The regular council meeting of the Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative was held virtually on April 20, 2023 for the purpose of considering business to come before the Council. Chair, Casey Klasna, presided over the meeting.

1. **Call to Order**
Casey Klasna called the meeting to order at **11:05am**.

Members Present: Anderson– Kristi Jacobs; Ennis– Casey Klasna; Gallatin Co. Supt.– John Nielson; LaMotte– LeeAnn Burke; Monforton– Darren Strauch; Willow Creek– Bonnie Lower

Members Absent: Amsterdam– Katherine Dawe; Big Sky– Dustin Shipman; Gallatin Gateway– Kelly Henderson; Harrison– Billi Taylor; West Yellowstone– Coul Hill

Visitors: None

2. **Public Comments**
None

3. **Consent Agenda**
Approval of Minutes & Expenditures

Motion: Darren Strauch
Second: LeeAnn Burke - Passed

Unanimously.

4. **New Business**

a.) **Business Manager’s Report:**
Joyce Schmidt, Business Manager, reported to the Board the cooperative books have been reconciled with the Gallatin County Finance Department [GCFD] through March 2023 with the cash balances per fund for February as well as March provided to the Board. Joyce reported there are four payrolls remaining in the current FY & the cash balances as of March 30th are consistent with expectations for meeting these as well as anticipated expenditures. The anticipated Retirement Fund distribution that was expected in February & was reflected in the number presented to the Board at the previous meeting did not occur in either month but is expected to be distributed in April.

The expenditure reimbursement reports have been submitted to OPI for the cooperative’s five active grants including ESSER II & ESSER III through March. Payment for January & February requests were received & reflected in the March numbers. The March requests are expected to be paid in May due to the OPI review schedule. It remains the cooperative’s intention to expend all ESSER II & III spending authority by June 30th as required by OPI. Joyce reminded the Board there is a remaining balance of $13,491 sent directly to the cooperative that may be used on any purchase(s) normally used for IDEA—a time limit for the expenditure of these dollars.

Expenditures through March 2023 for funds [314 & 382] were as anticipated as well as the YTD figures. The approved budget for these two funds is still expected to be sufficient including the Sick Leave/Personal Leave/Vacation Leave [SL/PL/VL] payout at FY end.

Fund 315 that comprises Medicaid & all grant expenditures is presently at 57% of the approved budget after removing non budgeted items. In comparison the previous FY would be 55% & Joyce reminded the board that the current FY budget is $154,000 less than the previous year.

The West Yellowstone School District has been invoiced for expenditures incurred through March for the Special Education Coordinator position & the cooperative has received payment for all invoices.

The cooperative has met with our MUST representative & received the renewal rates for Plan Year [PY] 2023-2024. Rates were expected to rise anywhere from 3% to 10% for the PY & the GMSEC rates rose 7%. For reference, our current PY increase was 9.2%. Additional plan options have been requested & we will be allowed to select a maximum of four. There is still the possibility of joining other Co-ops but Joyce was not aware of what those plans & rates might be by meeting time.

b.) **Director’s Report:**

Lani has been working with several Special Education teachers who are coming back and trying to model how to efficiently get through an IEP and not skip sections. She plans to continue and asks if anyone is noticing any issues to let her know and she will attend the meetings.
The head of Family Outreach is leaving. Lani plans to put together an action plan for Family Outreach to help facilitate and get things done more quickly.

The Co-op has a Physical Therapist for next year who has tons of experience at Park Co-op and Private Therapy and is very knowledgeable about working in schools. She will be working one day a week and Megan will continue at 4 hours a week. Lani asked if a full Board interview was required? In the past only a recommendation by the Director was required due to the urgency to fill the position with everyone getting snatched up. Lani asked if any of the schools have Special Education Teachers applying to let her know and she can let other schools know as well.

Budget and Resources: Goalbook is pretty expensive at 7K with special rate. Lani will start looking at places where the budget can be shived.

Insurance: MUST is talking with other Co-ops to see if combining with them would drive down the prices any. We are a larger Co-op so we are already getting a better deal. Some worries would be rate increases for the whole group and not being able to pick specific plans anymore. It would be about $60/month per employee in savings. Another potential obstacle would be the need to have a Clerk oversee all the Co-ops, not sure if that would be possible. We will have a better idea by early next week.

c.) Letter of Resignation: Rachel Wright

(Informational)

Rachel Wright submitted her Letter of Resignation as she is moving out of state. She thanked everyone at the Co-op and appreciated everything.

d.) 2023-2024 Discussion of Funding for Behavioral Coordinator Position

(Informational)

Lani has been speaking with a Special Education Teacher and trying to come up with a unique way to utilize her at the Co-op. Her salary would be around 52K-55K a year. There may be funding issues. Lani doesn’t want to only be able to find the funds to hire her this year but then not be able to for another year. It was suggested to look into tapping into school safety funds. This position is not something that the Co-op has had before. The position would be mainly to help with the behavioral aspect, helping with behavior plans, and doing things that the School Psychs don’t always have time to do. The majority of the Board agreed that there is definitely a need and love the idea but don’t know how it can be funded. Darren also stated that they already have a CTST Program that they use so they likely wouldn’t need to use her. John believes that this is a growing need and understands everyone being conservative on funds but also believes that “If we build it they will come” approach might be most appropriate. Joyce suggested carry
over spending authority or dipping into fund balance carry overs. Lani will speak with her and tell her the Board's concerns and see if she would be comfortable taking the risk of not having the funds later.

**e.) Approval of Strom & Associates, P.C. Standard Audit Contract:** July 1, 2023-June 30, 2026; $9,000 per year

*(Motion/Discussion/Action)*

The Co-op was quoted $7,500 but it looks like there will be additional fees. Darren stated that they are using them as well now and they are very thorough and one of the only options the Co-op has.

Motion to approve Strom & Associates, P.C. Standard Audit Contract.

Motion: Darren Strauch  
Second: Kristi Jacobs  
- Passed Unanimously.

**f.) Approval of Lease Agreement at Gallatin Industrial Park:** July 1, 2023-June 30, 2026: $1,296.00 per month ($253 per month paid by Shey Mayland for sublease of office space #3).

*(Motion/Discussion/Action)*

For the last 3 years it was a 3% increase, for the next three years they agreed to a 6% increase. They are keeping it the same rate increase for all three years because they believe the Co-op are good leasers.

Motion to approve Lease Agreement at Gallatin Industrial Park: July 1, 2023-June 30, 2026.

Motion: LeeAnn Burke  
Second: Kristi Jacobs  
- Passed Unanimously.

**g.) Approval of Identification of GMSEC as Partner in Planning Grant Application associated with Gallatin Schools Resource Coalition**

*(Motion/Discussion/Action)*

Lani wasn’t sure if this was something that needed Board approval. Upon discussion it was decided that it wasn’t a bad idea. The Gallatin Schools Resource Coalition are seeking a 50k grant application and are asking all that have been involved to be a partner on the grant application. After further discussion it was determined that there are no strings attached and the
Co-op can pull out at any time.

Motion to approve Identification of GMSEC as a Partner in Planning Grant Application associated with Gallatin Schools Resource Coalition.

Motion: Darren Strauch
Second: John Nielson - Passed Unanimously.

h.) **2023-2024 School Psychologist Personnel/2nd Offer of Contract**

197-day contract: **Jamie Greene**: Ed.S/MA45/Level (f), remain at 1.0 FTE $53,698 ($49,074 Salary and $2,624 (10-additional days @262.43) and $2000 Nat. Stipend)

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Proposing an additional 10 days to the beginning of her contract. Jamie is also moving up a step in the pay matrix. Casey stated that she is doing a great job at his school and looks forward to having her back.

Motion to offer Jamie Greene a contract for the 2023-24 school year.

Motion: Kristi Jacobs
Second: John Nielson - Passed Unanimously.

i.) **2023-2024 School Psychologist Personnel/3rd Offer of Contract**

197-day contract: **Ashley Nash**: Ed.S/MA45/Level (e), remain at 1.0 FTE $52,193 ($47,645 Salary and $2,548 (10-additional days @254.79) and $2000 Nat. Stipend)

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Lani mentioned that she has seen a lot of growth in her this last year and would like to keep her around for a long while.

Motion to offer Ashley Nash a contract for the 2023-24 school year.

Motion: Darren Strauch
Second: Kristi Jacobs - Passed Unanimously.

j.) **2023-2024 School Psychologist/Sped Coordinator Personnel/1st Offer of Contract**

197-day contract: **Kim Wegner-McCauley**: MA60/Level (n), 1.0 FTE $67,455 ($64,031 Salary and $3,424 (10-additional days @342.41)
Kim is a School Psychologist and has her Administrative License. She will be at Monforton primarily and lives in Three Forks so may also be at Willow Creek and Harrison. She has lots of experience in schools. She has no National Certification so she will not be receiving a stipend. The question was asked if Lani believes the extension of 10 additional days will be enough. Lani believes it is a good place to start as she will only be at 3 schools as of now.

Motion to offer Kim Wegner-McCauley a contract for the 2023-24 school year.

Motion: Darren Strauch  
Second: Kristi Jacobs  
-Passed Unanimously

2023-2024 Speech Language Pathologist Personnel/1st Offer of Contract

192-day contract: Alyssa Mount: MA/Level (f), 1.0 FTE $48,111 ($44,910 Salary and $1,201 (5-additional days @240.16) and $2000 Nat. Stipend)

Alyssa is from Belgrade School District and has Private Practice experience as well as time spent in middle schools. She was hard to recruit because she had worked her way up on the pay matrix so 5 additional days were added to her contract to make up for it. She will be coming into an established caseload and help from Rachel.

Motion to offer Alyssa Mount a contract for the 2023-24 school year.

Motion: LeeAnn Burke  
Second: Kristi Jacobs  
-Passed Unanimously

2023-2024 Personnel: Physical Therapist /2nd Offer of Contract

19-day contract: Megan Kemp: $61.80/hr (19 days, 150 hrs.); 0.1 FTE equivalent; $9,270

Megan agreed to stay on if she can continue at 4 hours per week. She will be at Amsterdam School and will have a 3% pay increase.

Motion to offer Megan Kemp a contract for the 2023-24 school year.

Motion: Darren Strauch
m. **2023-2024 Office Personnel Offer of Contracts**

8th contract offer for Riley Russell, Executive Assistant: $19.95/hr. (1016 hrs., 127 days); 0.6FTE equivalent; $20,270

*(Motion/Discussion/Action)*

This reflects a 3% increase.

Motion to offer Riley Russell a contract for the 2023-24 school year.

Motion: Darren Strauch
Second: John Nielson - Passed Unanimously.

8th contract offer for Joyce Schmidt, Business Manager/Clerk: $24.60/hr. (856 hrs., 107 days); 0.5FTE equivalent; $21,058

*(Motion/Discussion/Action)*

This reflects a 3% increase.

Motion to offer Joyce Schmidt a contract for the 2023-24 school year.

Motion: John Nielson
Second: LeeAnn Burke - Passed Unanimously.

5. **Board Meeting Schedule and Future Agenda Items:**

*(Informational)*

- May 18th - virtual
- **June 15th (In Person)** - Kristi and Casey will not be available, may want to move the date.

The question was asked if it has been discussed if Lani will have a pay increase? It has not been discussed yet but will talk about it in the May meeting.

6. **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn meeting at 12:16pm.

Motion: Kristi Jacobs
Second: Darren Strauch - Passed

Unanimously.

Submitted by: ___________________________ Date:

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Board Chair: ___________________________ Date:

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