The regular council meeting of the Gallatin-Madison Special Education Cooperative was held via Zoom video Conference on February 22, 2022 for the purpose of considering business to come before the Council. Chair, Katherine Dawe, presided over the meeting.

1. **Call to Order**

Katherine Dawe called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Members Present: Amsterdam-- Katherine Dawe; Anderson--Kristi Jacobs(left 1:56pm); Big Sky-- Dustin Shipman; Ennis-- Casey Klasna; Gallatin Co. Supt.--Matthew Henry; Harrison--Billi Taylor; West Yellowstone—Brian Smith; Willow Creek-- Bonnie Lower

Members Absent: Monforton--Darren Strauch; LaMotte--LeeAnn Burke; Gallatin Gateway--Theresa Keel

Visitors: None

2. **Public Comments**

None

Staff Present: Michelle Halberg, Director; Riley Russell, Executive Assistant; Joyce Schmidt, Clerk & Business Manager

Staff Absent: Lani Smith, Special Ed Coordinator

3. **Consent Agenda**

Approval of:

Motion to approve the minutes of January 20, 2022 as well as expenditures (#317316-317333)

Motion: Brian Smith
Second: Casey Klasna - Passed Unanimously.

4. **New Business:**

a.) **2022-2023 Director of Special Education: Personnel Committee Recommendation:**

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

Katherine Dawe, Board Chair, presented the recommendation from the personnel committee which included herself, Casey Klasna, Dustin Shipman, Shannon Childs, Jenifer Lewis, Joyce Schmidt. The committee thanked Mrs. Dawe for her organization in the process from review of applications, selection for interview and interviews. Mrs. Dawe shared that she and the committee are still working on contract details with Lani.

*Motion to hire Lani Smith as the GMSEC Special Education Director for 2022-2023*

Motion: Kristi Jacobs
Second: Casey Klasna - Passed Unanimously

b.) **West Yellowstone Request for Special Ed Teacher Services for 2022-2023:**

(Motion/Discussion/Action)

West Yellowstone School District Superintendent, Brian Smith, presented his request for the special education teacher services for the 2022-2023 school year. He shared the challenges he has faced in the past year to recruit an additional teacher for this year that are still a barrier to securing a certified teacher next year, primarily housing. While he
and the school board are working together to provide teacher housing there is nothing in place at this time nor for the Fall 2022. He and Michelle reviewed caseload and workload demands for this position and agreed that it would support two full-time special education teachers.

Michelle shared her concerns regarding this request that she and Brian had already discussed and as outlined in the Director’s Report. The primary concern includes the size of the caseload/workload could not be met through an itinerant teacher with a compressed work day due to travel demands. Basically, the Cooperative’s provision of an itinerant teacher driving from the Bozeman area to West is insufficient to provide services to students in a shortened day and likely shortened week. Cancellation of services due to road conditions was also considered. Given this, the district and the cooperative would be at risk for denial of FAPE to students with disabilities. While itinerant staff can support a District’s full-time teacher this too is problematic given travel from the Cooperative. The cost of an additional fleet vehicle and cost of gas to send an itinerant staff member to West was discussed. The board asked questions and discussed at length the pros and cons of approving this request.

*Motion to approve West Yellowstone’s request for special education teacher services for 2022-2023 school year.*

Motion: Brian Smith
Second: Matthew Henry
-Motion Failed Unanimously

c.) GMSEC Policy Update: Second Reading/Approval: 4000 Series: (Motion/Discussion/Action)

Minimal changes were made and this is the last policy that needs to be updated in the series. Joyce and Riley now have access to Dropbox where updates will be posted in the future.

*Motion to approve the 4000 Series of the Policy manual.*

Motion: Kristi Jacobs
Second: Casey Klasna
-Passed Unanimously.

d.) 2022-2023 SLP and SLP-A Personnel/ Offer of Contracts: (Motion/Discussion/Action)

12th contract offer for Shannon Childs: MA45/Level (r), remain at 1.0 FTE
$71,968 ($69,968 Salary and $2,000 Nat. Stipend)

9th contract offer for Amanda Massey: MA 30/Level (i), decrease to .6 FTE
$32,438 ($31,238 Salary and $1,200 Nat. Stipend)

5th contract offer for Rachel Wright: MA15/Level (f), remain at 1.0 FTE
$48,257 ($46,257 Salary and $2,000 Nat. Stipend)

4th contract offer for Amber Fortier: MA30/Level (e), decrease to .8 FTE
$38,606 ($37,006 Salary and $1,600 Nat. Stipend)

4th contract offer for Danielle White: BA/Level (f), remain at .8 FTE
$30,107 (Salary)

Michelle shared that Amber Fortier is making a lane change as well as reducing her FTE from full time to .8FTE. Amanda Massey is reducing her FTE from .8 to .6 FTE. The SLP-A, Laurie Smith, is not returning next year. There is a need for additional Speech
services due to growth in schools, distance schools having a shortened day and need to contain the amount of driving to these schools to two days.

**Motion to offer contracts to the Speech-Language Pathologists and Speech-Language Aide for the 2022-2023.**

Motion: Kristi Jacobs  
Second: Brian Smith  
-Passed Unanimously.

c.) **2022-2023 O.T. Personnel/Offer of Contracts:** (Motion/Discussion/Action)

12th contract offer for **Jenifer Lewis**: MA 60/Level (r), remain at 1.0 FTE  
$74,067 ($72,067 Salary and $2,000 Nat. Stipend)

3rd contract offer for **Julie Zimmerman**: MA/Level (f), remain at .6 FTE  
$28,146 ($26,946 Salary; 1,200 Nat. Stipend)

**Motion to offer contracts to the Occupational Therapists below for the 2022-2023.**

Motion: Kristi Jacobs  
Second: Casey Klasna  
-Passed Unanimously.

f.) **2022-2023 Special Ed. Teacher Personnel/Offer of Contract:** (Motion/Discussion/Action)

3rd contract offer for **Julia Tucker**: BA/Level (d) remain at 1.0 FTE  
$35,474 (Salary)

**Motion to offer a contract to Julia Tucker for 2022-2023**

Motion: Kristi Jacobs  
Second: Bonnie Lower  
-Passed Unanimously.

5.) **Cooperative Business Manager’s Report:**

Joyce reported to the Board that the cooperative books have been reconciled with the Gallatin County Finance Department through January & the cash balances by fund remain stable with sufficient cash flow to avoid any negative month end cash balances. Further, she reported that all grants having expenditures through January have been submitted to OPI for reimbursement & have been approved by them. The payments from OPI for January expenditures will be reflected in the February financial reports except for the IDEA-B/ARP that will be in March. The delay was the result of a budget transfer that had to be submitted to & approved by OPI before the request could be submitted.

On the expenditure side the cooperative continues to be mindful of increasing needs & our realistic future funding sources. Effort is being made to shift all allowable expenditures from the IDEA-B grant for the remainder of the FY to the ESSER II [Special Needs] & ESSER III grants being mindful to supplement not supplant. Spending FYTD by fund remains consistent with expectations as noted on financial reports provided to the Board in their meeting packets.

6.) **Director’s Report (Informational):**

Michelle referenced her Director’s report for the language within the GMSEC Interlocal Agreement that outlines that process when a district is requesting special education services that they didn’t have in the previous year.

There are two School Psychologist interns who have expressed interest in the Co-op’s vacancies. With Lani as Special Education Director, the Cooperative will need two full time School Psychologists. Michelle will
be reaching out to administrators to form an interview committee in the next several weeks and include Lani in the selection committee. There is one individual interested in the part-time SLP position and Michelle will set up an interview with select board members and Rachel Wright in the next few weeks.

Michelle thanked the board for their support of her conducting staff negotiations this year. The Professional Agreement and Staff Handbook will include the following: A new BA matrix with the corner increase to $34,44; a BA and MA salary matrix that includes more steps for longevity in the last two columns; and a change to sick leave definition and payout of unused sick leave annually that is over the bank of 60 days. Michelle will have the 2022-2023 draft staff handbook ready by April’s board meeting for review and approval.

7. **2021-2022 Board Meeting Schedule and Future Agenda Items: (Informational)**

   *March Thursday 24th* or 31st
   *April 21st*
   *May 19th*
   *June 16th In Person*

8. **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn meeting at 2:13pm.

   Motion: Dustin Shipman
   Second: Bonnie Lower
   -Passed Unanimously.

   Submitted by: ________________________________ Date: ________________

   Board Chair: ________________________________ Date: ________________