

Grand Isle Supervisory Union
South Hero School District
School Board Regular Meeting
Thursday, Dec. 6, 2018, at 6 p.m.
Location: Folsom Education & Community Center

MINUTES

Call to Order

1. Call to order at 6:10 p.m.

Introductions. In attendance:

-Board members: Melanie Henderson, Tim Maxham, Bentley Vaughan, Bob Chutter, David Cain

-Staff: Susan McKelvie, Michael Clark, Rob Gess, Julie Pidgeon

-Audience: Jim Jones (LCATV)

2. Adjustment of Agenda

-Added discussion of audit presentation to the agenda with approval of the audit engagement letter

-Added an update on a lawsuit against the GISU to superintendent's report

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Consent Agenda (Action)

A. Approve minutes from Nov. 15, 2018. The minutes of the Nov. 15, 2018, meeting were approved on a voice vote. T. Maxham made a motion to approve the minutes and B. Chutter seconded the motion.

5. Reports (Discussion)

a. Financial (R. Gess) (Action): R. Gess said the GISU approved its budget for FY20 on Nov. 26. The allocations for the district budget in the South Hero budget are final. The tax commissioner's letter is positive; the property tax yield is up, which means the commissioner anticipates no negative impact on the tax rate.

Gess attended a conference about a transition to a new chart of accounts that the state is implementing, which means the numbers associated with line items in the budget will be changing. Effective July 1, the district will be using the new chart of accounts. He noted it will not be an easy transition from the current numbering system to the new chart of accounts because the new system is more specific. M. Henderson asked the benefit of this change. R. Gess said the new chart of accounts will be aligned with the federal Department of Education system, which will make reporting data to the state easier and hopefully result in some reporting moving from supervisory unions to the state.

b. Superintendent's (M. Clark): Superintendent Clark thanked the GISU for offering him a 3-year contract, which he has accepted. In addition, the superintendent reported the following:

-On the lawsuit against the GISU, the superintendent reported on a ruling Dec. 5, 2018. The part of the lawsuit remaining related to the Open Meeting Law and whether the GISU followed the Open Meeting Law. On Dec. 5, the judge found in favor of GISU and supported the motion to dismiss the suit. The court ruled on a summary judgment in favor of the defendant (GISU) and the superintendent noted the lawsuit is now behind the district. T. Maxham clarified that the expense was covered under insurance after the deductible.

-The state Board of Education has now officially approved South Hero's alternate governance structure.

Board Business

6. Approve audit engagement letter (R. Gess) (Action)

R. Gess said shared a letter to engage the services of Sullivan and Powers for the FY18 audit. He recommends the board continue to contract with Sullivan and Powers. M. Henderson read the fees for audit services, which is projected to total \$14,300. B. Chutter moved and T. Maxham seconded a motion to approve Melanie Henderson to sign the contract with Sullivan and Powers for the FY18 audit at the stated cost.

Regarding the audit presentation. M. Clark said they have Sullivan and Powers booked to present the audit at the December 20 meeting. He noted that a quorum of the board saw the presentation at the GISU Board meeting. He said the presentation of the South Hero audit would be similar to the GISU presentation. T. Maxham said he would like to see a checklist of the deficiencies noted in the audit and how GISU management plans to address those issues. M. Clark said the FY17 audit was 2 superintendents and 1 business manager ago, and many of the business operations have changed since then. He noted that new processes and systems are being built to make the system highly functioning. He expressed confidence in the staff at GISU.

M. Henderson said she would like GISU to report to the board about how it is addressing the audit findings for South Hero and what the timeframe is to address them. M. Clark said it is the GISU's responsibility to put together a plan, and the board's responsibility to hold GISU accountable. T. Maxham requested this information in writing. B. Chutter asked when the 2018 audit is due. M. Clark said the 2018 audit has started, and GISU plans to present the FY18 audit to boards in March. B. Chutter suggested an update on actions the district is taking in March when the FY18 audit is presented. M. Henderson said she prefers to hear from Sullivan and Powers in March regarding the FY18 audit as well as how the issues from FY17 have been addressed. R. Gess is submitting an action plan to the state Dec. 14. He suggested the board revisit audit findings and receive an update from GISU on a quarterly basis on its work related to the audit findings.

T. Maxham asked about the audit of the food services program. R. Gess noted there had been issues around reporting free and reduced lunch data and verifying the data within a federal timeframe. The GISU is now managing the child nutritional programs reporting and correcting its processes.

7. Second draft of budget (R. Gess) (Discussion, possible Action). R. Gess distributed a second draft of the budget to the board. He said the supervisory union assessment figures are final. These appear in:

-Line 309: Health assessment, which is increased due to actual student count. D. Cain questioned the allocation since the nurse is scheduled to visit each school for 1 day. S. McKelvie asked if R. Gess could check into how the nurse allocates her time and noted she is only in Folsom for one-half day a week. He said he would check her time and reallocate the line item if warranted.

-Line 463: This is a \$46,000 increase. R. Gess noted there was a 4.89% increase to the GISU operational budget because the GISU ran a deficit in FY17 based on the audit. This amount is addressing the deficit.

-Line 521: Special education. This was a significant increase. It is based on service plans. M. Clark said transportation costs are skyrocketing, and the GISU Board will be discussing the increasing costs at a future meeting.

-Line 573: R. Gess said the district will need to rebid the transportation contract. He put a 7 percent increase as a placeholder based on the current cost. D. Cain asked if it is the same level of service.

-Line 574: D. Cain asked to have the comment struck

-Superintendent M. Clark showed a document that listed the South Hero students who are being tuitioned to other schools for high school. The district has confirmed 59 students and has 9 students it expected but has not received a bill yet. He expects 50 confirmed students in grades 9-11 for FY20 plus 14 eighth-graders. He projects 64 tuition students. The budget has 73 students budgeted. M. Henderson asked when the district would be confident of the number, and M. Clark replied he would not be confident until the board had approved a residency verification process. M. Clark said the number is between 66 and 71 tuition students for FY20 based on recent data. B. Chutter suggested the board go with 70 projected tuition students. R. Gess reduced the estimated number, which reduced the budget 1%.

The board then reviewed the budget line-by-line:

-D. Cain asked about instructional aide salaries on Line 10. S. McKelvie said they were special education aides and noted that those positions are paid through the local budget. M. Clark noted there is a 55% return in reimbursement. S. McKelvie said the school has not increased instructional aides for regular education students.

-B. Vaughan asked if the instructional salary line item assumed no changes in staff. M. Clark confirmed it was budgeted for the same number of staff.

-R. Gess said the health care cost line items are based on current choices of staff for health care.

-D. Cain asked why FICA went up 35%. He asked R. Gess to check the calculations.

-T. Maxham asked about field trips. S. McKelvie said the line item was increased to help cover the cost of educational field trips, which is why the amount expresses a larger increase.

-Technology: S. McKelvie said she is working with Dave Brisson, GISU technology director, to have a regular rotation of technology every 3 years. Some of the equipment is 5 years old. The budgeted amount is all student technology. R. Gess said most computers at Folsom are older than 2015.

-Line 135: T. Maxham asked about the projected expenses and whether spending was aligned with budget for pre-K.

-Line 131: Pre-K tuition is anticipated at \$44,300 for this fiscal year, with \$40,000 budgeted. The board discussed increasing that amount to \$45,000

-Line 140: special aide salary and Line 10 instructional aide salary. D. Cain asked about the difference. S. McKelvie said she would investigate.

-Page 6, Coaches and AD salaries: D. Cain noted the board had discussed this in the past.

-Line 232 Student activities late bus: B. Vaughan asked about the increase. The board discussed.

-Line 295-296: D. Cain asked for clarification. R. Gess said he would check with Megan Deviny. D. Cain said he thinks the equation isn't working for Line 296.

-B. Chutter asked about special education reimbursement and whether it is possible to provide information about which line item increases have off-setting special education reimbursements.

-Line 309: D. Cain said he would like the health staff cost allocated based on time.

-T. Maxham asked about after-school club stipends and why it was not expended. S. McKelvie noted that people were paid while she was on leave last year, and she needs to find out where the money was taken out. She will work with R. Gess on that.

-Library: S. McKelvie reminded the board that Mrs. Thoma, the school librarian, presented a three-year plan last year, and that S. McKelvie could review that plan with the board. T. Maxham noted that there are big changes in town with the new library that will involve expenses, and the school needs to be mindful of everything that is increasing. He asked the board to take that into consideration when putting together a budget for the school library. B. Vaughan asked for an update on the library proposal. B. Vaughan questioned the amount for the library. S. McKelvie asked the board to keep in mind that the current school library was designed for adults and children. She noted the furniture is mostly sized for adults, not children, and that when the adult portion of the library moves, the school library will need secured shelving. She also said the school will still be a community center when the town library moves, and she envisions the space could be used for community meetings. She asked the board to shift its thinking from a library to a flexible library and community space. S. McKelvie said she would like to see the school as partnering with the community library. M. Henderson asked S. McKelvie to confirm the \$7,500 that the board already set aside for this transition was not being duplicated in the budget. S. McKelvie said Mrs. Thoma will seek grants for books, but the basic furniture (tables, chairs and shelving) has a cost. The school is not looking at any renovations. B. Vaughan said he would be interested in a smaller amount for books, and S. McKelvie responded that library books are expensive. S. McKelvie said she would bring the proposal to share with the board at the next meeting.

-Page 13, B. Chutter asked about Line 473 and 475. S. McKelvie noted that the job title was changed to more clearly define the job. D. Cain asked if it still belongs in principal services. S. McKelvie said she wasn't sure and noted it's not really a support services position. D. Cain asked if it should be moved under instructional. S. McKelvie asked for time to discuss it with the GISU financial staff. S. McKelvie said she would share a job description.

-D. Cain asked if R. Gess has a revenue budget. He said he does not yet; he is working on the operational budget. R. Gess noted the town revenue for community use would be changing, and T. Maxham said he believed that amount would not be changing.

-B. Vaughan asked about phone costs.

-M. Henderson asked about Line 533, operational salaries. She asked why the line was going up from \$2,000 to \$9,000. R. Gess said he would do research.

-D. Cain asked for an estimate on students who might attend Folsom as tuition-paying middle school students. J. Pidgeon said she believed those decisions are being made. M. Clark suggested the school ask its guidance counselor to seek that information.

8. Residency Verification process (M. Clark) (Action). M. Clark reviewed his suggested process. It involves families completing an enrollment form, residency verification form and tuition voucher form, with the director of student support services monitoring enrollment for tuition-paying purposes. M. Clark said if the board approves this verification process, the GISU will send out these forms to all families of high school students. M. Clark said families would fill two forms out once if their student does not change schools. They would have to fill out the tuition voucher form more often to verify residency and inform the superintendent to expect a tuition bill from a high school. The district would require residency verification. B. Chutter suggested the superintendent send the tuition voucher form in January and June. The board concurred. Megan Deviny will be responsible for this process.

9. Tuition policy, procedure, transportation (M. Clark) (Discussion). M. Clark noted that the policy currently refers specifically to Alburgh and needs to be updated. But S. McKelvie and M. Clark reviewed its content and said the policy is solid. He noted the policies for the new CIUUSD are being written, and the district anticipates using those updated policies to inform revising GISU policies once they are done. M. Clark presented a procedure for students who might want to pay tuition to attend Folsom and noted the dates could be adjusted. M. Clark said they do not think there will be an issue with capacity in the near future. Regarding transportation, the bus company estimates it would be an additional \$60 a day for pickup at Grand Isle School. One tuition-paying student would cover it. S. McKelvie noted the route is one hour long already. It will add 5-10 minutes. M. Clark summarized it is a \$10,000 cost to generate \$15,000. Every student past the first student generates \$15,000.

D. Cain made a motion to provide transportation from a central pickup location and drop off location in Grand Isle for an estimated cost of \$10,000 for the next school year. M. Henderson seconded. Approved on a voice vote.

10. Update on long-term substitute coverage for grades 3 and 4 (S. McKelvie) (Discussion). S. McKelvie said two teachers are expecting babies in the spring. One will be leaving in mid-April and one in mid-May. The school has posted those positions for long-term substitute teachers for the year. S. McKelvie said she would like to have whoever is hired come in to transition with the teachers and classes. D. Cain asked if there has been communication to the families. It was noted the kids know, but families have not received official notification yet.

11. Next step in Futures protocol for financials (R. Gess) (Discussion). The board tabled this until its January meeting

12. Approve bills (D. Cain) (Action). B. Vaughan made a motion to approve the bills in Batch 3179 totaling \$309,637.94. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved on a voice vote.

13. Food service update (S. McKelvie) (Discussion). S. McKelvie offered data on how many students take breakfast and lunch in response to the board's discussion of the CIUUSD putting its food services out to bid. S. McKelvie said she does not have data on whether the school is breaking even financially on meals but asked R. Gess if he could provide that information. The board noted it is limited in what it could charge based on the federal limitation on raising the price no more than 10 cents per year.

14. Other

Closure

15. Setting the next agenda

Dec. 20, 2018:

-Finishing the curriculum futures protocol

-Review amended budget

-Review the library three-year plan

January 3, 2019, meeting:

-Review updated draft of the budget and approve a budget. Review GISU action plan in response to the FY17 audit and update on the FY18 audit. Financial futures protocol phase 2

16. Adjourn

The board adjourned at 8:53 PM on a voice vote. D. Cain made a motion to adjourn. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Passed on a voice vote.
