



**BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes**

Date of Meeting: March 31, 2014
Type of Meeting: **SPECIAL BUDGET WORKSHOP**
Location: School 12

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

At 6:00 pm Mr. Jason Schofield, President, called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mr. Jason Schofield, President
Mr. Bill Strang, Vice President
Mrs. Ann Apicella
Ms. Elizabeth Denio
Mrs. Carol Harvin
Mr. Tom Mayo
Mr. Michael Tuttman
Ms. Martha Walsh

Members Absent: Mrs. Anne Wager-Rounds

Also Present: Mr. John Carmello, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Donna Watson, Assistant Super (Executive Session only)
of Curriculum and Instruction
Ms. Mary O'Neill, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Ms. Kathy Ahearn, School Attorney

Also Absent: Mrs. Kristen Miaski, Director of Human Resources

CAC Members: Mary Ellen Adams Mary Marro-Giroux
Present: David Heyward Aimee Rigney
Ken Hughes Jeannie Steigler

CAC Member Tom Meyer
Absent:

III. PUBLIC SESSION

At 6:00 pm Mr. Schofield called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. BUDGET PRESENTATION - DRAFT 4

State Aid - Mr. Carmello reported good news regarding State Aid revenue received this morning. Troy will get an increase of \$1,453,077 in additional aid, mainly due to the GEA restoration. He feels the 1,700 letters and advocacy efforts paid off. Mr. Carmello is happy that we should be able to maintain all programs and no layoffs. We have creatively found savings with as little negative impact on students as possible and been fiscally responsible to our taxpayers.

Charter Tuition - There is no update on Charter tuition rates. District can choose between "frozen" rate or "unfrozen" rate but unfrozen rate is unknown at this point. If rate is lower, we still pay \$15,986 per student and State reimburses District for the difference. We still have many unanswered questions.

Tax Cap - Troy's tax cap is 3.61% based on PILOTS. We need to consider effects beyond next year's budget and strategically plan for the next 3-5 years.

Property Tax Freeze - Modified version of Governor's proposal is in the final budget. For 2014-15 taxpayers from school districts who stay under the tax cap will have no increase in their property taxes. This will come in the form of a rebate/credit from the State. In 2015-16, Districts that stay under the tax cap and that share services, taxpayers will again see a rebate for the full amount of the tax increase.

Mr. Carmello stated the Board needs to decide how far under the tax cap our levy will be. There will be 0% for taxpayer next year per the Governor; but we will have a better foundation for the following year. Retro aid is a one-time revenue in building aid and we do Mrs. Adams hopes the reduction in the GEA is every year and becomes the norm. However, it is possible that the State will stay at 0% for two years and we come back for more in the third year.

Tax Levy - Mr. Carmello explained to get our tax levy to 2.99% we need to cut 2 teachers from the Principal's "wish list" but these are not layoffs. If Ark students return we will need more staff; the savings from tuition will pay for these staff. Ms. Marro-Giroux asked if staff would be able to meet needs of special education services with additional students. Mr. Mayo added the savings from Ark tuition will pay for staff. Mr. Schofield asked why we are not using interfund transfers. Ms. O'Neill responded she could not justify a transfer. We have less due to free lunches which has paid for monitors.

Mrs. Harvin said the numbers can change because enrollment from the Charter school is not known. Mr. Carmello said we are having an Open House on Monday for Ark families at the Middle School. We will not have full numbers until we get invoices and into the beginning of the next school year.

Contingency Budget - The laws have changed regarding a contingency budget. New SED regulations regarding 0% tax levy increase on a contingency budget. From the \$106,959,708 budget, that would mean an additional \$1,194,624 in expenditure cuts. This would be devastating for our students so we want to present a budget that voters will approve.

Mrs. Adams said that if levy is 0%, taxpayers will make up for it somewhere else. We should not look at this at face value. She is concerned if the State pulls back aid it could be very high at the end of 3 years.

Mr. Heyward said there might be a problem because people read we received so much Aid, why are we looking at a tax levy.

Mr. Carmello said that 21% for Troy was misrepresented in the media. Once aid is taken out, we are in the middle at 7%. We are pleased with \$1.4 million and we feel legislators took care of us.

Ms. Steigler stated that if tax levy is 2.99% then next year cap that cap will be 1.5% and this will be difficult.

Mrs. Harvin said Mr. Carmello made an excellent presentation. It will be good for the public that there are no increases but nothing is free and we will have to make it up next year. She is not sure which way to go with the tax levy. Parents left Troy schools for a reason; do we know why they left? Mr. Carmello stated Rosemary Fagan has talked with each parent and gotten feedback.

Mr. Carmello said 2.99% levy is based conservative estimate of 85 students returning. If we budget for 95 students instead, it would be us 2.99% without any cuts.

V. PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Seth Cohen (TTA President) - We have to realize we will get back refund, but it has to come from somewhere. He will reach out to 500 United Teachers in 12180 zip code to advocate for the budget.

VI. BOARD MEMBER RESIGNATION

Martha Walsh has submitted her resignation to the Board Clerk effective April 1, 2014. Ms. Walsh was originally elected in 2009 and her term was to expire on June 30, 2015. The Board will fill the vacancy of her unexpired 1-year term at the May 20, 2014 election. Mr. Schofield presented Ms. Walsh with flowers and stated it has been a pleasure to work with her. Ms. Walsh stated we have come a long way in the five years she served; Troy has had three superintendents during that time.

Mrs. Harvin congratulated Ms. Walsh and she will miss her.

VII. MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:55 pm Mr. Schofield made a motion to adjourn the public meeting and move to Executive Session for the purpose of a Superintendent's Appeal. This was seconded by Mr. Strang and carried 9-0. Invited in was Mr. Carmello and Ms. Ahearn.

VIII. ADJOURN

The Executive Session was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Mary Beth Bruno
Board Clerk