

Tawas Area Schools
Regular Board of Education Meeting
August 9, 2021

The regular meeting of the Tawas Area Board of Education was called to order by President Klenow at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 9, 2021 in the boardroom at the administration office and through Google Meets or a teleconferencing method.

Mrs. Ulman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Present: Butzin, VanderVeen, Edmonds, Ulman, Lentz and Klenow
Absent: Bruning
Tardy: None

Administrators Present: Klinger, Mochty, Danek, Bolen, Suttle

Mrs. Klenow said we have an addition to the agenda which will be to hire a school social worker and it will be Item 7 under Recommendations and Reports from the Administration. Motion to add the item to the agenda by Ulman, support by Lentz. Motion carried unanimously.

POSITIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Mr. Klinger presented the positive highlight. He said the 2020-21 varsity volleyball team has been awarded an Academic Excellence Honor. The team was nominated through the Michigan Volleyball Coaches Association. A total of 1275 high school and college teams were nominated for the honor and Tawas was 1 of 413 high schools to receive the honor. To be eligible a team must maintain a 3.3 GPA or higher for each of the semesters in the school year and the team's overall GPA for all semesters must also be over 3.3. Mrs. Elowsky encourages academic excellence and works to promote a strong team academic environment. This award was issued by the U.S. Marine Corps and the American Volleyball Coaches Association. The board thanked Mr. Klinger for sharing this exciting news and congratulated the team on their honor.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Mrs. Klenow asked if there were any public comments on agenda or non-agenda items. Ms. Amy Jenkins shared a packet of paper with the board containing information regarding the wearing of face masks. They thanked her for the information.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Ulman, support by VanderVeen to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2021 board meeting as presented. There were no additions or corrections. Motion carried unanimously.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Motion by VanderVeen to approve the monthly contractual and prepaid expenses for the general fund in the amount of \$1,377,215.83, and the lunch fund expenses in the amount of \$31,518.87. There were no sinking fund bills to be paid. He also moved to approve payment of presented bills for the general fund in the amount of \$53,399.20 as funds become available. There was no sinking fund or lunch fund bills to be paid. Motion supported by Ulman. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

RECEIPT OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

RECOMMENDATIONS & REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Klinger said Mr. Suttle conducted interviews for the high school special education teacher vacancy. He is recommending Mrs. Genecia Mejeur be hired to fill this position. Mrs. Mejeur is a graduate of Western Michigan University with a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics and Biology. She also earned her Master's degree in special education from Western. She comes to us with nine years of teaching experience. Motion by Lentz, support by Butzin to hire Genecia Mejeur as a special education teacher. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Suttle held interviews to fill the other high school special education teacher vacancy. He is recommending Mr. Austin Clark be hired as a long-term substitute for this position. The teaching position will continue to be posted at the universities throughout the year as we try to find a credentialed candidate. In the meantime, Mr. Clark is working on being accepted to a special education program as well as seeking his teaching certificate to become fully certified. Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to hire Austin Clark as a long-term substitute teacher. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Suttle held interviews for the high school guidance counselor position. He is recommending Mrs. Kristina Warner to be hired as a long-term substitute for this position. This counselor position will also continue to be posted at the universities throughout the year while we seek a licensed candidate. Mrs. Warner comes with a strong skillset and is enrolling into a collegiate program to become a fully licensed guidance counselor. Motion by Lentz, support by Butzin to hire Kristina Warner as a long-term substitute guidance counselor. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Suttle held interviews to fill the athletic director vacancy. He is recommending Jonathan Mejeur be hired to fill this position. Mr. Mejeur is a graduate of Western Michigan University with a Bachelor of Science degree and earned his Master's degree in sports administration from Wayne State University. He comes to us with six years of experience in the education setting at multiple grade levels. Motion by Edmonds, support by Ulman to hire Jonathan Mejeur as the athletic director. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Suttle and Mr. Mejeur are recommending Riley Montgomery be hired as the freshman volleyball coach. Ms. Montgomery is a Tawas alumni and a graduate of Cleary University where she was a scholar athlete. Motion by Lentz, support by Butzin to hire Riley Montgomery as the freshman volleyball coach. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek held interviews to fill the Title I educational assistant vacancy at Clara Bolen. She is recommending Mrs. Shelby Ploof be hired to fill this position. Mrs. Ploof has experience as an instructional assistant at the elementary level and her references spoke highly of her skills. Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to hire Shelby Ploof as an educational assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek interviewed candidates to fill the elementary school social worker vacancy. She is recommending Ms. Alison Jungquist be hired for this position. Ms. Jungquist is a Tawas graduate and holds Master's degrees in social work and applied behavior analysis. She has many years of experience in the behavioral health field and will work to attain her school certification. Motion by Lentz, support by Butzin to hire Alison Jungquist as a school social worker. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Reports – None.

Legislative Report – None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Klinger said over the last year, the Clara Bolen basketball court concrete has started breaking up and crumbling. Mr. Couch reached out to several contractors to solicit bids to replace the concrete basketball court on the playground. The best bid is from Howard Hale Masonry for \$16,600. Mrs. Lentz asked if we had considered replacing it with any material other than concrete. Mr. Klinger said they had only looked for bids to replace it with concrete. He added that he believes this is the original concrete from 1991 when the school was opened. Motion by Ulman, support by Butzin to approve the playground concrete replacement bid as presented. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said the district is moving forward with the back to school plan as discussed last month. There is one new piece of information that our legal counsel has confirmed regarding bussing. The CDC states that face masks must be worn for those traveling on public transportation, which includes school buses. Passengers and drivers must wear a mask on school buses including on buses operated by public and private school systems. Mr. Klinger is working on a follow up communication in the same format as the one released at the end of June to update all families with the most current information. He plans to have it out by the end of the week. He has also received feedback from legal counsel on MIOSHA's employee safe work environment rules which state that if an unvaccinated staff member is determined to be a close contact, they will be required to be quarantined. Mr. Klinger said student's first day of school will be August 30th with staff professional development beginning August 24th. Student orientation sessions will be held next week the 16th – 19th for middle and high school students and Open House will be held on August 25th. At this time masks will be optional for students and contact tracing and reporting is still required. If anything changes in the next few weeks we will inform everyone of the change. Mr. Klinger said he has a great relationship with the local health department and will continue to work closely with them again this year. He will provide another update to the board at the special meeting on August 23rd.

INFORMATION & PROPOSALS

Administration – Mr. Klinger said there are a lot of moving parts as we prepare for the start of the school year and the transportation, maintenance, food service and technology departments continue to finish things up. Mrs. Bolen said she is working on technology related pieces for the upcoming PD days. They will be implementing Character Strong, a program that focuses on character development and social and emotional strength to develop a stronger identity and purpose. The resources will be available for both students and staff. Mrs. Mochty said the PD days will include department meetings, curriculum alignment and social and emotional aids to improve culture and climate. She said the Rachel's Challenge program will be back this fall with presentations on September 14th. Mrs. Danek said cooperative learning programs will be incorporated this year and summer school wraps up this week at Clara Bolen. Mr. Suttle said summer school concludes soon and it has gone very well. Orientation will be held next week for middle and high school students and fall athletic practices began today.

From the Board – Mrs. Edmonds congratulated the volleyball team on their academic honor. She thanked Mr. Klinger for his updates and welcomed the new hires. She is happy to hear the PD focus will be on social and emotional well-being. Mr. VanderVeen also congratulated the volleyball team on their award and welcomed the new hires. He was happy to hear Rachel's

Challenge is coming back this year and is glad the summer school programs were a success. Mrs. Ulman echoed the earlier comments and thanked Ms. Jenkins for sharing her information. She also thanked Mr. Klinger for his updates. Mrs. Lentz congratulated the volleyball team and coach and was also happy to hear the PD focus will be on social and emotional topics. She agreed that Rachel's Challenge is a positive motivator for the students. Mr. Butzin congratulated the volleyball team on their achievement and welcomed the new hires. He is pleased to see Tawas alumni returning to the area to be employed. Mrs. Klenow agreed with the prior comments and looks forward to the Character Strong program being implemented. She welcomed the new hires and said she is happy to see the positions filled with such good candidates. She reminded the board that there will be a special meeting on August 23rd.

ADVANCE PLANNING

Mr. Klinger said he would like to schedule a personnel committee meeting. That meeting will be held Thursday, August 11th at 5:15 p.m. He said the August 23rd meeting will provide an opportunity to hire more staff, and give another back to school update if there is any new information. There will be a board work session at the end of the meeting so the board can continue to discuss facility use projects and begin seeking bids for some of those projects that he hopes can begin sometime next year.

Motion by Ulman, support by VanderVeen to adjourn at 7:43 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.