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

August 10, 2020

President Pearce called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

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 Amy Pearce, that the Board approves the agenda as presented with the change of #4 Questions and Comments from the Audience moving to after #6 Separate Check Approval. 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.

Motion by Keith Johnston, support by Kelly Owen, to approve the consent agenda as presented; Minutes from the Regular Meeting of July 13, 2020; Requested Changes in Instructional Staff: Kimberly Rhodes, Owen Teacher for 2 years, Resigned for Job Opportunity effective 8/5/20, Jennifer Bare, BHS Teacher, Recalled effective 8/25/2020, Scott Wilsey, BNT Director, Reassignment effective 8/25/20; Requested Changes in Non-Instructional Staff: Atemia Holley, Administration Building for 3 years, Resigned for personal reasons, Alissa Frederick, Special Services Department Paraprofessional, Recommended effective 9/1/20; 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 – Motion by Darlene Loyer Gerick, support by Susan Featheringill to approve Ck# 150822 to Johnston Enterprises in the amount of 989.00. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: S. Featheringill – Aye, D. Gerick – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye, K. Owen – Aye, A. Pearce – Aye, and S. Pinter – Aye. 0 – Nays and K. Johnston abstained because it was a check to his business.

Questions and Comments from the Audience - Agenda Items – Aaron Lang, VBEA President, read a letter he had written to preface the comments and questions posted by VBPS teachers. Mr. Lang read the teacher comments and questions and Mr. Kudlak read the other comments by the community members. Some of the concerns raised by teachers were about the safety of staff and students returning to in-person instruction, worried about not being completely prepared for the start of school, concern if there will be enough supplies, who will be doing the cleaning and sanitizing between classes, who is monitoring passing time in the hallways, will there be a cap on in-person classes, how will social distancing work at the secondary level, will there be a set schedule for both remote learning and in-person learning, is there a discipline plan for students

who refuse to wear their mask, how will IEP's for students be handled, will visitors be allowed in the building, how will shared materials work in a classroom, how will the exposure plan work in the district and will COVID testing be offered for staff and students? Amy Pearce made a motion, supported by Susan Featheringill to move the rest of the questions and comments on Agenda Items to directly after the presentation of the Return to School Plan, #7d, but before the vote. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: S. Featheringill – Aye, D. Gerick – Aye, C. Hawkins – Aye, K. Johnston – Aye, K. Owen – Aye, A. Pearce – Aye, and S. Pinter – Aye. 0 – Nays.

The first Administrative Item was the PMC/IDS/Granger Bond Update. James Williams, Director of Plant Operations, introduced Rob Kakoczki from Plante Moran who presented an update on the ECDC project. He was very happy with the timeline and that they are within 1% of the bond amount so far for the project. IDS showed the Board an aerial view of the outside of the building and surrounding area and how it is laid out between BHS and the transportation building. IDS said that they will be separating the bus drop off and the parent drop off and this will create extra parking for special events at the high school. A map of the inside floor plan was showed. A. Mears asked if there will be a fenced in play area? The answer from IDS was yes. Kyle Oberdorf, Granger Construction, went over the timeline and their target dates for different pieces of the construction plan. This was information only.

The second Administrative Item was the Tentative Agreement between VBEST and VBPS. Abdul Madyun, Director of Human Resources, went over some of the highlights of the agreement. With the savings on healthcare and the hardcap, the District was able to give some money back to this group. They received $1.00/hour raise and a cash in lieu for those who do not take the District's insurance. Motion by Simone Pinter, support by Keith Johnston that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the Tentative Agreement with the Van Buren Educational Support Team (VBEST) dated August 3, 2020 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 third Administrative Item was the Sumpter Property (Career Tech Center) Recommendation. Superintendent Kudlak said that in August 2018, the District listed the old CTE center property for sale. To date, the District has not received any offers near the listing price. Also, if sold, we would need to build a new warehouse with nowhere to put it since the lot for the new ECDC building would not work. So by removing this listing from the market, we would look at other ways to repurpose this property, keep our warehouse and at spruce it up so that it is not quite an eye sore. Motion by Kelly Owen, support by Darlene Loyer Gerick that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the removal of the Sumpter Road Property (old CTE Center) listing and no longer consider selling it at this time as presented. There was discussion. Motion carried 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.

The next Administrative Item was the Return to Learn Plans for the 2020-2021 School Year Recommendation. Mr. Kudlak presented the plan to the Board that needed to be approved in order to be turned into the State of Michigan by August 15, 2020. Using Governor Whitmer's Return to Learn Roadmap and MI Safe Start Plan, districts were tasked to create a Return to

School Plan on how instruction would look and the safety guidelines to follow for Phases 1-3, Phase 4 and Phase 5-6. Mr. Kudlak said that in his presentation, he will focus on Phase 4 learning and what that will look like along with the safety protocols needed to accomplish this feat. He also said that if these procedures and protocols are not complete, then in-person schooling would be delayed. Once the plan is approved by the Board, it will be posted on the District website. Phases 1-3 will only consist of remote learning. A virtual helpdesk will be created for parents and staff to use. This type of remote learning will be very different than the remote learning done in the spring. Students will be tested, homework will be counted and attendance will be taken. In these phases the safety protocols are small because no one is in the buildings. In Phase 4 we are looking at clear masks for elementary staff and also enclosed shields. If a student cannot adhere to the guidelines, then they will have to be moved to Remote Learning. All K-12 students and staff will be required to wear masks. Mr. Kudlak said that we have about 90% of our cleaning supplies in and ready to be installed in the buildings. The first 2 weeks of school will be half days and that is when we will be reinforcing and practicing with the students in person. The students will be hand sanitizing and hand washing continually throughout the day. Mr. Kudlak went over what happens if there is a positive COVID test, what is exposure and what forms will need to be filled out. Teachers will have seating charts for their students which will allow for contact tracing, there will not be assemblies or the mixing of classes. Mr. Kudlak also spoke about the Transportation protocols and what that looks like for students riding the bus and for the bus drivers. In Phase 5, it is really just a lesser version of Phase 4. Instead of items being required, they are either strongly recommended or recommended. Amy Pearce was concerned about being ready by September 1, 2020. Mr. Kudlak said that there will be 3 full days of PD for staff and more optional PD days available as well. Darlene Loyer Gerick asked if we move from Phase 4 to Phase 3 (Remote) how will the class sizes be redistributed with students. Mr. Kudlak said that they will do the least amount of movement as possible. Calvin Hawkins was worried about not having to have a negative test to return back to school. Ms. Pearce asked Mr. Kudlak to explain the Hybrid model even though this is not the one being used yet. Ms. Pinter said that this is a group effort and everyone will have to work together. Parents, please practice wearing masks with your children. Susan Featheringill likes the parent waiver that needs to be signed in order to send your child to school. Ms. Loyer Gerick agreed too. Ms. Owen thanked the three committees for all their hard work over the summer. She said that there is still a lot to do to be ready for the first day of school. Mr. Kudlak reiterated that if we are not 100% ready, we would not start. He also wanted to remind the Board that they are approving the plan to be submitted to the State of Michigan, not the plan on how they will start school. The Board would like to meet again in one week to see where we are and get the answers to the questions from this Board Meeting. Due to the amount of questions and comments from the audience still left, Board President Pearce said that they would compile all of them from the meeting, get them answered and then post them on the District website this week. Motion by Susan Featheringill, support by Keith Johnston that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the Return to Learn Plans for the 2020-2021 School Year as presented with the understanding that we are approving the plans not the start date. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call votes: .S. Featheringill – Aye, K. Johnston – Aye, D. Gerick – Aye, S. Pinter – Aye, K. Owen – Aye, and A. Pearce. C. Hawkins – Nay.

The next administrative item was the Chromebook Purchase Approval. Sean Garland, IT Network Administrator, explained that in order to prepare for the upcoming school year we need

to expand our Chromebook fleet for the increased remote learning needs and the possibility that the district could go to completely online learning. This also allows for a limited amount of spare machines for break/fix replacements. Motion by Amy Pearce, support by Darlene Loyer Gerick that the Van Buren Public Schools Board of Education approve the Chromebook purchase from SHI at a total cost of $51,790.00 as presented. There was discussion. Motion carried with the following Roll Call vote: Featheringill – Aye, Gerick – Aye, Pinter – Aye, Pearce – Aye, Hawkins – Aye, Owen – Aye, and Johnston – Aye. 0 – Nays.

The last administrative item was the Changes to School Times for the 20-21 School Year. Mr. Kudlak said that the District has been working on reducing the bus routes and transportation costs. In an effort to do this, school start and end times will change. The new start and end times will be posted on the website. Information Only.

Questions & Comments from the Audience for Non-Agenda Items – None

Cabinet Member Reports: None

Items of Business from the Members of the Board:

Darlene Loyer Gerick – On 8/27/20 there will be a Food Truck Rally Fundraiser at BHS. This will be a drive up and get food activity.

Simone Pinter – Thank you to everyone for your hard work.

Motion by Susan Featheringill, 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.

Regular session adjourned at 11:38p.m.

Darlene Loyer Gerick
Board of Education Secretary

Debra McWilliams
Recording Secretary