

Hartland Consolidated Schools  
Regular meeting - Board of Education  
May 8, 2006

Members present: T. Moody, E. McPherson-Brown, C. Aberasturi, K. Kaszyca, E. Jankowski, M. Horning, N. Kessel

Members absent: None

Admin. Present: J. Sifferman, S. Bacon, S. VanEpps, L. Mayes, G. Waldrup, M. Otis, C. Hughes, K. Evenson, L. Smither, S. Livingway, K. Simpson, T. Sahouri, B. Cain, P. Nottle, K. Cotton, B. Meadows, M. Cheney, S. Pearson

Guests: D. Bonato, J. Denzer, S. Way, J. Hull, S. Hancock, P. Hancock, J. Stratford, L. DePoy, M. Lawrence, G. Moncatch, L. Bol, M. Bourdo, L. McFarland, S. Campbell, C. Graves, A. McFarland, J. Johnson, J. Nazem, S. Nazem, B. Jousma, B. Jousma, B. Young, J. Franklin, K. Dyer, T. Kendall, A. Sarin, R. Haig, J. Schuster, C. Kryskowski, M. George, A. Shooshanian, L. Salame, M. Kaye, J. Camilleri, S. Dobes, L. Cressey, A. Heck, J. Parkkila, M. Cannart, M. Parks, M. Hancock, S. Marshall, C. Burton, R. Naughton, W. Seiter, K. Condra, K. Lampe, L. Burrill, C. Sinelli, G. Sinelli, P. Richards, J. Snider, B. Shook, K. Reed, D. Bishop, N. Spranger, B. Wolf, L. Cooke, D. Clark, A. Hovey, A. Hovey, J. Yambor, L. Gilroy, L. Bates, G. Moncatch, E. Oldford, M. Bowser, K. Armstrong, K. Grohman, M. Rumril, L. Champlin, A. Kujawa, T. Smith, J. Lindahl, C. Davis, L. Dobis, S. Staub, C. White, T. Klein, T. Brower, E. Ensley, K. Kuchevski, E. Seguin, J. Bosley, C. Drafta, N. Angerilli, A. Szcondronski, J. Stitle, D. Miller, A. Cherello, I Prieto, C. Rockey, A. Pruitt, C. Miles, N. Watson, K. Ball, S. Szekeres, D. Dunville, J. Eaton, J. Schwartz, R. Davis, S. Russano, F. Felan, R. Matschikowski, S. Matschikowski, L. DeRosier, L. Buffmyer, B. Staub, K. Brunton, K. Harper, Z. Mobley, E. Burton, G. Smithkort, K. Strafford, B. Strafford, R. Wright, C. Denson, L. Cook, B. Lenox, A. Angerilli, S. Simmer, S. Moncatch, L. Reck, T. Cremons, C. Gadwa, J. Bair, M. Bain, M. Hubert, C. Green, C. Sullivan, A. Sochacki, J. Kimmel, J. Partica, M. Hughes, B. Martin, J. Delo, J. Safford, K. Chapman, K. Jagusch, K. Fielding, J. Burgess, N. Rutkowski, R. Jellison, P. Grantman, J. Klein, A. Trojan, Dep. Callahan, J. Christian, J. Bittner, C. Kube, L. Roy, P. Bonk, C. Evans, T. Hayes, D. Lubeski, K. Spisz, S. Cooper

President Jankowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Hartland Educational Support Service Center. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Motion by Moody, supported by McPherson-Brown that the agenda for the May 8, 2006 regular meeting be approved as revised, that policy be set aside allowing Item II.A. to be treated as an Action Item, and that public participation be allowed on all items. Motion carried 7-0. 5/8/06 AGENDA APPROVED

Motion by McPherson-Brown, supported by Moody that the minutes of the April 24, 2006 special meeting be approved. Motion carried 7-0. 4/24 MINUTES APPROVED

During Call to the Public Mr. Harley Keeling congratulated Ms. Kessel and Ms. Sinelli on their successful Board elections. He also praised Mr. Horning for his 16 years of service to the district. Mr. Keeling made a proposal that high school students attend a session of traffic court and in return receive a discount on their parking pass. He believes this would be an excellent method of teaching students how to avoid accidents and missteps, while also showing the consequences of their actions behind the wheel. CALL TO PUBLIC

Superintendent Sifferman congratulated Nora Kessel and Cindy Sinelli on their bids to serve on the Board. She also thanked Lynn Burrill, Cari Sinke, and Dennis Tierney for their interest in the district and for elevating the level of the campaign. She then introduced Superintendent Sally Vaughn of the Livingston Educational Service Agency, to present LESA's budget for 2006/2007. Dr. Vaughn explained the various services LESA provides to Livingston County school districts and then introduced Asst. Superintendent Mike Hubert, who presented the budget overview.

SUPT. REPORT

Ms. Kessel congratulated Cindy Sinelli on her victory and stated that she was looking forward to working with her on the Board. She also thanked Principal Livingway and Asst. Principal Cheney for a successful Career Day. Ms. Moody also congratulated Ms. Kessel and Ms. Sinelli on their victories.

BOARD REPORTS

Motion by Moody, supported by Kessel that the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations, authorizes the administration to purchase a cooling tower for Farms Intermediate School pursuant to the emergency purchase provisions of the Board's purchasing policy. Based on pricing information received by our Director of Operations, the cost of said tower should not exceed \$80,000. Mr. Aberasturi questioned why this was considered an "emergency purchase". Mr. Bacon noted that policy states that a specific bid process be used when purchasing equipment over a certain amount and that, due to the time constraints, while the administration is seeking Board approval and will likely get three bids, the bid process will not be followed as specified by policy. Motion carried 7-0.

CHILLER - FIS

Motion by Moody, supported by Kaszyca that the Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations, authorizes the administration to sign a five-year contract with Grand Rapids Building Services for custodial services, including employees and supplies, effective July 1, 2006. Provisions of the contract will meet the district's RFP requirements. President Jankowski began the Board portion of the discussion by introducing the district's attorney, Don Bonato of Thrun Law Firm, and asking the Board to direct their legal questions to him while he was present. Mr. Aberasturi asked Mr. Bonato if there was a legal way in which the district could construct its all day kindergarten program and charge a fee for participation. Mr. Bonato stated that it is in violation of the state constitution and the State Aid Act to charge for instruction in a public school. If the district receives state aid for these students, the district cannot charge for any portion of their instruction. The district could charge for daycare if they configured their buildings and personnel to conform to the regulations for daycare, but not for instruction. Mr. Aberasturi asked if the district brought in the requisite number of aides for daycare and configured the classrooms correctly, if the afternoon portion of kindergarten could be considered "day care". Mr. Bonato stated that he felt this was in violation of the intent of both the constitution and the State Aid Act. Ms. Moody stated that she would not be comfortable as a Board member, knowingly putting forth a program that was skirting the edge of legality. She stated that the Board, after two years of discussion and research, voted to provide an all day everyday kindergarten program because they felt it was the best introduction for our children to education.

CONTRACT FOR  
CUSTODIAL  
SERVICES

Superintendent Sifferman read a statement noting that these were extremely difficult times in the district and that the decision before the Board was an extremely difficult one to make. She asked that everyone remember the reason we are all here.

President Jankowski asked the Board to continue with their questions for the attorney. Mr. Aberasturi asked about the ability of the union to reform under the management of GRBS and what liability the district would face if the MEA were to take either GRBS or the district to court. Mr. Bonato stated that the district would face no liability, that PA 112 allows school districts to contract out their non-instructional staff with no contractual liability. Mr. Aberasturi noted that there was nothing to keep the employees GRBS hires from unionizing. Mr. Bonato agreed but noted that would be GRBS's issue, not the district. He also noted that many districts across the state of Michigan have privatized various non-instructional services and only one, Grand Rapids, has resulted in re-unionization and a lawsuit, and that lawsuit is between the MEA and the contract company, not the district. Members of the Board discussed their various views on privatization and how best to move the district forward during difficult financial times. Nancy Angerilli, vice president of the Maintenance/Custodial unit, indicated that her group was willing to discuss concessions with the Board in closed session if they were interested. She noted that they could not reach the \$500,000 noted on the cut list, but that they could do something. President Jankowski called for a 10-minute break so the union and administration could determine a course of action.

CUSTODIAL  
CONTRACT  
(CON'T)

BREAK - 8:55 p.m.  
RESUME - 9:05 p.m.

BREAK  
RESUME

Motion by Moody, supported by Kaszyca that the Board of Education table the current motion and enter into a closed session to discuss contract negotiations with the Maintenance/Custodial unit. Roll call: Horning-yea, Kaszyca-yea, Kessel-yea, McPherson-Brown-yea, Aberasturi-yea, Moody-yea, Jankowski-yea. Motion carried 7-0.

TABLE MOTION  
GO TO CLOSED  
SESSION -  
NEGOTIATIONS

The Board entered into Closed Session at 9:08 p.m.

9:08 CLOSED

The Board reentered into Open Session at 10:00 p.m.

10:00 OPEN

Motion by Kessel, supported by Moody that the motion for Item II.B. be returned to the table for discussion. Motion carried 7-0.

MOTION  
UNTABLED

The Board resumed discussion on the privatization of the custodial unit. Ms. Moody, Ms. Kessel and Mr. Kaszyca all stated that while this was a difficult decision, the district's mission was to educate, with Mr. Kaszyca stating that it is the Board's duty to prioritize cuts, hire quality staff and impact programs as little as possible. Ms. Moody noted that though this was a very emotional issue, the Board must take the emotion out of it and make a solid business decision. Ms. Kessel noted that regardless of what the Board decides, people will lose jobs. Mr. Horning read references that he had compiled from various administrators and staff members at the other districts that employ GRBS, noting that all of the response were basically positive. Mr. Aberasturi indicated that he just had a gut feeling that there was an undiscovered issue here, and that if it was this easy to do and they were this good, all districts would privatize all services.

CONTRACT  
DISCUSSION  
CONTINUED

Members of the public spoke out against privatization including Marty Devitt, President of the Custodial/Maintenance unit, Jo Strafford, Casey Burke, Pat Bonk, George Moncatch and Chris Hemmings.

PUBLIC  
COMMENTS

President Jankowski read a statement noting that she could not leave any stone unturned and while there was some sort of concession on the table, she felt this needed to be pursued. Mr. Aberasturi asked if this meant she wanted to postpone the vote. Ms. Jankowski said no, a decision needed to be made, but she would vote "no". The Board continued to discuss the concessions proposed by the union and how the district would have to proceed regarding the cut list, as their concessions did not reach the targeted \$500,000. Mr. Kaszyca noted that without the full savings from the custodial unit, most of the items on Tier 3 of the cut list would have to be implemented, causing a loss of programs and jobs for students & teachers. Mr. Aberasturi felt the decision could wait two weeks. Ms. McPherson-Brown called the question.

BOARD  
DISCUSSION

Motion carried 5-2 (Aberasturi, Jankowski - nays).

QUESTION  
CALLED

CONTRACT  
APPROVED

Motion by Aberasturi, supported by Moody that the Administration hold off on pursuing a contract with Grand Rapids Building Services for two weeks. Ms. Jankowski noted that the decision had been made and the administration should be allowed to move forward. Mr. Bacon indicated that it would take several days or more to develop and come to final terms on a contract anyway. Motion defeated 1-6 (Aberasturi-yea).

MOTION-  
SUSPEND  
CONTRACT  
TALKS 2 WEEKS  
DEFEATED

Nancy Angerilli thanked the community for their support and for entrusting their children to them.

The Board discussed the parameters for the Ad Hoc committee concerning Board communication policies. President Jankowski asked that any members interested in serving on the committee should contact her.

AD HOC  
COMMITTEE

Motion by Horning, supported by Kessel that the discussion on the Budget Reduction List, Item III.B. be deferred to the next regularly scheduled meeting, May 22, 2006. Motion carried 7-0.

DEFER BUDGET  
DISCUSSION  
5/22/06

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,

Elsie McPherson-Brown  
Secretary

Paula Waters  
Recording Secretary