

The Grinnell-Newburg Board of Education met in Regular Session on March 25, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, Community Building 927 4th Avenue, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

Members Present: Barbara Brown, Kirsten Fisher, Jeff Knobloch, Jonathan Nance, Jeff Smith and Carol Wilhelm.

Members Absent: Claire Moisan

Also in attendance at the table: Superintendent Todd Abrahamson and Accounting Assistant Teresa Hawk.

Administrators Present: Sara Hegg-Dunne

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Board President Barbara Brown called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
Accounting Assistant Teresa Hawk called the roll. Six members were in attendance.

2. Fiduciary Report:

Board member Carol Wilhelm noted an FEH bill for the 11th Avenue demolition. Superintendent Abrahamson explained this was for the architects building design, not for demolition. She also noted a bill for Brian Gruhn's legal fees. Abrahamson explained it was a three month old bill and the central office has had no contact with this firm since November. Wilhelm questioned who reviewed the bond referendum literature that was provided to the public. Abrahamson explained the Iowa Ethics & Campaign Disclosure Board is a free service and they have reviewed the bond referendum literature. No legal fees apply.

3. Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion by Knobloch to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Nance.

A. Approve/Amenda Agenda

B. Minutes: Regular Meeting 3/4/15, Regular Meeting 3/11/15

Wilhelm noted that the Minutes from the 3/11/15 Board Meeting listed Matt Gillaspie's name incorrectly in the Facilities section.

Motion by Knobloch and seconded by Fisher to approve the name correction.

Motion carried 6-0.

C. Financials

D. Claims and Accounts

Motion carried 6-0.

4. Communication from the Public

Community member Scott Keenan praised the Public Forum held on 3/24/15. He stated he spoke with one of the FEH architects regarding figures the district has published. Board member Kirsten Fisher indicated that renovation costs are always an estimate, and estimates are per square foot - not an exact number. Abrahamson stated that the architects were never asked to do a design for renovation on the buildings, which would have provided more concrete numbers, because the Task Force made the recommendation to the Board to build new rather than renovate.

Community member Dale Lamb expressed concerns that the voters were going to the polls with misinformation. Keenan questioned why the bond mailings only went to residents of the 50112 zip code. Abrahamson stated there was a miscommunication between the district and the vendor, which would be addressed and rectified.

Community member George Graham stated he had not received school related mailings for years. He also stated he had concerns with communication/trust in the board and leadership. He pointed out that the Bond issue was started by Superintendent Eckles rather than by Mr. Abrahamson. Lastly he questioned why the school district had declining enrollments

5. Communications and Reports

A. Board

Wilhelm voiced her concern about the public voting with the possibility of erroneous literature. Board member Jeff Knobloch mentioned the legislature hasn't made a decision on school start dates.

Wilhelm continued to voice concern regarding the bond literature, and whether it was violating iowa code regarding neutrality. She questioned how much money has been spent in literature - and if it was advocating a yes vote. Abrahamson pointed out that the literature had been approved by the Iowa Ethics Board.

Board member Jonathan Nance noted citizens are asking for school start dates. Abrahamson stated two calendars are being prepared, with either an August 24 or August 31 start date. These calendars will be presented at the April 8th meeting.

B. Superintendent- FY16 Budget Presentation

Abrahamson reported that radon testing had been done at the 11th Avenue building. Fairview preschool rooms were also tested due to regulations pertaining to preschool. Radon testing will be done in all school rooms, at a cost of \$50 per

classroom. Mitigation systems will be installed at the 11th avenue building.

Wilhelm expressed concern regarding mold growth.

Abrahamson presented a slide show depicting the projected 2015-2016 certified budget. The proposed budget assumes a 1.25 percent increase in supplemental state aid. He is hoping the legislature will set this amount soon, so the budget can be approved at the April 13 Board meeting.

6. Old Business

None

7. New Business

A. Approve Audit Report

Russell Terpstra from Hunt Associates presented an overview of the audit report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014. Copies of the audit will be available in the Central Office and also online on the School Website. He stated the district is in great financial shape.

Motion to table the vote was made by Knobloch and seconded by Wilhelm. This will allow the Board time to review the audit. Abrahamson will report back to the Board to explain any report findings from pages 75-80.

Motion carried 6-0.

8. Board Discussion

A. Facilities

Brown remarked that the 2nd Public Forum had very good discussion regarding curriculum and teachers. She stated the teachers made good points regarding the ease and availability of moving children into different grades if the bond passes. Wilhelm noted the importance of primary reading before 3rd grade standardized testing. She also noted the teachers have emphasized the benefits of working together as a grade team.

Board member Jeff Smith asked about the bids for the deconstruction of the 11th Avenue building. Abrahamson noted the bids were opened and appear to be favorable. The bids will be presented to the board at the April 8th meeting. The architects are now working on the design for the relocation of the central office to the high school. A 90 day notice will be given to the City before relocation is done. The architects will then begin the design for replacing portions of the high school roof. This should be completed over the summer months.

Community member Helen Redmond questioned why the district is not training teachers to use the technology that is currently available to skype or meet online.

Abrahamson noted that teachers have tried this but prefer to collaborate face-to-face instead of online. Part of the new Technology Integration Specialist's responsibilities will be to train students and staff. Training is currently being done on an individual basis.

9. Board Talking Points

Wilhelm noted she appreciated that community member Graham came to the meeting. Brown stated she recommends anyone in the district with a concern would communicate their concerns to the Board as a whole, and not just individual board members. Graham expressed his disappointment in the attendance from the community at the board meeting. He stated residents of the community have questions, but was surprised to find no one was at the meeting. Board member Kirsten Fisher agreed, stating it is very important to attend and dispel rumors, answer questions, etc.

Upon completion of Board Talking Points, Brown moved to have Board Members take a brief break. The Board then moved to Closed Session.

Closed Session per Iowa Code 21.5(1)(a) and 21.5(1)(i):

To review or discuss records which are required or authorized to be kept confidential.

To evaluate the professional competency of an individual whose performance is being considered to prevent needless and irreparable injury to that individual's reputation, as that individual has requested a closed session.

President Brown called the Closed Session to order at 8:35 p.m. Accounting Assistant Teresa Hawk called the roll. Six members were in attendance.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Knobloch, seconded by Nance to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

Board Calendar

Policy Advisory Meeting	4:00 p.m., April 9, 2015
Special Board Meeting	6:00 p.m., April 13, 2015
Regular Board Meeting	6:00 p.m., April 22, 2015
Academic Advisory Meeting	4:15 p.m., April 28, 2015