

The Grinnell-Newburg Board of Education met in Special Session on September 18, 2013, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 927 4th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

Members Present: Jeff Smith, Doug Cameron, Barbara Brown, Jeff Knobloch, Leo Lease, and Claire Moisan, Carol Wilhelm. Also in attendance at the table: Superintendent Todd Abrahamson, Business Manager Lisa Johnson, and Board Secretary Susan Kriegel

Members Absent: none

Administrators Present: Jeff Kirby, Sara Hegg-Dunne, Sarah Seney

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

President Smith called the special meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Board Secretary Susan Kriegel called the roll. Seven members were in attendance.

2. Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion by Brown, seconded by Lease to approve consent agenda

President Smith noted the following amended item to the consent agenda:

2. Approval of Consent Agenda

A. Personnel:

1. Offering: Callie Austin: middle school food service

A. Personnel:

1. Offerings: Lori Walker: Davis School para-educator; Whitney Abrahamson: Davis School para-educator; Erin Thompson: Davis School para-educator; Jennifer Atchison: Davis School para-educator; Vicki Van Renterghem: preschool para-educator; Esther Ware: preschool para-educator; Terri Chambers: preschool para-educator; Adam Geerdes: middle school para-educator; Sarah Lewis: middle school para-educator; Jan Warnick: Bailey Park para-educator; Shauna Grewe: Bailey Park para-educator; Mary Ensign: administrative assistant bus barn; Linda Perrenoud: high school fall play director; Mike Hunter: high school fall play technical director; Judy Mitchell transfer food service from middle school to high school; Terry Morrison: van driver

2. Resignation: Kathy O'Connor: music accompanist

B. Open Enrollments In: Skyler Rombert: 10th grade from Montezuma; Scott Smith: 8th grade from South Tama

C. Contract upgrades: Tyler Youngers: BA to BA+15; Aaron Backlin: BA to BA+15; Susan Ter Louw BA+15 to MA

Motion by Knobloch, seconded by Moisan to approve amended consent agenda. Motion carried 7-0.

3. Communications from the Public

None to report.

4. New Business

A. Task Force Recommendation

Superintendent Abrahamson reported last week's power point presentation explained to the board the progress on the facility discussion from May to now. The Building and Grounds committee will now review all possible locations for a preK – 5th grade building. This was the charge. There needs to be a communication plan that explains the process from the beginning to the end. There is a plan to have a public forum on Wednesday, October 16. There will be different phases of this process, to prepare for a possible bond referendum. The elementary building is the primary goal, followed by a 6th grade to 8th grade middle school building, then the high school. Abrahamson explained the current buildings and grounds committee consist of Jeff Smith, Jeff Knobloch, and Shawn Edelen. The task force committee was empowered to make a recommendation, now it the time to act.

Motion by Cameron, seconded by Lease to accept the task force recommendation and vote on Superintendent Abrahamson's recommendation: Approve Task Force recommendation as outlined in the enclosed document, and as presented to the Grinnell-Newburg Board of Education on September 11, 2013. Charge the Buildings & Grounds committee to begin investigating all possible locations for the elementary school facility (PK-5), and charge the Grinnell-Newburg administrative team to create a communications plan – tell the Grinnell-Newburg Story from the beginning to the end. In addition, approve a public forum – Wednesday, October 16, 2013.

Discussion question, the board needs to be stewards of the public, can the board vote after the public forum. Discussion indicated this delay won't solve the problem, nothing gained if wait until after the public forum. The board is here to discuss the grade configuration or the properties.

Further discussion to table the motion, not convinced the preK-5th grade building is the best way to go. Respected the task force meetings, but not listening to the public.

President Smith stated accept the recommendation as presented by Superintendent Abrahamson and approve the public forum. Roll call vote; Smith - yes, Cameron - yes, Brown - yes, Knobloch - yes, Lease - yes, Moisan - yes, Wilhelm – no. Motion carried 6-1. Wilhelm explained her no vote, was not because she was against the recommendation but because she was not for it yet.

Currently the district does not have a list of sites, the district does not own RC Industries, due to the appeal process, does not own the 11th ave. property, but does own the middle school property. The facilities task force changed the vote three times for the location of the elementary building.

President Smith indicated the architects needs to design a footprint for a preK - 5th grade building.

The audience questioned whether or not geothermal could be placed at each current building, figures are very close on new building versus updating the current buildings. It was stated that a vertical well at Bailey Park for geothermal, would result in the cost doubling for the project. Comments from the audience indicate education and academic goals do not support the three current elementary buildings.

President Smith stated we need to look at all the options, renovations, and what could be plausible.

Comments from the audience indicated task force members felt more time was needed to make a decision. There were eight pages of questions, which did not get answered. Need to be diligent. Comments from the audience to remind the board to advertize for the upcoming public forum.

The public forum will be Wednesday, October 16. The eight pages of questions need to be part of the discussion.

Comments from the audience stated the student population is decreasing, partly due to the high rent in Grinnell versus surrounding towns.

It was stated the insurance rates for the district will go up, with the new health care reform.

KGRN, the newspapers, and the website were appreciated for doing a good job of advertizing the facility information. It was stated Superintendent Abrahamson has presented a program on the facility process to both the Rotary group and the Lions group. It was stated if the district spends more money then taking in, will have to cut staff.

Audience suggestion to have a moderator with the school board on one side and the task force committee on the other side.

President Smith thanked everyone who spoke at the board meeting. A thank you extended to Cameron and Lease as they are shortly leaving the board.

5. Adjournment

Motion by Lease, seconded by Cameron to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Board Calendar:

Annual & Organizational Meeting

6:00 p.m., September 25, 2013