Van Buren Board of Education
Minutes of the Board of Education
Regular Virtual Meeting

December 14, 2020

President Pearce called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Pearce recognized Keith Johnston and his service on the school board for 12 years. He is a wonderful example for our students. He will be retiring at the end of the year. Mr. Kudlak also thanked Keith for being a great mentor to him. He also said that Keith is very active in the community and will be missed. Kelly Owen said that the Board will not be the same without him. Afterward, Mr. Johnston thanked everyone and let them know that he enjoyed every minute of it. He said that he will miss everyone.

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

Motion by Kelly Owen, support by Simone Pinter, that the Board approves the agenda as presented. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, O nays.

Questions and Comments from the Audience - Agenda Items – A. Mears thanked Keith Johnston for his years of service.

Motion by Keith Johnston, support by Kelly Owen, to approve the consent agenda as presented; Minutes from the Regular Meeting of November 23, 2020; Requested Changes in Instructional Staff: Psyche Jetton, BHS for 2 years of service, Resigned for job opportunity effective 12/4/20; Amanda Haas, Tyler Elementary School, less than 1 year of service, Resigned effective 12/4/20; Cristine Gulu, Rawsonville Elementary School, less than 1 year of service, Resigned effective 11/20/20; Tisha Love, Haggerty ECDC GSRP Teacher, Hired effective 1/11/2021; Madison Dagenais, Tyler Elementary School, 1st Grade Interventionist, Hired effective 12/7/20; and Check Register. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

Separate Check Approval – None

The first Administrative Item was the 2019 - 2020 Financial Audit Presentation and Report Approval presented by Laura Payne, Business Advisor and CPAfor Taylor & Morgan. Sara Cortese said that this audit is usually done at the end of October or beginning of November but because of COVID-19 the deadline was extended. The district received an "Unmodified level of

reporting" rating which is the highest a district can receive. Ms. Payne explained that our fund balance as of June 30, 2020 was 17% which most districts like to be around 15%. We are where we need to be. The Board was shown graphs comparing the last 5 years in the areas of State Aid Memberships and Foundation Allowance. We looked at the General Fund Revenue and Expenditures as well as comparing our Fund Balance to the last 5 years and with other District Averages in the State of Michigan. Ms. Payne also compared the Food Service and Athletic Departments' Revenues and Expenditures over the last 5 years. There are also other economic considerations that affect the district's finances such as the retirement rates, MPSERS memberships, pensions, and OPEB Liability. Motion by Susan Featheringill, support by Keith Johnston, that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the 2019-2020 Annual Audit Report as presented. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

The second Administrative Item was the Plante Moran Packet #2 (Group B) request for Approval presented by James Williams, Director of Plant Operations and Rob Kakoczki, Plante Moran Cresa. The information for this packet was presented at the last board meeting and is now being brought to the Board for approval. Motion by Amy Pearce, support by Simone Pinter that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the total project award recommendation for Bid Package #2 - Final (Group B) and Granger Construction's costs and fee of $3,249,789.00. This brings Granger Construction's GMP (Guaranteed Maximum Price) to $10,548,848.00 which includes bid packs 1, 2 and construction contingency as presented. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

The next Administrative Item was the Final Design Presentation for Bid Packet #2. James Williams, Rob Kakoczki and the IDS team presented a final design of the Early Childhood Center including the acceptance of the alternates. The site plan of the outside incorporated all the changes so far that have been approved by the City. The exterior of the building has changed to brick veneer. Canopies are now over the classroom windows and doors and benches under the canopies have been added to the plan. The team showed pictures of the furniture that is going to be used in the building. There will be shared restrooms between the classrooms. A color palette for each of the classrooms will be used to help young children know where to go. Mr. Kakoczki showed the Board an overview of the schedule for the completion of the building. They are hoping to have the enclosure completed in May 2021, move in furniture and staff in October 2021 and then have students shortly after that. Amy Pearce said that the staff involvement in this project has been amazing and she is so happy that they can be involved. Rob agreed that the staff has been great to work with. Information Only.

The fourth Administrative Item was the Plow Truck Purchase Approval presented by James Williams. Mr. Williams said that the District has several plow trucks with the oldest being a 2004 F250 that needs to be replaced. He would like to replace it with a new F350 and v-plow from Atchinson Ford. Motion by Keith Johnston, supported by Susan Featheringill that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the purchase of a 2021 Ford F350 and v-plow from Atchinson Ford for the amount of $41,897.20 as presented. There was discussion.

Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

The fifth Administrative Item was the CTE (Career Tech Building) Demolition Information presented by James Williams and Rob Kakoczki, Plante Moran Cresa. The CTE building has been a topic of discussion in the past couple of years. The site was up for sale for a while but since it did not get any great offers, it was taken off the market. Mr. Williams and others looked at cleaning it up and possibly changing how it was used. Mr. Kakoczki explained the information in the packet and the breakdown of the cost of this project. Keith Johnston was concerned about why the company's bid was so low. He asked if we had spoken to any of their references. Rob said that he had not used them before but that he had spoken to 1 or 2 other companies that had used them and they had nothing bad to say. They are actually a trucking company and have added demolition to their business in the past 5 years. Amy Pearce asked if their lack of demolition experience caused them to come in with a lower bid than any of the other competitors. James Williams commented that even if that was true and the cost ended up being more, that they could not change the cost on the contract. Mr. Kudlak added that this is sinking fund money and not general fund money. Susan Featheringill inquired about what costs we have with the building now; for example, electricity, heat, water, etc. Mr. Williams said that the only cost right now is the electricity. The approval for this project will be brought to the Board at the next meeting. Information only.

The next Administrative Item was the Annual Summer Tax Resolution Approval presented by Sara Cortese, Director of Finance. Ms. Cortese said that this will be an annual vote every year in December. Ms. Cortese explained that this resolution states that we will collect 100% of the summer taxes. She also said that if we do not levy summer taxes, we do not have enough fund balance to operate without revenue until the first state aid payment of the school year in October. Motion by Amy Pearce, support by Susan Featheringill that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the Annual Summer Tax resolution as presented. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

The School of Choice 2nd Semester Dates Recommendation was the next Administrative Item presented by the Director of Curriculum, Jeff Moore. The district participates in the program under Sections 105 and 105c and offers an unlimited number of openings. Amy Pearce asked if this was different because of COVID and if we were seeing more applications than usual. Mr. Moore said that there has been no difference in the number of applicants even with COVID. Motion by Kelly Owen, support by Simone Pinter that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the Schools of Choice program participation under Section 105 and 105c for the Second Semester of the 2020-2021 school year as presented. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

The next Administrative Item was the Reconfirm Extended COVID-19 Plan. This was only a discussion and it was led by Jeff Moore, Director of Instruction. Each month Mr. Moore presents data and allows for public comments and discussion from parents and community

members on the Extended Learning Plan and review of the weekly 2-way interactions. Information Only.

The ninth Administrative Item was the 2021 Organizational Meeting Date Recommendation. Mr. Kudlak said that we traditionally hold this meeting on the second Monday of January. This year we are proposing that the date be January 11, 2021. Motion by Susan Featheringill, support by Keith Johnston that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the 2021 Organizational Meeting to be held on Monday, January 11, 2021 at 7:00pm either in-person at the BHS Commons or virtually depending on the COVID-19 Emergency Orders. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

The tenth Administrative Item was the Thrun Law Firm Board Policies and Service Adoption Recommendation presented by Superintendent Kudlak. Mr. Kudlak explained that in August the Administration decided to look at the Thrun law Firm Board Policies to replace the current District Neola Board Policies. After many discussions and implementation meetings it was decided to recommend to the Board the adoption of the Thrun Law Firm Board Policy Manual. One of the stipulations to adopting the Thrun Policy Manual was that we would adopt their Anti-Bullying policy #5207 at a separate meeting so as to allow for public comment and discussion. Amy Pearce and Susan Featheringill said that they are happy with these policies and how they read. Motion by Susan Featheringill, support by Keith Johnston that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the adoption of the Thrun Policy Manual, except Policy 5207 (Anti-Bullying), in the form presented and recommended by the Administrations as the Board's new policies and bylaws, including those forms and administrative guidelines in the Policy Manual, for purpose of governing Van Buren Public Schools as presented. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

The last Administrative Item was Suspend Thrun Board Policy 2501 Meetings Section F2A (Remote Participation) Approval presented by Superintendent Kudlak. Mr. Kudlak explained that just like with Neola Board Policies, we need to suspend the policy that requires a board member to be physically present to vote. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Wayne County Health Department and Governor Whitmer have extended the emergency orders that allow for public business to be conducted virtually until March 31, 2021. Motion by Susan Featheringill, support by Simone Pinter that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education suspend the Thrun Board Policy 2501 Meetings section F2A that requires board members to be physically present in order to vote until the Governor of Michigan and WCHD lift the Emergency Order that allows for virtual board meetings as presented. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

Questions & Comments from the Audience for non-Agenda items – A. Mears said that there will be a Hungry Howies Fundraiser on 12/21/20 supporting McBride Middle School. They have to have people order so that they meet the minimum percentage to count. A. VanDenbergh said that the MDHHS want people not to expect things to go back to normal until next fall. It will take a long time to get 70% vaccinated at this time.

Cabinet Member Reports:

Karen Johnston – Thanks to all the companies, families and community for all the donations to help our families.

Abdul Madyun – We had a good year with our self-insured insurance plan for the first year with our District. With the savings, everyone will get a check. Abdul also added more insurance information with each check sent out. K. Tyner asked if everyone from the district would receive a check. Mr. Madyun said that everyone but VBEST.

Jeff Moore – Mr. Moore thanked Keith for all his service to the School Board, District and community.

Sara Cortese – Thank you so much to Karen Waller and Elizabeth Banks for getting this food service distribution. We have over 700 kids getting meals. They did an amazing job. Also, thank you to the Transportation Staff – Trevor, Kristy and Terry. They are amazing.

Pete Kudlak – Currently have 7 positive cases right now. 3 people are quarantined. People are contacting Dionisia still. Thank you to Keith Johnston for all his work and dedication.

Items of Business from the Members of the Board:

Amy Pearce – It has been a year. Very proud of this district on how they have responded to this pandemic. I am very proud to be a part of it.

Darlene Loyer Gerick – Thank you to everyone who shopped at the virtual craft show. I made 30-40 ornaments for the craft show. Thank you to Keith for helping me get started on the Board.

Simone Pinter – Thank you Keith and thank you to Mr. Kudlak for all you have done. Also thank you to all the staff. A special thanks to the BYC for their gift giving donations to VBPS.

Kelly Owen – Thank you Keith. We will miss you. Keep in touch. Happy Holidays.

Keith Johnston – This has been amazing and you have all been great to work with. I will miss everyone but I will still be around. Thank you all for the kind words.

Susan Featheringill – Thank you to Keith. Enjoy your extra Mondays. Everyone stay healthy and safe over the holidays.

Calvin Hawkins – Shout out to Keith. Thank you for making me feel welcome when I came on to this board. I also want to recognize the staff and Administration for all they are doing. The finance audit was awesome news. Be safe over the holidays.

Motion by Keith Johnston, support by Amy Pearce to enter into Closed Session pursuant to Open Meetings Act Section 8(a) Periodic Personnel Evaluation. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

The Board entered into Closed Session at 9:11pm.

Motion by Kelly Owen, support by Darlene Gerick to enter back into Open Session. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

The Board entered back into Open Session at 12:11am.

The next Administrative Item was the Superintendent Evaluation. Motion by Keith Johnston, support by Amy Pearce that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education rate Superintendent Kudlak as Highly Effective for the period of January - December 2020. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

The second Administrative Item was the Superintendent Contract Recommendation. Motion by Darlene Loyer Gerick, support by Keith Johnston that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education extend the contract of Pete Kudlak, Superintendent, to conclude June 30, 2024 and to set his 2021-2022 salary at $154,000. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Johnston – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays.

Motion by Keith Johnston, support by Simone Pinter to adjourn the regular meeting with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Owen – Aye, Pearce – Aye, K. Johnston – aye, C. Hawkins – aye and Pinter – Aye, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Regular session adjourned at 12:15 am.

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Darlene Loyer Gerick
Board of Education Secretary

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Debra McWilliams
Recording Secretary