

Tawas Area Schools
Regular Board of Education Meeting
August 14, 2023

Vice President Bruning called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 14, 2023.

Mrs. Jenkins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

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

Administrators Present: Klinger, Danek, Livingston, Tiffany, Clouse

POSITIVE HIGHLIGHTS

There was no positive highlight for tonight's meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Mrs. Bruning asked if there were any public comments on agenda or non-agenda items. Mr. John Tanase stated that he wanted to speak about the education system. Mrs. Bruning explained that he would have 3 minutes to share. Mr. Tanase stated that he and his wife had adopted a daughter, Erica. Erica is now married and has 2 children. Erica's kids both attended Tawas Area Schools for the first time this past year and Mr. Tanase stated that the boys' teachers were all very engaged and encouraging. The staff did a great job helping the kids adjust. Mr. Tanase went on to say that one staff member in particular deserved to be called out and that was Mrs. Denise Spaid. Mrs. Spaid was on top of things and very helpful. Next, Mr. Tanase's daughter, Erica, spoke briefly about the teaching staff and how great her kids' experience was because of them.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Ulman, support by Edmonds to approve the consent agenda items which included the approval of the July 10, 2023 regular meeting minutes and the payment of bills as follows: the monthly contractual and prepaid expenses for the general fund in the amount of \$1,223,391.12 and the lunch fund expenses in the amount of \$23,011.37. There were no presented monthly bills to be paid. Letters of retirement were received from Clara Bolen elementary teacher, Mrs. Becky VanderVeen, who will be retiring after 30 years of service, effective December 1, 2023, Mrs. Donna Beckley, high school secretary, who has retired after 24 years of service, effective immediately, and custodian Mr. Allen Look, who has retired after 6 years of service, effective July 14, 2023. Letters of resignation were also received from Mrs. Tisha Thompson, bus driver, who has resigned effective immediately but would like to remain employed as a substitute employee in several different departments if her medical condition improves, Mr. Steve Shaver, bus driver, who has resigned after 6 years of service, effective July 24, 2023, and Mrs. Meaghan Martinez, middle school teacher, who is resigning after 3 years of service, effective immediately and contingent upon approval from the West Branch-Rose City School Board on August 21, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDATIONS & REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Klinger said that we have many new hires on the agenda tonight. He stated that athletic director, Jonathan Mejeur, is recommending Mrs. Tricia Briggs be hired as the 7th/8th grade volleyball coach. Mrs. Briggs has many years of experience playing volleyball and wants to share her passion for the sport with students. Mrs. Briggs was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Butzin, support by Jenkins to hire Mrs. Tricia Briggs as the 7th/8th grade volleyball coach. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger went on to say that Mr. Mejeur is also recommending that Mr. Marcus Doan be hired to fill the junior high football assistant coach vacancy. Mr. Doan has coached in the Tawas football program in the past and has experience coaching and playing football. Mr. Doan was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to hire Mr. Marcus Doan as the junior high football assistant coach. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger stated that transportation supervisor, Mr. Brandon Lichota, is recommending Matthew Pfundt be hired to fill the bus driver vacancy. Mr. Pfundt has been a substitute bus driver for the district since October 2022 and was selected as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to hire Mr. Matthew Pfundt as a bus driver. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said that Mr. Brandon Lichota is also recommending Mr. Devon Summerland be hired to fill the open custodian position. Mr. Summerland has been a temporary custodian with Tawas since June of this year and was selected as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to hire Mr. Devon Summerland as a custodian. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said that Mrs. Amy Clouse is recommending Ms. Kathleen Slack be hired as a special education, educational assistant. Ms. Slack has her associate's degree in child development from Schoolcraft College and has experience as an aide and teaching assistant. Her passion for children and the learning process, as well as her background, make her a top candidate for this position. Motion by Butzin, support by Edmonds to hire Ms. Kathleen Slack as an educational assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger stated that Mrs. Clouse is recommending Ms. Stefanie Fuller as a Title I educational assistant. Ms. Fuller has over 30 years of experience in customer service and has spent several years as an office clerk. Her communication and people skills make her the best candidate for this position. Motion by Edmonds, support by Ulman to hire Ms. Stefanie Fuller as an educational assistant, pending the successful completion of the ETS parapro assessment. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said that Ms. Morgan Davis is being recommended by Mrs. Clouse as a one on one special education, educational assistant. Ms. Davis has 4 years of experience as a one on one special education parapro and has experience in the area of customer service. Ms. Davis was chosen as a top candidate for this position. Motion by Butzin, support by Jenkins to hire Ms. Morgan Davis as an educational assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said that Mrs. Clouse is recommending Ms. Taylor Marine be hired as a one on one special education, educational assistant also. Ms. Marine is currently working toward her bachelor's degree in elementary education and special education through Grand Canyon University and has experience working with children as a parapro for Hale schools. Ms. Marine was chosen as a top candidate for this position. Motion by Butzin, support by Jenkins to hire Ms. Taylor Marine as an educational assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger stated that Mrs. Danek has interviewed and is recommending that Mrs. Delisa Roulo be hired as a special education, educational assistant in the middle school. Mrs. Roulo showed a strong desire to fill this position and a passion to enrich her skills and experiences. Mrs. Roulo is currently completing classwork with Alpena Community College and was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Ulman, support by Edmonds to hire Mrs. Delisa Roulo as an educational assistant. Yes: Jenkins, Ulman, Edmonds, Bruning. Abstain: Butzin. Motion carried.

Mr. Klinger said that Mrs. Danek is also recommending Ms. Rachel Swartz to fill a special education, educational assistant role. Ms. Swartz is a Tawas alumni and is looking forward to the opportunity to work with middle school students. She was selected as a top candidate for this

position. Motion by Edmonds, support by Ulman to hire Ms. Rachel Swartz as an educational assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger stated that Mrs. Danek and Mr. Livingston are recommending Ms. Sam Papas be hired to fill a media center educational assistant vacancy at Tawas Area Middle School and High School. Ms. Papas has experience with customer service and possesses office coordinator skills. She has previously held employment where IT skills have been a vital part in her growth as a professional. Ms. Papas was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to hire Ms. Sam Papas as an educational assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said that Mrs. Danek has held interviews for 2 secretarial openings. The first is a high school secretary vacancy and Mrs. Danek is recommending Emily Loew be hired to fill this position. Mrs. Loew is fluent in many of our technology programs and has shown a desire to become part of the Tawas Area Schools team, working as a paraprofessional and substitute in the past and supporting our PTO committees and athletics. Mrs. Loew was chosen as a top candidate for this position. Motion by Butzin, support by Ulman to hire Mrs. Emily Loew for the high school secretary position. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said that Mrs. Danek is also recommending that we hire Ms. Dawn Ziegelmann to fill the middle school secretary position. Ms. Ziegelmann has over 20 years of experience in an office setting and is proficient in numerous areas applicable to this position. Ms. Ziegelmann has a diverse background and conveyed a strong desire to become part of the Tawas Area Schools team. She was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to hire Ms. Dawn Ziegelmann as the middle school secretary. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger stated that Mrs. Danek has interviewed for the 6-12 mathematics teacher vacancy and is recommending that Mrs. Erin Challenger be hired for this position. Erin has a bachelor's degree in speech pathology from Calvin College and has completed an accelerated program with Saginaw Valley State University to earn her teacher certification. She has been teaching mathematics in a neighboring district for the past 5 years and is a Tawas alumni. Mrs. Challenger was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Butzin, support by Ulman to hire Mrs. Erin Challenger as a high school math teacher. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said that Mrs. Clouse is recommending Mrs. Courtney VanderVeen be hired to fill the upcoming elementary teaching vacancy. Mrs. VanderVeen has a bachelor's degree in music education from Saginaw Valley State University and has taught music for the past 6 years. Mrs. VanderVeen is currently enrolled in the Teachers of Tomorrow program to obtain her elementary education endorsement for Pre-K – 6th grade. She will also need to complete her MTTC test. Mrs. VanderVeen was chosen as a top candidate for this position. Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to hire Mrs. Courtney VanderVeen as an elementary teacher. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Reports – Mr. Klinger said that the personnel committee met on Tuesday, August 8, 2023 to discuss and create the superintendent's merit goal for the school year. The committee also discussed the School Resource Officer's documents. The meeting concluded with a brief update on the Clara Bolen Elementary gym project as well as a staffing update.

Legislative Report – Mr. Klinger said that there is no legislative update at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

Facilities Request – Mr. Klinger introduced Mr. Tim St. Aubin who was there to present an idea to the board about our facilities. The Association of Tawas Football Alumni would like to name the football field after Richard D. Look. Mr. St. Aubin present this idea as a way to look at future opportunities and open meaningful dialogue to identify possible future candidates. Mr. St. Aubin

explained that the bar would be set very high and would produce a short list of names. He stated that the candidate must be in the hall of fame for the sport they are requesting the facility to be named after them for. Longevity would also be a consideration, including post-retirement involvement in the community. Another factor that would be weighed is perpetuity, or what kind of footprint the individual has left. Mr. St. Aubin concluded by stating that in his research, he has found that many stadiums were originally named after the farmers who donated the property but those fields are now under re-consideration to be renamed after coaches.

The board members discussed the next step and decided that it would be best to take this idea to a committee. This committee would consist of Ulman, Jenkins, and Butzin with Mr. Mejeur sitting in on discussions.

Resolution to call a special election/certify ballot proposition - Mr. Klinger said the board has been provided with a copy of the resolution to call a special election and the ballot certification proposition. The special election will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 and we will seek to renew the 0.4963 mills levied on all property in Tawas Area Schools, Iosco and Arenac Counties, Michigan. The resolution and proposition must be approved and submitted to the County Clerk's office on or before August 15, 2023. Mr. Klinger also stated that the board had copies of the Q & A document in their packet that would be sent out to educate the community on the renewal. Motion by Ulman to approve the calling of a special election and certify the ballot proposition, support by Butzin. Motion carried unanimously.

Approve superintendent merit goal - Mr. Klinger discussed the superintendent's merit goals for the 2023-2024 school year, which the personnel committee helped to create. He explained that the goals will focus on student leadership opportunities and mentoring our new administrators. Motion by Butzin, support by Ulman to approve the superintendent's merit goals as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

School resource officer request - Mr. Klinger said that he is recommending that Tawas Area Schools partners with our Iosco County Sheriff's Department to provide a School Resource Office for our district. He said that this has been an ongoing collaborative effort with the Iosco County Sheriff and Under Sheriff researching this possibility and securing a grant to help offset the costs associated. Mr. Klinger stated that Sheriff Frank was there to answer any questions or provide clarification if needed. It was explained that if this passes, this individual would start at the beginning of the school year. Mrs. Ulman thanked everyone involved and stated that she feels confident in moving forward with this and wanted to point out that a lot of research was done prior to this. Mr. Butzin also thanked everyone and commended the chosen candidate. Motion by Butzin, support by Jenkins to approve the hiring of a school resource officer. Motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION & PROPOSALS

Superintendent Report – Mr. Klinger said that the PA systems are complete and finalized and is excited to see how this will improve communication. He said the Clara Bolen gym project has been delayed due to some unforeseen issues. The floor is to be completed this week and the painter will be in next week to finish up painting the bleachers and lines. This project will be finalized in September. Mr. Klinger also spoke about the lighting project, which has been challenging due to delays in shipment but will be finished before school starts. The boiler units are slightly delayed but largely complete at this time.

Mr. Klinger said that the county-wide safety drill had occurred at Oscoda Area Schools and he had come away learning new things will be worked on with staff to implement.

Mr. Klinger concluded by mentioning that orientations are this week, with staff back on campus next week. He invited board members to attend the welcome back breakfast.

Mr. Klinger also briefly mentioned that the furniture upgrades for the board room are still in the works and more information will be coming.

Student Representatives – Ms. Catherine Push was at the meeting and had a few highlights to share. Ms. Push talked about the student senate and some ideas that are in discussion with Mrs. Martin regarding Homecoming and the return of the Brave Cave to help increase school spirit. Ms. Push also talked about recent rotary events and Students Leading Students (SLS) events.

Administration –Mrs. Danek said that it was nice to have so many new hires and that it makes the interview process worth it. She also gave an update on the E-board, which has been established and the members are registered for a regional event in February. Mrs. Danek stated that teachers that are new to the district this year are invited in on Monday for prep and to meet with their mentors, with all staff returning on Tuesday for professional development.

Mr. Livingston said that he has been preparing for his new high school position and making sure all resources are prepared. He is getting ready to welcome back students and make sure things are in order.

Mr. Mejeur stated that we are in the 2nd week of fall sports. Girls soccer has their first soccer game on Wednesday and the girls golf club had an event tonight. Mr. Mejeur stated that numbers are up in sports participation.

Mrs. Clouse stated that they have over 80 kindergarten enrollments, with 441 students enrolled in K-4 at this point. Clara Bolen is covered on aides and has all general education teacher positions filled. Mrs. Clouse said that there is still a Title I teaching position open but that Mrs. Linda Ramsdell has been secured as a substitute until a replacement is locked down.

Mrs. Tiffany said that there have been over 40 new enrollments in the middle school since August 1. They are showing strong numbers in the middle school. Mrs. Tiffany also talked about returning to an old policy where 5th and 6th grade students cannot take their Chromebook home with them. She also stated that teachers have started to plan for the Washington D.C. Trip, which will be for 8th and 9th grade students and will happen every other year and have started discussing fundraising ideas.

From the Board – Mrs. Ulman welcomed all the new hires and thanked the football alumni for the presentation of naming facilities. She said she is grateful for the safety drill training that happens each year. Mrs. Ulman welcomed back student representative, Catie Push and said that she appreciated the educational updates from the administrators and is happy to see student numbers on the upside. Mrs. Edmonds thanked the retirees for their dedication and gave a shout out to Mrs. Ramsdell for stepping in to help. She looks forward to what will come from committee discussions regarding facility naming and thanked Sheriff Frank for all of his work with securing the School Resource Officer. Mrs. Jenkins welcomed the new hires and said she is excited for the School Resource Officer. Mr. Butzin said he is happy to have Mrs. Emily Loew filling in for Ms. Beckley and he is sure she will do great and he hopes Mrs. Beckley enjoys retirement. Mrs. Bruning welcomed the new hires and commended Ms. Push for her efforts, even in the summer months. Mrs. Bruning said that she appreciates the feedback from the administrators and thanked Mr. Tanase. She said she is also looking forward to what will come from the facility naming committee and is thankful for Sheriff Frank and excited to have a School Resource Officer.

ADVANCE PLANNING

Mr. Klinger said a personnel committee meeting will be scheduled in the future.

The board took a brief recess at 8:05 p.m.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Ulman to enter closed session at 8:10 p.m. for a student request to return to school. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to return to open session by Ulman, support by Jenkins at 8:25 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Ulman, support by Jenkins to allow Student 2022-2023-#2 to return to school on August 28, 2023 under a behavior plan that will be developed by administration and the family. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Ulman to go into closed session for superintendent evaluation discussion at 8:30 p.m. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion to return to open session by Edmonds, support by Jenkins at 8:42 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to adjourn at 8:43 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.