Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education
Minutes of the Board of Education
Regular Meeting

November 9, 2020

Vice President Featheringill called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Board members present: Susan Featheringill, Keith Johnston, Darlene Loyer Gerick Simone Pinter, Calvin Hawkins and Kelly Owen. Amy Pearce was absent. Also in attendance were: Superintendent Peter Kudlak, Sara Cortese, Director of Finance, Karen Johnston, Director of Student Services, James Williams, Director of Plant Operations and Abdul Madyun, Director of Human Resources. Jeff Moore, Director of Instruction was absent. Also present was BHS Student Council Representative, Olivia Sylvestre

Motion by Keith Johnston, support by Kelly Owen, that the Board approves the agenda as presented There was discussion. Motion carried.

Questions and Comments from the Audience (Agenda Items) – None

Motion by Keith Johnston, support by Calvin Hawkins, to approve the consent agenda as presented; Minutes from the Regular Meeting of October 26, 2020; Minutes from the Closed Session of October 26, 2020; Requested Changes in Instructional Staff: Amanda Haas, Tyler Elementary Remote Teacher, Hired effective 11/11/20; Cristine Gulu, Rawsonville Elementary Remote Interventionist, Hired effective 11/9/20; Khaii Mason, Savage Elementary Remote Teacher, Hired effective 11/9/20; Emily Nadrowski, Edgemont Elementary Remote Teacher, Hired effective 11/9/20; Kimberly Lammers, Rawsonville Remote Teacher, Hired effective 11/6/20; Requested Changes in Non-Instructional Staff: Brenda Thomas, Transportation, 1 year of service, Resigned effective 10/19/20; Yvette Gorecki, Transportation, 6 years of service, Terminated effective 10/28/20; Michael Dotson, Plant Operations, 1 year of service, Terminated effective 10/30/20; Christopher Tharpe, Custodian, Hired effective 11/2/20; Hussein Alakhrass, IT Support Rep., Hired effective 11/10/20; Devin McCafferty, IT Support Rep., Hired effective 11/2/20 and Check Register. There was discussion. Motion carried.

The first Administrative Item was the Savage Elementary Crosswalk Project Information. Mr. Kudlak and James Williams have been looking into getting a crosswalk for Savage Elementary School and Country Walk Subdivision to allow children from that area to walk to school instead of being bussed, ultimately hoping to save money. Simone Pinter asked if Wayne County would pay for this Crosswalk. Mr. Williams answered that it would be at our cost. Mr. Johnston asked what the savings in cost would be to implement the crosswalk compared to the cost of running the busses. Mr. Kudlak did not have the exact savings but would get that amount. Mr. Williams said that there is a $21,695.00 cost for surveillance before the project can begin and that would be coming to the Board for a vote at the next meeting. Information only.

The second Administrative Item was the Plante Moran Bid Packet #2 (Group A) presented by James Williams, Rob Kakoczki and Kyle Oberdorf. Mr. Kakoczki explained that upon completion of the post-bid scope review meetings, and after subsequent clarifications and discussions, the Project Team is recommending the firms listed in Granger Construction

Company's Award Recommendation Letter dated November 3, 2020. The total Project award recommendation for Bid Package #2 – Partial (Group A) is $5,851,622.00. This award recommendation includes the following:

Base Bid Contract Amount + $5,263,050.00
Alternate #8: Brick Exterior + $42,900.00 (complete)
Alternate #9: Classroom Canopies = $77,250.00 (group A only)
Alternate #10: Exterior Classroom Window Seats = $42,900.00 (complete)
Voluntary Alternate: Combined Plumbing/Mechanical = ($32,000.00)
Construction Contingency = $458,422.00

This was information only and will be brought to the Board at the next Board Meeting.

The third Administrative Item was the Building Presentations by Haggerty School, Savage Elementary School and Tyler Elementary School. The first presentation was given by Becky Ross, Haggerty School Principal, Cassidy Taylor, Teacher and Pat McInchak, Para-pro. Ms. Ross said that there are 2 In-Person GSRP classrooms and 5 In-person ASD and ECP half-day session classrooms. COVID-19 procedures include social distancing and masks, limited classes in common areas and individual student boxes for bedding, supplies and materials. Remote Learning for Haggerty students includes 2 remote classrooms for GSRP and 3 Remote half day sessions for ASD and ECP classrooms. Remote Learning includes both Synchronous Learning and Asynchronous Learning. Ms. Taylor explained that the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) tool enhances academic learning, narrows achievement gaps and eases the transition to Kindergarten. She also described the standards that are aligned to the practices in this type of learning. Ms. McInchak explained how they use Social Emotional Learning during Literacy time and even at play. Staff are working hard at partnering with families by giving them at home learning kits, getting family input on learning goals and helping them to introduce the transition to Kindergarten. Ms. Ross said that the staff is involved in ongoing professional learning and collaboration. Lisa Preuss, Principal and Heather Palmer, Instructional Coach, presented for Savage Elementary School. Ms. Preuss said that 2 of the Target Areas that they will be working on with the Leader in Me are Academic Goal Achievement and Perseverance. They are focusing on these two because the survey taken in the spring showed these 2 areas as needing the most work. One of the School Improvement Goals that staff will be concentrating on this year is in Science through the Project Lead the Way program. Two teachers received training on this program over the summer and then they will in turn train the rest of the staff. How it works is that students begin with a problem and have 3 activities. Next the students will be given a project to complete. There is a lot of trial and error for the students to reach a common goal. It is amazing to watch how kids get to that goal and in many times it is different ways. The remote teacher that is helping Ms. Palmer get this program moving and get staff trained is Becky Sutton. Finally, Ms. Preuss spoke about school safety and the processes they have in place to keep everyone safe. In person learning looks a lot different than in past years. The last building presentation was from Tyler Elementary, Ms. Pitt, Principal and Jennifer Kitchen, 2nd grade teacher. Ms. Pitt showed the Board videos that her team created to help students and parents understand what needs to be done to follow COVID-19 guidelines and keep everyone safe. She called the videos Pitt's Tips. These can be found on Tyler's website page and Facebook. Ms. Kitchen, 2nd grade teacher, explained that one of their focuses this year is the Reading Workshop. The Reading Workshop helps kids to look for clues in the piece they are reading. It helps them to understand that when they see an exclamation point, then they need to read it with excitement.

Students use post-it notes with prompts from the teacher on what they need to be looking for and them figuring out what it means.

The last Administrative Item was the Reconfirm Extended COVID-19 Plan Approval. Mr. Moore, Director of Instruction, explained at the last board meeting that as part of this plan, it is required that the Board of Education approves the plan every 30 days after the initial implementation. There are three major components that the Board members need to look at: 1. Reconfirm how Instruction will be delivered, 2. Allow for parent comments with documentation, and 3. Review the weekly 2-way Interaction with the students and teachers. The data that Mr. Moore presented was from the month of October. Moving forward, Mr. Kudlak said that the plan just needs to be brought to the board for discussion and public comment. It does not need a vote. Mr. Johnston expressed that he would like to have say in this plan and the changes that are made. For example, if the District needs to close a school for a period of time, Mr. Johnston would like more people to be involved in the decision making; not just one person. Mr. Hawkins said that he likes that this is coming from the health department first. Motion by Kelly Owen, support by Simone Pinter that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the Reconfirmation of the Extended COVID-19 Plan as presented. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: S. Featheringill – Aye, D. Loyer Gerick – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye, K. Owen – Aye, and S. Pinter – Aye. K. Johnston – Nay. 5 -1 approved.

Questions & Comments from the Audience for non-Agenda items – None

Cabinet Member Reports:

Karen Johnston, Director of Student Services – My assistant, Marybeth Voigt, will be moving to the Finance Department.

Sara Cortese, Director of Finance – Marybeth Voigt will be joining the Finance Department. I received the audit draft this week. Figures came back much better for the school year. I will be bringing an amended budget in January.

Pete Kudlak, Superintendent – I have been making plans in case we go 100% remote. The staff is anxious and they have had a lot of questions. We are looking for a new Supervisor for the new ECDC building. Becky Ross would still be handling the State and Federal Grants and then taking on some of the Curriculum duties. The BHS Volleyball team won Districts and will be playing on Tuesday against Bedford. There are a total of 8 positive COVID cases and 45 quarantine staff and students. So far there have not been any transmissions in our buildings.

Abdul Madyun, Director of Human Resources – I have been answering a lot of questions about whether the district will go remote. Meeting with the Union Leaders to explain what it would look like in their area.

James Williams, Director of Plant Operations – I am looking at cleaning up the site where our CTE Building is located and possibly demolishing one of the buildings. Once I get a price, I will be bringing it to the Board.

Olivia Sylvestre, BHS Senior Class President – As a Remote Learner, the transition has been super smooth. The communication with the teachers has been great.

Items of Business from the Members of the Board:

Darlene Loyer Gerick – There is a Dine to Donate for the Senior Class Party on 11/18/20 from 4pm – 8pm at BWW for carryout only. There will be a virtual craft show coming. Any crafter interested, email BHS. On 11/12/20 there is a Meeting of Priorities with Legislatures. The conference link will be sent soon. CBA 101 for incoming board members will be free in December.

Calvin Hawkins – Do we look at the gaps between the levels/each grade? Are we looking at closing those gaps? Mr. Kudlak said that we have been looking at the data and working to close those gaps. However, with both remote and in-person learning this year, it has made it harder to collect accurate data.

Keith Johnston – Congrats to Dionne Falconer as the new member of the school board. I also wanted to say that it has been a pleasure to work with everyone.

Kelly Owen – I attended a workshop last weekend with Susan and Amy. It was a lot of information and very good. I will talk about the classes at the next board meeting.

Susan Featheringill – I will speak about the conference at an upcoming meeting.

Motion by Keith Johnston, support by Calvin Hawkins that the Board of Education enter into Closed Session due to the Potential Action on Student Discipline – Reinstatement Request. Motion carried with the following roll call vote: S. Featheringill – aye, K. Johnston – aye, C. Hawkins – aye, S. Pinter – aye, K. Owen – aye and D. Loyer Gerick – aye. 0 – nays.

Motion by Keith Johnston, support by Simone Pinter that the Board of Education enters back into open session. Motion carried.

Motion by Kelly Owen, support by Darlene Loyer Gerick, that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education reinstate Student 19-20-001 unconditionally. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Simone Pinter, support by Calvin Hawkins to adjourn the regular meeting. Motion carried.

Regular session adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Darlene Loyer Gerick
Board of Education Secretary

Debra McWilliams
Recording Secretary