

**Merrill Area Public Schools  
Special Board of Education Meeting  
February 16, 2021 – Minutes**

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The meeting was called to order by President Kevin Blake at 6:00 p.m. in the Merrill High School Auditorium and by Google Hangout virtual meeting.

Board members present: Kendra Osness, Maria Volpe, Ron Liberty, Jon Smith, Brett Woller, Linda Yingling and Kevin Blake (a quorum was present). Board members absent: Nubs Ashbeck and Jeremy Ratliff. Others present: Dr. John Sample, Superintendent; Attorney Tess O'Brien-Heinzen; approximately 36 people from the staff and public; and, Tammy Woller, Recorder. Others present remotely: Karen Baker, Director of SPED/Pupil Services; Glenda Oginski, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; Dale Bergman, Director of Buildings & Grounds; Shannon Murray, MHS Principal; Trisha Detert, Elementary Principal; and, approximately 21 people from the staff and public.

President Blake led the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Blake read the legal description of the property proposed to be detached in the electors' and owners' petitions, and cited Wis. State Statute 117.12(3).

Peter Fromm Wade, Angie Servi and Stevie Klockziem gave a [presentation](#) regarding reasons to detach the proposed property from the Merrill Area Public School District.

Board members asked clarifying questions.

The following individuals then spoke in favor of the petitions for detachment by giving public comment or reading their written statements submitted to the Board: [Angie Servi](#) (as an elector, petitioner); Trina Lutzke (non-petitioner); Olive Primm (student and non-petitioner); and Terry Fondow (non-petitioner).

President Blake read the [Resolution](#) that was passed at the January 11, 2021 Friends of Maple Grove, Inc. Governance Board Meeting.

Vice President Maria Volpe read written statements submitted to the Board from the following individuals: [Sharon Kreft](#) (in support of the petitions) and [Sara Faber](#) (opposed to the petitions).

Shawn Henrichs spoke to the Board in favor of the petitions

Dr. John Sample provided [information](#) on the criteria under s. 117.15 of the Wisconsin Statutes related to the proposed school district reorganization. There were clarifying questions from the Board.

Trina Lutzke spoke to the Board in favor of the petitions.

Attorney David Moore spoke to the Board regarding the property description set forth on the petitions for detachment and stated Section 26 was intended to be part of the petitions.

Angie Servi read her [summary of arguments](#) on criteria for school district reorganizations. There were clarifying questions from the Board.

Osness left the meeting 8:05-8:07 p.m.

Yingling left the meeting 8:15-8:17 p.m.

Jeff Mastin (Superintendent of Athens School District) spoke to the Board in response to questions about the Athens School Board's willingness to accept the detached property.

Eric Vogel (Chairperson for the Town of Hamburg) spoke to the Board in favor of the petitions.

Dr. Sample gave a clarifying statement on a previous question about WIAA and open enrollment.

An anonymous speaker came to the microphone with a statement to the Board in favor of the petition.

Chad Krueger spoke to the Board regarding open enrollment and WIAA rules.

When public comment was complete, President Blake called for a motion to adjourn into executive (closed) session pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes under Section 19.85(1)(g), Wis. Stat., concerning strategy to be adopted by the Board with respect to litigation in which it is or is likely to become involved, to wit, appeal of any decision regarding one or more of the detachment requests, and Section 19.85(1)(e), Wis. Stat., to conduct specified public business which for competitive or bargaining reasons requires a closed session, to wit, the division of assets and liabilities between the school districts in the event of the granting of one or more of the detachment petitions. The Board will reconvene in open session after any such closed session to resume deliberations and take such action regarding the petitions as it deems appropriate, and/or adjourn the special meeting. MOTION by Smith, second by Volpe to adjourn into executive session. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

MOTION by Yingling, second by Volpe to reconvene into open session. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

Board members had additional questions for the petitioners and Dr. Sample in preparation for the additional Special Board Meeting scheduled for February 25, 2021.

MOTION by Volpe, second by Yingling to adjourn at 9:51 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Maria Volpe  
Acting Board Clerk

Tammy Woller  
Recorder