

The Grinnell-Newburg Board of Education met in Regular Session on April 9, 2014, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 927 4th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

Members Present: Jeff Smith, Barbara Brown, Kirsten Fisher, Jeff Knobloch, Claire Moisan, and Jonathan Nance. Also in attendance at the table: Superintendent Todd Abrahamson, Business Manager and Board Secretary Lisa Johnson

Members Absent: Carol Wilhelm

Administrators Present: Sara Hegg-Dunne, Heidi Durbin

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

President Smith called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Board Secretary Lisa Johnson called the roll. Six members were in attendance, with member Brown arriving at 6:20 p.m.

**2. Fiduciary**

Business Manager Johnson answered questions from the board members on the bills. Board member Moisan asked for a building breakdown of utilities, and requested clarification on CAM. Business Manager Johnson presented the budget for the 14-15 school year. Moisan asked about bond prepayment and if it would allow increased bonding capability in the future, which it would.

**3. Approval of Consent Agenda**

Motion by Knobloch, seconded by Moisan to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried 6-0.

- A. Approve/Amend Agenda
- B. Minutes: Regular Board Meeting 3/26/14
- C. Claims and Accounts: Bills, Summary

**4. Public Hearing: FY2015 Certified Budget / Budget Presentation**

Business Manager Johnson asked for questions on the certified budget for fiscal year 2015. There were no questions from the public.

**5. Communication from the Public**

None

**6. Communication and Reports**

**A. Board**

President Smith complimented the FCCLA on their hard work on the many great projects they have undertaken. The teacher mentoring program was mentioned by board member Fisher. Knobloch discussed the completed site visit with the Iowa Department of Education, as well as recent attendance at

the Arts Symposiums. Moisan spoke on the concept of language learning through gaming.

**B. Superintendent**

The demolition on the RC property is ahead of schedule and the DNR will be on the site this week. The horse barn bid on the property was awarded for an amount of \$1,550.00 and that demolition has begun. Denny with the FEH group will be starting to work on programming meetings. He would prefer to have a site location before completing a majority of the design work, but will begin without one.

Superintendent Abrahamson stated no supplemental state aid has been set yet. Some have expressed a desire to delay this decision until after the elections. The site visit went exceptionally well, with 20 issues in the 2009 visit and only 2 in the current report. The final report will be available in May and will be posted on the district website.

The needs assessment surveys were returned and will be used by the SIAC committee. They will present the data to the school board in May.

High School Dean of Students Heidi Durbin presented on the Olweus Bullying Program. The Homecoming parade in 2013 featured the program and they will soon be setting the theme for next year's parade. Durbin emphasized the 14-15 year will focus on: parent/community aspects and building teams to help with objectives. They are using 5-12 student questionnaire data to plan future events. Reporting forms are online and paper forms continue to be available in the building offices.

Educators from elementary and middle school grade levels shared their thoughts on bullying. Classroom meetings at the K-2 level help students understand expectations. High School mentors reading to students in classrooms provide good examples. Lessons are being built into everyday classroom activities and assemblies can be used to drive more focus.

The High School staff and student council representative Zane Strawser spoke of the Respect Retreats in the fall, put on for the past 4 years by the Youth Frontiers group. Seminar time has been used to do small community outreach projects.

Superintendent Abrahamson indicated that during the site visit students were interviewed on bullying. High School students ranked it at low-average and said it was improving. They thought the gaggle software was helping. Middle School students ranked as average - high. Stating most was happening on the bus. Board member Knobloch asked about the data related to behavior intervention at the Middle School and whether it is making improvements. Fisher mentioned the need to model good behavior in the community. President Smith asked about the capability of putting student seminar projects on the website and possibly the GET 12 station.

**7. Old Business**

**A. 2nd Reading - 200 Policy Series, Change Log, 200 Series**

Motion by Knobloch, seconded by Moisan to approve the 200 Policy Series. Motioned carried 6-0.

**8. New Business**

**A. Debt Service Prepayment Resolution**

Motion by Moisan, seconded by Nance to approve the Debt Service Prepayment Resolution. Roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.

**B. Budget Guarantee Resolution**

Motion by Brown, seconded by Fisher to approve the Budget Guarantee Resolution. Roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.

**C. Certify the FY2015 budget to the levying bodies**

Motion by Brown, seconded by Moisan to approve the Certification of the FY2015 budget to the levying bodies. Roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.

**D. Ratify Tentative Agreement (District and GNEA)**

Motion by Brown, seconded by Moisan to approve the Tentative Agreement (District and GNEA). Motion carried 6-0.

Moisan questioned whether the district can afford the increase and be able to sustain. Superintendent Abrahamson addressed that the district can afford the increase in FY15, but cannot sustain it without making adjustments.

He also indicated he visited every building for the initial discussions on budget reductions. Staff at each location were quite involved in this process. Brown expressed her concerns about the need for more reductions if wages are increased. Board member Knobloch mentioned that the population in our community that is aging may reduce the number of children as prospective students in our district.

**9. Board Discussion**

**A. Facilities**

Knobloch suggested the use of a matrix, which would cover topics on; availability, affordability, needs to be met, and public support. Brown questioned whether the city might have a preference regarding district facilities, and which projects were currently being worked on.

Board member Moisan suggested looking for a better way of understanding what our community would support. She also wanted to include 11th Ave in FEH's focus, with the possibility of housing grades levels of 6-8 or 7-8 at this location.

In conjunction with Moisan's proposal of 11th Avenue property use, other board members sounded on their PK - 5 or 6 site preferences. The Middle School was the choice for Knobloch, Fisher and Brown. President Smith would also support the Middle School site- if there were a plan for transition- or the RC Property. Moisan and Nance were in favor of the RC Property, and Nance suggested the site be called the 4th Avenue site.

Brown stated that the focus of planning and resources should be directed to the Middle School site for a consolidated elementary building.

**B. Agenda**

Board members will discuss their thoughts on meeting at the educational buildings once a month. They will decide whether this is an option they would like to continue.

**10. Board Talking Points**

President Smith noted the district is doing a great job incorporating the Olweus program in daily school activities. Moisan emphasized that the younger staff might become more involved with the program. She also thought the boards work on budget issues was positive despite the outcomes. Member Knobloch pointed out he too thought the discussions on future facilities were another positive step by board members.

**11. Adjournment**

Motion by Knobloch, seconded by Brown to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

**Board Calendar:**

**Regular Board Meeting (Davis Elementary)**

**6:00 p.m., April 23, 2014**