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**EAST GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**2915 Hall Street SE**  
**East Grand Rapids, MI 49506**

**James E. Morse, Ed.D.**  
**Superintendent**

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**SPECIAL Meeting of the East Grand Rapids Board of Education**

High School Little Auditorium, 2211 Lake Drive SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

Phone 616-235-3535.

**Monday, April 17, 2006**

**7:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

The SPECIAL MEETING of the East Grand Rapids Public Schools Board of Education, Kent County, Michigan, was held on Monday, April 17, 2006 in the High School Little Auditorium, 2211 Lake Drive SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

**Board of Education:**

**Present:** Mrs. Beth Lent, Mr. Charlie Denton, Mr. Joe Camp, Mrs. Stacy Trierweiler, Mrs. Diane Bok, Mrs. Julie Ridenour, and Mr. Brian Ellis

**Administration:** Dr. James Morse, Mr. Doug Derks, Mr. Pat Cwayna, Mrs. Jeanne Glowicki, Mr. Doug Jenkins,  
Mr. Kevin Philipps

**Meeting Called to Order**

Mrs. Lent called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. (Approx. 25 people in attendance).

**Community Bond Forum**

Mrs. Lent made opening comments and introduced Dr. Morse who welcomed everyone to the meeting. Both he and Mrs. Lent stated that our facilities would be kept up to date with the passage of this bond issue. He also stated that passage of the bond would not increase millage for community members. Dr. Morse introduced Doug Derks who then made introduction of Bill Schoonveld from OAK, Ralph Moxley from URS and Jim Haskins from URS technology. Mr. Derks gave a brief history of the 1995 and 1999 bond issues. He stated that we are not trying to redo what was done previously but add on to what has been done with the previous bond issues. He also reviewed the various projects that have been funded by private donations from citizens in the community.

He reminded everyone that our mission statement is: "Educating and inspiring each student to navigate successfully in a global community." One part of our Strategic Plan (12.4) is the mandate to maintain facilities.

We had URS do a detailed study of each building in the district and meet with administrators of each building. Following this study, a citizens committee evaluated the work of URS and made recommendations to the Board of Education. The Board came up with three proposals, the State of Michigan then reviewed all of the proposals. On February 27<sup>th</sup> the Board called for the election on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Proposal I – Educational Quality (Educational technology, classroom additions, building safety and integrity) at a total cost of \$15,645,000.

Proposal II – Environmental Quality (Air conditioning) at a total cost of \$3,460,000.

Proposal III – Athletic Quality (Auxiliary gym at HS, new synthetic turf for both Mehney and Memorial, new bleachers, Memorial Field/Gerken Plaza completion) at a total cost of \$10,180,000.

The total cost of all three proposals is \$29,285,000

Mr. Moxley gave a review of the various projects for each of the buildings and grounds. Mr. Derks stated we are not only looking at the needs of today, but also looking out 5-10 years in the future and projecting what will be needed.

Mr. Derks gave an overview of how these projects will be paid. He reviewed the original bond from 1999 and showed how the rates would be extended and not added on to.

Mrs. Lent asked for questions from the audience:

Tom Koperski of 2550 Oakwood SE – Asked if the Board has received any negative feedback? Dr. Morse stated that overall we have had a very positive response from people. The main questions and concerns have been about the air conditioning. Classroom additions will be used for early childhood and special education programs both now and in the future.

Diane Angell of 1638 Oxford SE – Stated classroom extensions at Breton Downs will go out about 15 feet – how will this impact the playground? Mr. Moxley addressed this question. She then asked about using Woodcliff space in daycare or preschool? Dr. Morse stated that these programs are now full and are using all of their facilities. He did say that we are in the process of creating an early childhood assessment area (for testing) at Woodcliff.

Jeannine Rizzo 1047 San Lucia – Asked why the bond issue is being touted as no increase in taxes, when in fact, it is an increase when you extend something. She asked why do we market it this way and erode trust of the community? Dr. Morse and Mr. Derks stated that the local tax rate will not increase, debt millage will not go up. Ms. Rizzo asked why now for the bond? Mr. Derks replied that interest rates are favorable at this time. He also stated that some projects need to be completed sooner rather than later and not everything will be started immediately, it will be ongoing over a couple of years.

Steve Wonch 2629 Elmwood – Has concerns regarding duration of bond. He asked if future Board's would be able to do things that will be needed? Mr. Derks said that we will have bond capacity for the future. Mr. Derks also indicated that the State has strict standards on how we can use funds.

Sherri Blair 2629 Elmwood SE – Asked if there is a cost savings on having synthetic turf vs. natural turf? Mr. Derks replied that with natural turf operational costs were very high as it is more labor intensive. He did not have dollar amounts here now but costs have been reduced. Dr. Morse stated that we have had increased use of about 500% with synthetic field – the natural field had restricted use.

Rob Deane – 700 Plymouth SE – Had some comments. He felt there were not any bad or stupid proposals laid out tonight. He said he has appreciated the long-term concern and effectiveness of Mr. Derks, Dr. Morse and

the Board of Education. He stated he has four concerns: 1) Needs vs. wants – what is a real need and what is a want and what is, down the line, nice to have? 2) Timing – he is concerned we are using up our highly rated borrowing capacity up front for projects that will not have a 25-year life span. 3) Leadership – Dr. Morse, Mr. Derks and OAK – the leadership will stop with Dr. Morse and Mr. Derks this summer. He feels we will have untested people to take over with no proven track record. 4) Context – Both the city and the schools – he has concerns regarding the size of the check to pay for taxes. He quoted from Itzak Rabin – “Enough already, enough!” Mrs. Lent responded that she is confident that the leadership going forward will be strong – that is the Board of Education’s responsibility. Mr. Camp reviewed the process of needs vs. wants and the overview of the citizens committee, the Finance Committee and the Board of Education.

Gordon Jones (no address given) – Stated his concerns over the years for maintenance of buildings on a regular basis and energy costs for air conditioning. Mr. Derks stated we already know that we can maintain the facilities with our existing staff. Also, by enhancing energy management systems we trust we will be using energy more efficiently. The Board has already approved an energy program to reduce consumption levels without reducing comfort levels. We are guaranteed to save \$1.4 million over 5 years.

Steve Edison of 2855 Elmwood – Asked if the parking plan, which was looked at two years ago by the city, is included in this plan. Mr. Moxley stated they have talked with city and have ideas to incorporate parking issues at the High School.

Edward Gray of 1115 Lakeside SE – Stated his understanding is that this will be a year round system for humidity control and will not run just when it is warm. Mr. Derks responded that his understanding is correct.

Dr. Morse thanked everyone for coming and stated he and the Board appreciated the questions.

Any other matters that come before the Board - None

### Adjournment

Mrs. Lent adjourned the meeting at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy L. Trierweiler, Secretary  
East Grand Rapids Board of Education

\* Minutes for this meeting will be available in the Superintendent’s Office at 2915 Hall St. SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506. The phone number is 235-3535.

\*\* If you plan to attend and have a special need and require accommodation to attend this meeting, please contact Dr. James Morse at 235-3535.