

SPECIAL MEETING

A Special meeting of the Benzie County Central Board of Education was held Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at Benzie Central Middle School, 9300 Homestead Rd., Benzonia, MI. 49616

Vice President Brown called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Members Present: Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Johnston, Mr. Gray, Ms. Cota Hill, Mrs. Pomper, Mr. Noffsinger

Members Absent: Mr. Childs

19-20-051 It was moved by Mrs. Pomper and supported by Mr. Gray to approve the agenda as written.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

19-20-052 It was moved by Mrs. Pomper and supported by Mrs. Johnston to approve Consent Grouping items as presented, with the addition of (2) after closed session action items;

19-20-048 - recommendation of the Superintendent to terminate custodian, Ray Miehke.

Ayes: 3

Nays: 3

Motion Failed

19-20-049 - recommendation of a 30 day unpaid suspension and mandatory training for custodian, Ray Miehke.

Ayes: 3

Nays: 3

Motion Failed

A. Minutes: November 4, 2019 – Regular

B. Business: General Fund Bills - NONE

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0 Abstain Noffsinger

Motion Carried

Student Council Report: NONE

Administration Report: NONE

Board of Education/Committee Reports: NONE

Audience Participation (Agenda Items Only) – NONE

Discussion Topics: Discussion on Future Direction of Bond Proposal – Superintendent Olson shared election results by townships. There was a higher voter turnout and we closed the gap a bit.

Nicolette Brown shared that she feels there has been more feedback after the 2nd (November 5) bond proposal than over the last two years.

She added that reaching out to leaders in the community would be beneficial in clearing up any misinformation and would like to invite townships, business owners, and community leaders to meetings. She has also received feedback that teachers and students plan to come out and speak, educate, and inform in the event of another bond proposal. Stephanie Johnston would like to reach out to recent alumni, weigh in, and encourage them to absentee vote/vote. She feels the needs of our district are still there. Scott Gray feels there is a snag with some of the retired population and would like to reach out to provide information. He too feels that the district must move forward with an additional effort for a Bond Proposal. Lori Cota Hill added that our approach should be altered. She feels that asking for the same thing will not yield a different result. She recommends putting a portion on the ballot right away, and the remaining after the sinking fund ends in 5 years. She believes that there is a lot of confusion surround the sinking fund in relation to the bond proposal. Amber Pomper feels that moving forward, doing nothing is not an option. She has received a lot of feedback regarding confusion over the ballot language. She suggests, online polls, mailers, survey, school app remind, Superintendent State of the District Address on YouTube monthly, video walk through tours, and further educating the community. Chris Noffsinger shared that he felt that there was misinformed data surrounding social media issues. He feels as a board, that rather than responding to false information on social media, they should rather extend an invite to reach out to board members or the Superintendent directly.

Superintendent Olson recommends to the board for an August vote. Votes are not on pure facts, but rather can be emotional. Mental state matters. Mentality of people in August compared to November...pretty positive time.

We are going back, the needs are there. There is a desire to seek feedback from the community in a number of ways. Going forward, he proposes a timeline of the steps in which we are trying to accomplish. What are we going to put on the next ballot? Do we plan to set up the bond and then educate, or educate and then set up the bond. We can set up a simple community survey to facilitate feedback and initiate board of education coffee dates through our Benzie Central website and District facebook page.

Superintendent Olson proposes setting up the dates and times ahead of time.

Superintendent Olson also shared to keep in mind that the scope will change based on time and cost, and sinking fund projects scheduled in the near future will the change the overall scope as well.

Action Topics: NONE

Audience Participation (Open Topics):

Meagan Zych shared her concerns with the ballot language as proposed. Her primary concern as to why she did not support the proposal, was the 19 million dollar proposed new elementary and the 26 year length of the bond itself. Meagan feels that our students do not care about the buildings, but rather the people in them.

Mike Zych shared with the board of education that although he felt that they had a good grasp, the term of the bond was too long. Mike also recommends a master plan with placement of the proposed lay out here on the main campus. He also shared that demographic, lack of jobs, declining enrollment, and misinformation contributed to this bond failing. Mr. Zych also cautioned the board of education on social media practices.

Board Communication: NONE

Announcements:

1. Mrs. Pomper shared that legislation passed for increased penalties for those who pass stopped school buses employing the use of their red flashing lights.

19-20-053 It was moved by Mrs. Johnston and supported by Mrs. Pomper to adjourn the Special Board Meeting at 8:27 PM.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried


Secretary, Board of Education