

**Merrill Area Public Schools
Special Board of Education Meeting
February 25, 2021 – Minutes**

The meeting was called to order by President Kevin Blake at 6:01 p.m. in the Merrill High School Auditorium and by Google Hangout virtual meeting.

Board members present: Nubs Ashbeck, Kendra Osness, Maria Volpe, Ron Liberty, Jon Smith, Brett Woller, Linda Yingling and Kevin Blake (a quorum was present). Board members absent: Jeremy Ratliff. Others present: Dr. John Sample, Superintendent; Brian Dasher, Director of Finance; Attorney Tess O'Brien-Heinzen; approximately 23 people from the staff and public; and, Tammy Woller, Recorder. Others present remotely: Karen Baker, Director of SPED/Pupil Services; Shannon Murray, MHS Principal; and, approximately 12 people from the staff and public.

President Blake led the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Blake gave an introduction and overview of the February 16, 2021, meeting, as well as, the order of the February 25, 2021, meeting.

Dr. John Sample addressed the Board and provided information regarding the number of students and families living in the detachment area and the schools serving those students. Dr. Sample also provided the results of a survey that was sent to parents of students living in the Maple Grove School area regarding the proposed detachment.

Brian Dasher provided information pertaining to the fiscal impacts of the proposed detachment, including a report completed by PMA Securities, LLC, and financial information prepared by Mr. Dasher.

Angie Servi, Stevie Klockziem and Peter Fromm Wade provided [additional information](#) requested by the Board at the meeting on February 16, 2021 regarding the criteria for detachment under Wis. Stat. 117.15.

Mike Henrichs, petitioner and owner, addressed the Board to speak in favor of the proposed reorganization.

Cindy Artus read her [written statement](#) in support of the proposed detachment.

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 or sale of assets and the division of liabilities between the school districts in the event of the granting of one or more of the detachment petitions, and to take action regarding the same. The Board will reconvene in open session after any such closed session to resume deliberations and take such action on one or more of the petitioners' detachment requests, including granting or denying the petitions for reorganization and issuing an order regarding the same. MOTION by Volpe, second by Liberty to adjourn into executive session. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

7:21 p.m. - 7 minute break to get organized

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

President Blake addressed the electors' and owners' petitions and confirmed that both petitions met the requirements under Wis. Stat. 117.12 for small territory detachment

President Blake addressed the legal description of the detachment petitions. Specifically, he addressed the omission of Section 26 from the description. He stated that based on the petitions as a whole, including the header of the legal descriptions, the parcel number lists, the petitioners' stated intent, the Clerk's total value calculation, and the signatures collected, Section 26 would be included in the petitions considered by the Board.

President Blake addressed each of the criteria in Wis. Stat. 117.15, and for each criteria, the Board considered and discussed the information provided by the administration, the petitioners and public, including the educational and extracurricular offerings at Athens, the financial health of the Athens School District, and the fiscal impacts of detachment.

The Board also considered information from other sources including information regarding the Maple Grove Scholarship.

Following all discussion, President Blake explained the actions the Board could take with respect to each petition for detachment.

MOTION by Smith, second by Osness to adopt the following resolution: [RESOLUTION REGARDING PETITION BY ELECTORS TO ALTER SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES](#). Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

MOTION by Liberty, second by Yingling to adopt the following resolution: [RESOLUTION REGARDING PETITION BY OWNERS TO ALTER SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES](#). Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

MOTION by Volpe, second by Yingling to adjourn at 9:11 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Nubs Ashbeck
Board Clerk

Tammy Woller
Recorder