

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
HELD SEPTEMBER 26, 2011**

A duly called Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Great Falls Public Schools was held at the Early Learning Family Center Skyline School at 3300 3<sup>rd</sup> St NE in the Gym on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2011.

**Trustees Present:** Jeff Gray, Chairman  
Robert Moretti  
Johnny Walker  
Ann Janikula  
Laura Vukasin  
Mary Sheehy Moe  
Jan Cahill

**Others Present:** Cheryl Crawley, Superintendent; Brian Patrick, Director of Business Operations; Ruth Uecker, Assistant Superintendent K-6; Tom Moore, Assistant Superintendent 7-12; Chris Olszewski, Director of Curriculum, Sharon Lindstrom, Director of Special Education, Jeff Patterson, Director of Technology, Tammy Lacey, Director of Human Resources and Sally Mathers, Supervisor Federal Programs. Also in attendance was Dawn Beal, representative from MAFB, and Mike Picking, President of GFEA.

At 7:00 pm Chairman, Jeff Gray called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees, Great Falls Public Schools and asked everyone to join him in the pledge of allegiance.

**ROLL CALL** – Clerk Brian Patrick took roll call and all the Trustees were present.

**ADOPT AGENDA**

Motion – Laura Vukasin, Seconded – Ann Janikula, passed unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.

**APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion – Mary Sheehy Moe, Seconded – Laura Vukasin, passed unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

A. **Minutes of September 12, 2011, Regular Meeting** – The Board approved the minutes of the Regular Meeting of September 12, 2011 as presented.

B. **Personnel Actions** – The Board approved the Personnel Actions as presented.

C. **Incoming Student Attendance Agreements** – The Board approved the Incoming Student Attendance Agreements for 3 students who live outside of the Great Falls School District to attend school in Great Falls for the 2011-2012 school year and tuition not be waived – to be paid for by the parent, State, or Centerville District.

D. **Outgoing Student Attendance Agreements** – The Board approved the Student Attendance Agreements for five students living in Great Falls to attend school in Vaughn, Montana for the 2011-2012 school year with tuition being waived.

**COMMUNICATION**

A. **Update on Great Falls Public Schools Foundation**

Bethann McGregor, Secretary to the Foundation reported that the Foundation has raised over \$385,000 in pledges and donations in the past six months. Three major donors are D.A. Davidson, Benefis Healthcare System, and Pacific Recycling. Also 100% of the Foundation Board members have made financial commitments. She stated that the Foundation is raising money to enhance education in the Great Falls Public Schools and not replacing public funds. Some of the funds raised have created a children's library in the Early Learning Family Center which will be used by all groups housed at Skyline. Donations to this library came from the Janice Leslie Memorial Fund, Stu and Janie Nicholson and local Lions clubs. She also encouraged the Board to approve the policy dealing with the naming of a building and upon its approval I encourage the Superintendent to appoint a committee to look at naming the library we have just gifted to the District. The major donors would like the library named in memory of a teacher that spent over 30 years in education. The Foundation also paid the salary for a grant writer who helped develop an application that resulted in \$675,000 Department of Defense grant which benefits all students at Loy and North Middle School. Foundation funded travel for Presidential Scholar Teacher, Brian Sullivan; and funded GFPS Band Trips for students in need. The future funding of the Foundation is to establish Discovery Grants which will give innovative teachers the tools they need to develop and enhance curricula through project-based grants. It will help with the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Fair, school supplies for students in need, gifted and talented education programs; grant writer salaries; Fine Arts and Career and Technical Education. Chairman Gray thanks the Foundation for all that they have done and will be doing on behalf of the Board, Great Falls Public Schools and the Community.

## **REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**

Luke Diekhans, Environmental Education Teachers, and Kathy McLean, Sunnyside Elementary Principal were nominated and selected to serve on a statewide leadership team for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. This group will be helping the Montana Office of Public Instruction to further develop STEM education in Montana.

Great Falls High School seniors, Alekses Clifton and Jacob Strauss have earned and been named National Merit Semi Finalists.

Cheryl pointed out that when she arrived at GFPS that Skyline was just winding down from being an Alternative High School. It feels so good having it open again and serving the youngest members of our community that really need us the most in order to really succeed in their educational endeavors.

Rachel DeMarce a CMR graduate has been working for Denise Juneau at OPI and has been working in D.C. She also led the Browning Public Schools in "Let's Get into Movement and Action". We are all proud of her leadership.

### **Report from Brian Sullivan's Trip to Washington, D.C.**

Tom Moore introduced instructor Brian Sullivan from Great Falls High School who was selected by student Will Strauss for the Teacher Recognition Award. Brian Sullivan was then able to travel with Will to Washington D.C. The Presidential Scholars Program selects one male and one female student from each state annually. Students at-large and in the arts are selected based on outstanding scholarship, service, leadership and creativity through a rigorous selections and review process administered by the White House Commission Presidential Scholars and the U.S. Department of Education. Receiving the United States Presidential Scholars' medallion from the US Presidential Scholars Program is one of the highest awards a graduating high school student can receive. Each scholar also recognizes a teacher to receive the Teacher Recognition Award. Brian also indicated that the GFPS Foundation assisted with his travel. He commented that this was once in a lifetime experience for both recipients, with receptions at the Smithsonian and performances by the Scholars in the Arts at the Kennedy Center.

## **D. Report of the Malmstrom Representative**

Dawn Beal reported that there was a training held out at the base with Sharon Lindstrom from Special Education. Training provided information to parents as to what GFPS can provide and do for them and their students. There was really good feedback from this training and hope to have more in the future. She also commented that the new base commander received such good feedback on the tour of the base that Loy Elementary took that he is has extended his invitation to all the schools.

## **QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, AND INFORMATION FROM THE AUDIENCE**

Judy Tankink of Great Falls spoke to the Board in reference to the district's Bullying program; Rudolf Tankink of Great Falls spoke to the Board in reference to Constitution Day; and Cyndi Baker of Great Falls spoke to the Board in reference to the K-9 naming Contest; Superintendent's contract and the new anti-bullying policy. She also addressed the Board on the open meeting laws and the GFPS Foundation and handed out a letter from the Meloy Law Firm stating their opinion on this matter. Trustee Sheehy Moe replied that she wanted to clarify for the record that while Mr. Meloy does specialize in freedom of information litigation, he is not the only or necessarily leading attorney on this issue in Montana.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Accept Donation of Library at the Early Learning Family Center at Skyline School** – Motion- Jan Cahill, Seconded – Laura Vukasin, passed unanimously to accept the donation of books from Stuart and Janie Nicholson of Great Falls to the library at the Early Learning Family Center at Skyline School with thanks. The Nicholson's book donation included every Caldecott Medal Winning book from 1938-present.

**B. Adopt Amendment to Board Policy 9200 School Facilities – Naming of Buildings and Grounds** – Motion – Bob Moretti, Seconded – Johnny Walker, passed unanimously to adopt the amendment of Board Policy 9200 School Facilities – Naming of Buildings and Grounds. The amended policy was presented for first reading at the last meeting of the Board on September 12, 2011. At that meeting the trustees recommended adding community representation to the list of committee members.

**C. Appoint Great Falls High School Master Plan Task Force** – Motion – Mary Sheehy Moe, Seconded Laura Vukasin, passed with Jeff Gray, Laura Vukasin, Jan Cahill, Johnny Walker, Mary Sheehy Moe and Ann Janikula voting in favor of the members being appointed to the Task Force for GFHS Master Plan and Bob Moretti abstaining. Cheryl Crawley presented the Trustees with the list of individuals who will be on the Task Force committee. The initial meeting of this committee is scheduled for October 11 and 12, 2011.

**D. Accept Financial Report and Approve Check Registers** – Motion – Mary Sheehy Moe, Seconded – Laura Vukasin, passed unanimously to approve the Financial Report as presented and Accounts Payable checks #44890-45380 in the amount of \$1,152,141.47 and Payroll checks #35745-35932 in the amount of \$164,639.91.

**ACTION: OTHER** None

## **REPORTS, DISCUSSION, AND POLICIES**

### **A. First Reading of Amendment to Board Policy 3125 – Education of Homeless Children**

Sally Mathers, Director of Federal Programs presented an amendment to Board Policy 3125 in the last paragraph to read District Liaison for Homeless Children. This policy change is needed in preparation for submission of an application for grant funding under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. She also introduced Lee Houle who is the District's Homeless Coordinator. Mary Sheehy Moe clarified that this is simply a housekeeping matter in terms of updating a policy that has existed for some time. Cheryl Crawley also stated that is to make sure that the Board had reviewed the policy and was aware of the laws regarding Homeless Students so that Sally Mathers could apply for the grant.

## **B. Report from GFHS Student Donovan Dennis' Proposed Voter Registration Initiative for High School Seniors**

Tom Moore introduced Donovan Dennis who spent a semester as a page in the US Senate in Washington D.C.. Donovan stated that he is working with Montana Secretary of State Linda McCulloch to start a statewide voter registration campaign for eligible high school students. The goal is to make it a competitive event between Class AA schools, and later all schools in Montana, to see which one can get the largest percentage of eligible students registered to vote. He wants to prove once and for all that young people are a part of the democratic process. He commented that he is working with Ed McNamee, social studies teacher at CMR to get all of the AA districts in the state on board this fall. He also indicated there will be no cost to the district for this project.

## **C. Discussion, committee Reports, and Comments**

1. **Montana Conference of Education Leadership Representation** – Chairman Gray announced that the Montana Conference of Education Leadership Representation will be held in Great Falls this year on October 19-21, 2011 at CMR and the Board is invited to attend these meetings also.

2. **Montana Schools Unemployment Insurance Program's Annual Membership Meeting** – Chairman Gray commented that Mary Sheehy Moe has volunteered to attend this meeting on October 20, 2011.

Bob Moretti stated that he toured North Middle School, attended the ground breaking of the High School Houses and attended the honor luncheon for Sally Mathers and Sharon Lindstrom.

Jan Cahill commented that he attended the Western Region Association Meeting in Jackson Wyoming. There were 9 other states that attended and grew to appreciate Montana for the funding that we do get, in that other states are getting major cuts and no funding. He also encouraged all Board Members to attend MCEL.

Cheryl Crawley, commented that employee Bruce Barta is in serious condition from an accident and wish him and his family the best.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Chairman Gray announced that the October 10 and 24 Regular Meetings will be held at the District Offices at 7 pm.

## **ACTION TO ADJOURN**

Motion – Laura Vukasin, Seconded – Mary Sheehy Moe, passed unanimously to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees at 8:17 pm.

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Jeff Gray, Chairman

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Brian Patrick, Clerk