

GRAND FORKS SCHOOL BOARD
GRAND FORKS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
July 14, 2025

The School Board of Grand Forks Public School District No. 1 held its annual meeting on Monday, July 14, 2025, at the Mark Sanford Education Center, with Superintendent Dr. Terry Brenner and President Dave Berger presiding.

Board Members Present: Josh Anderson, Dave Berger, Amber Flynn (via phone), Dr. Sherry Houdek, Jay Kleven, Joel Larson, Eric Lunn, Jeff Manley, and Bill Palmiscno. **Absent:** None.

Others Present: Dr. Terry Brenner, Superintendent of Schools; Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager; Dr. Catherine Gillach, Associate Superintendent of Secondary Education; Matt Bakke, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education; Brady Olson, President of the Grand Forks Education Association; Laura D. Cobb, Attorney; Jonathan Ellwein, Director of Buildings and Grounds; and Cindy Johnson, Executive Secretary.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Brenner as Presiding Officer:

calling for nominations three additional times, no other nominations were made.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m., and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

It was moved by Kleven and seconded by Palmiscno to close nominations for president. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Anderson, Berger, Flynn, Houdek, Kleven, Larson, Lunn, Manley, and Palmiscno. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Reading of School Board Meeting Norms.

Baumbach read aloud the meeting norms.

Declaration of 2025-2026 School Board.

Baumbach declared membership on the Grand Forks Public School District No. 1 School Board as follows:

It was moved by Larson and seconded by Kleven to elect Dave Berger as president of the Grand Forks School Board for the fiscal year 2025-2026. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Palmiscno, Manley, Lunn, Larson, Kleven, Houdek, Flynn, Berger, and Anderson. Nay: None. Absent: None.

<u>Board Member</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
1. Josh Anderson	June 2026
2. Dave Berger	June 2026
3. Amber Flynn	June 2028
4. Dr. Sheryl Houdek	June 2026
5. Jay Kleven	June 2028
6. Joel Larson	June 2026
7. Eric R. Lunn	June 2028
8. Jeff Manley	June 2028
9. Bill Palmiscno	June 2026

President Berger as Presiding Officer:

Election of Vice President of the School Board.

Berger called for nominations for vice president of the school board. Palmiscno nominated Anderson. After calling for nominations three additional times, no other nominations were made.

Election of President of the School Board.

Dr. Brenner called for nominations for president of the school board. Lunn nominated Berger. After

It was moved by Kleven and seconded by Manley to close nominations for vice president. Upon a

roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Lunn, Flynn, Palmiscno, Larson, Kleven, Houdek, Anderson, Manley, and Berger. Nay: None. Absent: None.

It was moved by Manley and seconded by Kleven to elect Josh Anderson as vice president of the Grand Forks School Board for the fiscal year 2025-2026. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Houdek, Larson, Manley, Kleven, Anderson, Flynn, Palmiscno, Lunn, and Berger. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Approval of Agenda.

It was moved by Manley and seconded by Kleven to approve the agenda as written. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Palmiscno, Anderson, Lunn, Flynn, Larson, Manley, Kleven, Houdek, and Berger. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Public Comments.

Mona Leake, Andrew Krauseneck, Mary Koponen, and Bob Cowger spoke in opposition to the request for payment in lieu of taxes for Northridge Properties.

Finance Committee Report.

Baumbach and Palmiscno reported that the committee discussed the general impact of a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) with specific examples of both PILOTS and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) incentives.

Attorney Cobb participated in a general Q&A about the process related to the school district's role in considering PILOTS.

School Board Regular Meeting Schedule for 2025-2026.

Dr. Brenner outlined a proposed school board regular meeting schedule, based on current policy and practice. The schedule includes a special meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 29, 2025.

It was moved by Kleven and seconded by Larson to approve the school board's regular meeting

schedule for 2025-2026, including the July 29 special meeting and July 13, 2026, annual meeting as outlined. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Larson, Palmiscno, Kleven, Lunn, Manley, Anderson, Houdek, Flynn, and Berger. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Consent Agenda.

It was moved by Palmiscno and seconded by Anderson to approve the consent agenda as follows:

- June 9, 16, and 26, 2025, school board meeting minutes as written;
- Teacher appointment effective August 18, 2025, of Anna Marie Fernandez, autism teacher, salary placement at BA/BS, Step 1, \$64,043;
- Designation of the *Grand Forks Herald* as the official newspaper of Grand Forks Public School District #1;
- Use of up to \$486,267.58 Building Fund dollars for leases including Shared Use Agreement with Parks, GFC Parking Ramp, SAIL Center-Olive Anne, community High School, GFC Qwest Lot, Phoenix United Lutheran, Maintenance Garage, and various facility rentals, and to permit the future expense of building and facility leases to be paid from the building fund; and
- Transfer of \$886,223.28 from the special reserve fund to the general fund to offset over-budget salary expenses.

Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Kleven, Manley, Houdek, Anderson, Flynn, Larson, Lunn, Palmiscno, and Berger. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Consideration of Use of Building Fund Dollars for Summer Projects.

Baumbach and Ellwein reported that this request includes painting of the Cushman Field press box and paneling, carpet replacement at Red River High School Room 611, and a 10% contingency.

It was moved by Manley and seconded by Larson to approve the use of \$16,630.86 Building Fund

dollars for the summer projects as outlined. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Manley, Lunn, Larson, Palmiscno, Houdek, Kleven, Flynn, Anderson, and Berger. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Consideration of Proposal for Food Service Disposable Supplies.

Baumbach reported that three proposals were received and reviewed by Wendy Mankie, Director of the Child Nutrition Program, and himself.

It was moved by Palmiscno and seconded by Kleven to accept the proposal from Cole Paper for \$106,626 to provide food service disposable supplies. Upon a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. Aye: Anderson, Houdek, Flynn, Manley, Lunn, Palmiscno, Larson, Kleven, and Berger. Nay: None. Absent: None.

Consideration of Payment in Lieu of Taxes for Agristo North Dakota LLC.

Grand Forks City Administrator Todd Feland and Grand Forks Mayor Brandon Bochenski spoke in support of the project.

Agristo, a family-owned potato processing company based in Belgium, has informed the City of Grand Forks that it intends to build its first North American facility in Grand Forks. The final decision is contingent on certain conditions related to infrastructure, incentives, and finalizing competitive BNSF transportation rates.

The Grand Forks site represents an initial investment of at least \$450 million in the first phase of development. In addition, there is an associated and collaborative agreement of approximately \$150 million for on-farm or off-site grower storage. The groundbreaking is scheduled for the spring of 2026, with plans to commence operations in summer or fall 2028. The investment is expected to create 300-350 direct jobs and stimulate indirect investments in agriculture and supply chains, significantly boosting local and regional economies.

To support the project, the city is pursuing a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) incentive of 90% for 20 years. With the incentive, the school district is expected to see an increase in property taxes from \$68,186 (current) to \$179,433 (commencing post-construction), with an annual receipt of \$1,410,218 in perpetuity once the PILOT expires. Additionally, economic modeling estimates an increase in student enrollment due to the project, ranging from 59 to 99, which could result in per-pupil payments increasing from \$669,591 to \$1,123,551.

Following discussion, it was moved by Kleven and seconded by Palmiscno to approve the PILOT request for a 90% property tax exemption for 20 years as outlined. Following additional discussion, the motion carried by a roll call vote. Aye: Flynn, Kleven, Anderson, Palmiscno, Lunn, and Berger. Nay: Houdek, Manley, and Larson. Absent: None.

Consideration of Request for Payment in Lieu of Taxes for Northridge Properties 01 LLC dba The Reserve.

Grand Forks City Administrator Todd Feland and Grand Forks Mayor Brandon Bochenski spoke in support of the project. Attorneys Daniel Gaustad, representing the City of Grand Forks, and Laura Cobb, representing the school district, and Mikaela Huot of Baker Tilly (via phone) participated in the discussions.

The proposed Northridge Construction development, The Reserve, is a multi-family development at 4551 South 17th Street (near the Sanford Clinic and Edgewood Grand Forks) and is currently zoned appropriately. The proposed development is a significant private development investment. The developer is Northridge Construction.

The development includes approximately 155 residential rental units with underground parking. The proposed start date is August 2025, with a completion date of March 2027. The development project is estimated to be a \$38 million investment. The development project will

not require significant public infrastructure development, as it is an infill development and is served by public infrastructure. The developer is requesting the consideration of a tax incentive exemption for a period of greater than five (5) years. The development will meet the Grand Forks community's strategic interest in growing the tax and economic base and provide further needed housing opportunities.

To support the project, the city is pursuing a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) incentive of 15 years of 90% for years 1-5, 80% for years 6-10, and 60% for years 11-15. With the incentive, the school district is expected to see an increase in property taxes from \$6,199 (current) to \$41,696 (commencing the second 5-year period), to \$80,798 (commencing the third 5-year period), with an annual receipt of \$201,504 in perpetuity once the PILOT expires.

Following discussion, it was moved by Flynn and seconded by Houdek to reject the PILOT application of Northridge Properties dba The Reserve PILOT application because it would be in the best interest of the district to receive the full amount of tax benefit from the start and moving forward and belief that the developer would be able to figure out how to move forward with the project.

It was moved by Lunn and seconded by Anderson to amend the motion to indicate that the board is willing to enter into negotiations for a different set of terms. Upon a roll call vote, the motion to amend carried. Aye: Palmiscno, Lunn, Larson, Kleven, Anderson, and Berger. Nay: Manley, Houdek, and Flynn. Absent: None.

Upon a roll-call vote, the motion as amended carried. Aye: Anderson, Kleven, Larson, Lunn, Palmiscno, and Berger. Nay: Flynn, Houdek, and Manley. Absent: None.

Announcements.

- SPA is wrapping up at Grand Forks Central and starts at Red River High School this week.

- Emily Dawes is a finalist for North Dakota Teacher of the Year.
- Applications are being accepted until August 1 for the Northeast Region Director on the NDSBA Board of Directors.

Board Requests for Future Consideration.

Palmiscno asked if the administration was aware of the large holding pond that is being built by Discovery Elementary School. Bakke will look into this.

School Board Meeting Norms—How Did We Do?

Baumbach reported that the board did very well in following its meeting norms.

Adjournment.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

APPROVED: _____
(Date)

Dave Berger, President

Brandon Baumbach, Business Manager