

Grand Isle Supervisory Union

School Board Meeting

Thursday, January 24, 2019

Minutes

Board Present: Joyce Tuck, Jane Zera, Don Bartlett, Michael Inners, Nathan Robinson, Tim Maxham, Bridget Brisson, Melanie Henderson, Bentley Vaughan

Administration Present: Michael Clark, Rob Gess, Michele Weaver

Public Present: none

1. Call to Order - Melanie Henderson called to order at 6:36 pm
2. Adjust the Agenda - Michael Clark would like to add executive session to discuss Central Office contracts
3. Citizens and/or Staff to be Heard - none
4. Consent Agenda
 - Tim Maxham moves to approve minutes from 11/26/2018, Nathan Robinson second. All in favor, motion passes 9-0.

Reports

5. Superintendent's Report -

- Michael Clark highlighted written report, most items are agenda items and will be discussed further during those items.

Financial Report -

- Rob Gess started with snapshot of what is happening in central office - started and working on FY18 audit. Working on FY 18 and 19 grant reporting. Looking at cash management processing in place for food service within the individual schools. Looking at AP processes and looking to streamline processes. Looking at streamline payroll- making inquiries with payroll vendors, need to have an integrated solution to keep up Central Office productivity. RFPs for food service as required by state. Looking at transportation and bid on transportation contract. Looking at propane and fuel RFPs as well. Believe town clerks have all information they need for town meeting. New chart of accounts started in December and needs to be to state to import to new financial system.
- In packet was budget to actuals, we are halfway through the year.
 - Starting w/ special ed, we will go over due to transportation and excess cost tuition. Not related to cost of salaries and benefits, items we have control over are fine.
 - GISU operations- salaries, we are projected to be over-budget, the parent liaison will be moved to grant position to offset. 95% of legal fees related to special education. Regarding technology, board approved a new IT tech that came on at a higher salary rate than originally approved. This offset by the budget for technology consultants, bringing in less due to having the new IT tech. Desktop central allows for remote diagnostics and keeping track of fixed assets.
 - Special ed coordination will be moved to correct line.
- From operational perspective, we will be under budget, but special ed will be over-budget.

- Tim Maxham moves to approve that financial report received and reviewed, second by Nathan Robinson. All in favor, motion passes 9-0.

Board Business.

6. Presentation from Director of Student Support Services - Michele Weaver

- Been here five months and focus on processes. Persistent and consistent approach.
- Purpose of Act 173 of 2018-
 - change special education in VT. Will be good for us in the SU. Availability and equity of services.
 - Studies done at UVM to look at funding of special education in VT.
 - Not only change funding system, but also look at change in delivery model, AOE contracted with DMG to research.
 - With new law, funding will be for students with IEP and 504 plan and students who cannot learn due to social, emotional, or behavioral issues, english learners, and students to who read below grade level. This opens up possibilities to more students.
 - Michele Weaver shared Vermont and National averages on IEPs
 - Also shared GISU local statistics, over national but under VT averages.
 - Currently, service plans are based on estimates done a year in advance for reimbursement.
 - Factors contributing to cost of providing special education
 - Trauma-based needs, increased number of families moving to VT with disabilities, increased demand for mental health and social service agencies and none offered within the county and students need to attend programs outside the SU.
 - Currently in United States, VT is 1 of 5 states that has a reimbursement model.
 - UVM study found issues with current reimbursement model
- Census funding model allows for increased flexibility in use of funds, allows for funding to be used for more students, simple and predictable, and aligns with policies.
 - This is our last year to be reimbursed, there will be a hold-harmless, and complete a three-year cost averaging, and do professional development resources.
 - Reviewed the changes in the funding model
 - State will set a per student (ADM) amount
 - SU/SDs will receive a grant equal to the per student amount times the 3-year average of ADM count
 - Weighting study being used to determine census funding model.
- Next steps: effectiveness, efficiencies, enrollment

7. Update of tracking audit findings -

- Rob Gess shared document of audit responses given to the AOE and has monthly contact with AOE and they have expressed satisfaction with progress

8. Compensation for required lawsuit attendance

- Michael Clark reviewed conversation from last meeting. Should Don Van Nostrand and Andy Julow be compensated for their time for coming up for the lawsuit hearing. Michael Clark shared quote from Mason Maltais, "if we expect people to come up and defend GISU, we should expect to compensate them especially when findings were on our side."
- Melanie Henderson asked number of hours and suggested compensation rate? Discussion took place regarding how often they have been at the meetings. Joyce Tuck asked if they have not asked for compensation, why are they offering? Michael Clark shared it seemed like the right

thing to do. Bentley Vaughan said members are not compensated for it. Nathan Robinson ask if they could file counter-suit and have to pay legal fees? Michael Inners said he is not a fan of approach, it is a part of the job. By paying for the legal fees to defend all named in lawsuit, we did our part. Melanie Henderson tends to agree with Michael Inners. Melanie Henderson was at court house one day, but not asking for compensation. Nathan Robinson indicated that if they are not asking, not inclined to give it.

- No motion made.

9. GISU space update

- Michael Clark shared the proposal from CIUUSD Board to use the modular office space from Exterrus (owns state contract for furniture and modular office). Floor plan is similar to floor plan of architectural firm, but at a lower price tag. CIUUSD has authorized \$70,000 to renovate space from transition grant funds that must be spent by the end of the year. CIUUSD has talked about not charging rent, but charging for amenities, like heat and electricity. Can help to make GISU more efficient by bring everyone in one office.
- Nathan Robinson motions to move GISU to office space to the space in Grand Isle School offered by the CIUUSD. Bentley Vaughan seconds. All in favor, 8-0. Bridget Brisson abstains/conflict.

10. Equalized Pupils

- Michael Clark gave out memo from AOE that describes in detail what is going on with equalized pupil count.
- State unable to give number because of implementation of statewide longitudinal data system.
- Central Office is going through extreme measure of identifying individual students on list sent from state and this is consuming time and resources.

11. Six Month Status Update

- Michael Clark gave out report. Most has been gone through piece by piece.
- Most of the interim work is on its way to completed, if not completed. Some things Michael Clark wishes were farther along and other things has popped up, like residency verification.
- We have a new office with people who are working really hard, Rob gave good overview of what his department is working on, Michele gave good overview of big projects and does not include day to day functions.

12 Integrated Field Review

- Michael Clark shared that integrated field review will occur in our system. Feb 13, a team of 12 will tour our school and offer feedback to improve our schools. And we will contribute to a team of 12 that will go to other schools as well.

13. E-finance Plus Update and Support

- Rob Gess handed out document with the project schedule. There is concern about the project plan from powerschool. This is a resource-intensive project.
 - Concern of if there is enough resources to complete the project at the milestones. Training and chart of accounts is above and beyond what the normal expectations are.
 - Has identified someone who may be able to come in and help. Costs are affordable and within budget.
- Michael Clark would like hire a person in a consulting role to help manage project at a reduced rate. Earmark \$10,000 of tech funds to allocate to this project and be able to report back to board the progress. Not a permanent person, but without this resource, it seems like this project will not

be completed on time. If no objection, will move forward with plan. This will help add resources to projects that are necessary within the GISU offices.

- Melanie Henderson voices that she thinks it would be beneficial.

14. RFPs

Food

Transportation

- Rob Gess touched on this earlier. We must use the RFP process on the AOE website for food services.
- Concern about the transportation RFP. not sure about competition within the area. Have reached out to counterparts in the area for suggestions

15. Grant Double payment

- Michael Clark shared that 3-4 weeks ago, AOE discovered that there was a double payment of grant funds.
- Showing deficits because funds have not been released and we have been able to cover expenses.

16. Residency Update

- Michael Clark shared that Megan DeVinny sent out all the envelopes and is getting responses and in the process of cleaning up and have knocked some names off the list.

17 Instructional Coach Approval

- Michael Clark shared that we have found an instructional coach after advertising since last year. This is a grant-funded position. We have found a person willing to be a 0.6 FTE with previous experience. She is working to coach teachers get better at instructional practices.
- Nominate Sharon Wight for this position.
- Michael Inners motions to approve, Don Bartlett seconds. All in favor, motion passes 9-0.

18. Approval of the Financial Management Questionnaire

- Rob Gess passed out the document from the AOE that shows minimal internal controls with answers to questions. Required to provide to board, request approval that it has been reviewed and sign tonight.
- Michael Inners motions to have Melanie Henderson to sign, Jane Zera seconds. All in favor, motion passes, 9-0.

19. Executive Session

- Nathan Robinson motions to enter executive session to discuss personnel contracts. Jane Zera seconds. All in favor, board enters executive session at 9:12 pm.
- Board exits executive session at 9:27 pm.
- Melanie Henderson motions to approve hire of Michele Weaver as Director of Student Support Services and issue two year agreement as presented. Bentley Vaughan seconds. All in favor, motion passes 9-0.
- Melanie Henderson motions to authorize Superintendent to work with Mason Maltais, GISU Board Chair, to issue contracts to GISU staff as discussed in executive session, Jane Zera seconds. All in favor, motion passes 9-0.

Closure

20. Adjourn - Bentley Vaughan motions to adjourn, Jane Zera seconds. All in favor 9-0, meeting adjourns at 9:29 pm.