this year on "Turning Garbage into Garden". West All School Choir sang "Agents of Change" and "Tomorrow Needs Us". The Board was also presented Seedlings that students had grown using their compost soil. Michelle Meredith then closed the Spotlight with thanking everyone and Board for coming tonight and announcing that there will be ice crème served in the cafeteria for students and families.

At 7:20 Steve Erwin announced that they will take a 10 minute break so the students and parents could leave.

At 7:30 pm Steve Erwin called the Board Meeting back to order.

ADOPT AGENDA

Motion – Laura Vukasin, Seconded – Jeff Gray, passed unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion – Jeff Gray, Seconded – Greg Oswood, passed unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

A. **Approve minutes of Regular Meeting of February 14, 2011** – The Board approved the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 14, 2011 as presented.

B. **Approval Personnel Action** – The Board approved the Personnel Action report as presented.

C. **Approve Facility Usage Fee Waiver Request – Great Falls Bobcat Booster Club** – The Board approved the request for a rental usage fee waiver for the use of Memorial Stadium on Saturday, April 16, 2011 and field at Paris Gibson Center and any custodian and groundsman time will not be waived.

D. **Approve Incoming Student Attendance Agreement** – The Board approved the Student Attendance Agreement for a 2nd grade student to attend school in Great Falls and tuition not be waived – to be paid for by Centerville School District.

E. **Good Apple Awards** - The Board recognized and honored the following individuals for receiving the “Good Apple Award” Mary Christiaens, Michael Smith, Barbara Swaby, Rachel Bohannon, Andrea Meyer, Sue Schuff, Kelly Parsons, Elizabeth Coogan, Nichol Lafond-Rooney, Laura Bason, Cindy George, Marilyn Brasch, Shelby Nichols, Lee Haynes, Carole McKittrick, Steve Shallue, Treve Brinkman, Suzanne Lambert, Alyssa Calsetta, Pam Dougherty, Leslie Lott, Cathy Allen, Shelly Sien, El Moldenhauer, Cindy George, Gwen Williams, and Katie Kotynski.

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS AND INFORMATION FROM THE AUDIENCE

None

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

A. **Report of the Superintendent**

RESPONSE TO PATRON

At the February 14 meeting of the Board, neighbors of Morningside Elementary School addressed the Board about water damage to their home they believe is due to run-off from the school property. The District and the City of Great Falls are in the process of addressing the issue.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS’ LISTENING SESSIONS HELP DRIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS

Over this past year elementary school principals have hosted a series of listening sessions with parents. This gave leadership staff an opportunity to have in-depth conversations with parents in order to get their views about the quality of education in district schools. Many positive comments were received. Other issues brought to our attention call for some reevaluation of current practices and processes. The listening sessions helped identify action items to be implemented in the coming year. Specifically, staff will be working to adopt and implement a system-wide bullying prevention model, improving parent resource accessibility via district website, continuing focused staff development, re-evaluating lunch time practices, reviving primary handwriting instruction, and increasing opportunities for parent involvement.

TECHNOLOGY INTERNS FROM MSU – GREAT FALLS

Collaboration between educational institutions is important to improving student learning. Work experience makes what a student learns in textbooks and labs come to life. In embrace of that philosophy the District’s Technology Department will be hosting four students from MSU-Great Falls to give them exposure to all aspects of our technological operations. They will do everything from learning the central operating system to working on the help desk, and learning how data information is backed up and recovered—to name just a few of their activities. A great opportunity for these young college students, and we are pleased to collaborate with yet another community partner, MSU – Great Falls.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

On February 17 the Great Falls Public Schools Budget Committee convened for their first meeting of 2011. In addition to the Committee there have been over 20 visitors in attendance including trustees, teachers, administrators, current and former administrators, interested citizens, and a trustee from a nearby district. The majority of the meeting was taken up by two presentations. Dr. John Matt from the University of Montana presented "Montana School Finance 101" and Human Resources Director **Tammy Lacey** laid the foundation for further budget information with a comprehensive report on the District's personnel and the financial and social impact these people have within the broader community of Great Falls. At the second meeting, the committee was treated to surprise speaker **Jessica Hardin** of C.M. Russell High School. After listening to the wonderful education experience Jessica has had in the Great Falls District, committee members began the process of diving into the detail of the organization, its departments, and the various expense scenarios. Revenue information will likely be very late in coming as the Legislature currently has no school funding bill under consideration.

KUDOS TO STUDENTS AND STAFF

Meadow Lark Elementary 5th grader **Sarah Cherry** was selected as this year's Charlie Russell essay contest winner on Sunday afternoon at the C.M. Russell Museum. This was the 42nd "I like Charlie Russell because ..." essay contest. Local school winners were: **Teddi Kessel** - Chief Joseph, **Josh Epperle** - Lewis and Clark, **Alec Good** - Lincoln, **Ashaya Big Leggins** - Longfellow, **Avery Frankhouser** - Loy, **Hailey Little** - Morningside, **Parker Ward** - Mountain View, **Jessica Dawson** - Riverview, **Zack Deshaw** - Rossevelt, **Annabella Aline** - Sacajawea, **Shyleene Mullins** - Sunnyside, **Korena Frantzich** - Valley View, **Jacob Gilman** - West, and **Lariah Gutierrez** - Whittier.

Dave Houtz, Transportation and Risk Management coordinator for the District, has invited the Great Falls Fire Department to observe simulated lockdowns in the Great Falls Public Schools. The Fire Department is likely to be called to provide EMT support in the event of a real emergency, so it stands to reason they would be interested in District procedures. They have been very impressed with our program. Dave has also lent technical expertise to Foothills Christian Community School to assist them in upgrading their lockdown procedures.

HUMAN RESOURCES

A. Action for the Non-Renewal of Temporary Non-Tenured Teachers Whose Positions Expire June 3, 2011

Motion - Laura Vukasin, Seconded - Ann Janikula, passed unanimously to non-renew the teachers listed (list attached with minutes) as they are temporary teachers whose positions expire June 4, 2011.

FUNDING, FINANCE, AND FACILITIES

A. Appoint Budget Committee Member - Motion - Jan Cahill, Seconded - Laura Vukasin, passed unanimously to appoint Robert England to the Budget Committee of the Great Falls Public Schools. Robert England is a Great Falls Realtor and has served in the business community of Great Falls for 20 years, is a member of the local Realtors Association and served in an elected office representing Great Falls in the statewide realtors association, and has a student attending high school in the District.

B. Accept Financial Report and Approve Check Registers - Motion - Jeff Gray, Seconded - Laura Vukasin, passed unanimously to accept the monthly financial report and approve the Accounts Payable checks #40190-40738 in the amount of \$1,258,746.07 and Payroll checks #32330-32939 in the amount of \$1,081,065.11.

ACTION OTHER

None

REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES

A. Report on OPI Scholastic Review Team's visits to GFHS and EMS

Tom Moore reported that OPI Scholastic Review Team visited Great Falls High on January 3-6 and East Middle School on January 18-21 to conduct a follow-up scholastic review of both of these schools. The follow-up scholastic review report was based upon the examination of the documents provided in the school portfolio, classroom observations, interviews, and from the school perception survey. There are ten focus areas in this review. The specific strengths and areas for development are organized under the heading of the ten focus areas in the reports. There are three final recommendations included which the OPI feels are imperative for continued school improvement. Shelly Fagenstrom, Principal EMS reported to the Board the three final recommendations. They are: 1. Increase data-driven decision making as a basis for development of teacher strategies, including project-based learning, to benefit students. She indicated that they had already been putting this recommendation in place before their review had been done; 2. Build cultural proficiency in the staff, empowering them to more readily integrate IEFA into their curriculum. Invite culturally diverse community members to participate in school and classroom activities throughout the year which are coordinated with curricular objectives; and 3. The district and school leadership staff need to explore the means to disseminate health and wellness information to staff, students, and parents, and revise the protocol and means of verification for meeting individual student's health and medication needs. Fred Anderson, Principal reported to the Board the three final recommendations for GFHS. They are 1. Leadership and staff should seek to continue and refine the practices that have been developed through recent planning (PLCT, Connections, professional development and implementation of goals in the 5YCEP and SIP). Allow these positive changes to mature and strive to have all stakeholders involved in the process; 2. Increased integration of multi-cultural perspectives would be beneficial to students, staff and the community. Leadership should consider providing teachers with strategies and training for embedding IEFA into their content area; and 3. Leadership should tap into the existing academic and instructional expertise within the school community. Consider allocating time for staff to network and analyze data to enhance and improve student achievement including the promotion of higher levels of thinking for all students.

B. Discussion, Committee Reports, and Comments

Superintendent Crawley reported that there are 4 trustee positions that will be open for the upcoming Trustee Election. The individuals whose positions are up are Steve Erwin, Greg Oswood, Jan Cahill, and Alicia Thompson. The deadline to file for a Trustee position is March 24, 2011.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Chairman Erwin announced that the next Full Board Agenda Planning will be on March 7, 2011, the next Budget Committee Meeting will be on March 10, 2011 and the next Board Meeting will be on March 14, 2011.

ACTION TO ADJOURN

Motion – Laura Vukasin, Seconded – Greg Oswood, passed unanimously to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 8:10 pm.

Steve Erwin, Chairman

Ernie Jean, Clerk

