

The Annual Meeting of the Merrill Area Common Public School District was called to order at the Merrill High School Auditorium at 5:30 PM on September 18, 2023 by Kevin Blake, President of the Board of Education. President Blake introduced the members of the Board that were present: Board Vice President Brett Woller, Board Clerk Kendra Osness, Board Treasurer Ron Liberty, Nubs Ashbeck, Paul Proulx, and Linda Yingling; Superintendent Shannon Murray; and, Director of Business Services Dr. Kelley Strike. Board members not present were Jacqueline Gremler and Chad Krueger. There were 13 members of the staff present.

Board President Blake gave a brief opening statement, thanking the staff and students. President Blake also stated that parliamentary procedure will be followed at this meeting, referenced the green handout for the Notice of Publication, the blue handout for the ground rules and voter qualifications, and the yellow handout for the powers of the annual meeting.

President Blake requested nominations for a chairperson of the meeting.

**MOTION BY** Ron Liberty, second by Brett Woller to nominate Kevin Blake as chairperson.

President Blake called for additional nominations for chairperson. Hearing no other nominations, the motion to nominate Kevin Blake as chairperson carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Chairperson Blake called for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. **MOTION BY** Paul Proulx, second by Nubs Ashbeck to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Chairperson Blake called for a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes and accept the minutes of the last annual meeting as they appear on the pink handout. **MOTION BY** Paul Proulx, second by Ron Liberty to dispense with the reading of the minutes and accept the October 24, 2022, Annual Meeting and Budget Hearing minutes as they appear on the pink handout. Motion carried on a voice vote with Linda Yingling abstaining from the vote.

Ron Liberty, Board Treasurer, presented the treasurer's report which indicated the following for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023: " The highlights of 2022-2023 year end are as follows: There was a small increase of just over \$14,000 in Fund 10 fund balance. This figure also represents the difference between revenue and expenditures in the Gender Fund (Fund 10) for the fiscal year. We are nearing the end of ESSER grants. Our remaining ESSER dollars must be spent by September of 2024. There was a transfer of \$500,000 from Fund 10 to Fund 46 at the end of 2022-2023 school year. We did spend some of our food service (Fund 50) fund balance this year. We are

limited in the amount of money that can be held in Fund Balance so reducing the amount is required. We replaced some equipment including dishwashers, cafeteria tables, and water softener in our kitchens. We will be offering universal free breakfast in the 23-24 school year as another strategy to spend down the fund balance. Middle School Activities and the pool are funded through our Community Fund (Fund 80). We now have a negative fund balance in Fund 80 of -\$31,298.02. Although districts are allowed to have a negative fund balance in Fund 80, it is not recommended. We have increased our Fund 80 levy this year to adjust for increased costs and will continue to monitor expenses and pool hours. Lastly, certain funds such as Fund 27 and Fund 29 will not carry a fund balance based on WUFAR and GASB accounting guidelines. We appreciate anyone taking the time to attend the annual meeting and/or review information in the annual meeting booklet. Thank you.”

Chairperson Blake requested a motion to adjourn the Annual Meeting and convene the Budget Hearing. **MOTION BY** Ron Liberty, second by Nubs Ashbeck to adjourn the Annual Meeting and convene the Budget Hearing. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Chairperson Blake stated that the electors have the right to be heard on the proposed budget. The electors do not approve the budget. The electors do vote on the local tax levy needed to implement the budget. However, in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes 120.12 (3), the school board, on or before November 1, determines the amount necessary to operate and maintain the district schools and, on or before November 10, certifies the final tax levy.

Dr. Kelley Strike gave a presentation for the budget hearing. There were no questions by audience members.

**MOTION BY** Paul Proulx, second by Ron Liberty to reconvene the Annual Meeting. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

**MOTION BY** Nubs Ashbeck, second by Paul Proulx to adopt Resolution A: The 2023-2024 tax levy for the Merrill Area Common Public School District is voted and approved in the amount of \$9,275,768 where \$8,925,768 is Fund 10 and \$350,000 is Fund 80. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

**MOTION BY** Shannon Murray, second by Ryan Martinovici to adopt Resolution B for compensation and authorized reimbursement of expenses of school board members: 1) the board president and the board clerk will be paid \$150.00 for each school board meeting attended, and will be paid an additional \$50.00 when attending a school board meeting lasting longer than five hours (including travel time); 2) all other board members will be paid \$100.00 per meeting for each school board meeting attended, and will be paid an additional \$50.00 when attending a school board meeting lasting longer than five hours (including travel time); 3) all board members will, in addition to the foregoing, be reimbursed when traveling by automobile in the performance of board duties at the I.R.S. rate per mile in effect at the time such travel occurs; 4) all board members will, in

addition to the foregoing, be reimbursed when traveling in the performance of board duties for actual costs of meals, not to exceed \$25.00 per diem, subject to school board approval; and 5) all board members will, in addition to the foregoing, be reimbursed when traveling in the performance of board duties for actual costs of overnight accommodations, subject to school board approval. Motion carried on a voice vote with Board members abstaining for the vote.

**MOTION BY** Nubs Ashbeck, second by Ron Liberty to adopt Resolution C: Authorizing School Lunch Program designating that the Merrill Area Public School Board shall furnish school lunches to the pupils of the Merrill Area Common Public School District and appropriate funds for the specific purpose. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Superintendent Shannon Murray presented the State of the District to the audience, including such topics as 2023-2024 opportunities and challenges and district goals for 2023-2024.

**MOTION BY** Paul Proulx, second by Ron Liberty to set the next Annual Meeting and Budget Hearing for September 16, 2024. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Chairperson Blake announced that he would entertain any other matters, provided by law, relating to the management of school district affairs. Hearing none, Blake asked for a motion to adjourn.

**MOTION BY** Nubs Ashbeck, second by Linda Yingling to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously on a voice vote. (TIME: 6:10 p.m.)

Kendra Osness  
Clerk, Board of Education

Tammy Woller  
Recorder