

**THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
YOUNGSTOWN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO**

20 West Wood Street

April 25, 2017

The Youngstown Board of Education met in regular session at the I.L. Ward Building on April 25, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by President Brenda Kimble. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Roll call was taken with the following board members in attendance:

Members present: Hunter, Shadd, Kimble, Murphy, Williams, Adair
Ms. Sanderson arrived at 5:36 pm.
CEO Mohip attended the meeting.

Members absent: None

APPROVE AGENDA

It was motioned by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mr. Shadd to approve the agenda as presented.

Roll call vote results were as follows:

Ayes: Shadd, Kimble, Murphy, Williams
Abstain: Hunter, Adair

Ms. Sanderson had not arrived at meeting for this vote.

Motion passed.

APPROVE MINUTES

It was motioned by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mr. Shadd to approve the following minutes:

Special Meeting – Work Session

April 10, 2017

Regular Meeting

April 11, 2017

On roll call vote the results were as follows:

Ayes: Shadd, Kimble, Murphy, Williams, Adair
Nays: Hunter

Motion passed.

CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION

Tammi Givens addressed the board, she wanted to know if the children who were currently attending Chaney VPA or Stem were going to be allowed to stay at the school. Her son started at Chaney in the 6th grade when the program began and to move him would be pretty bad because he would have to leave all his friends and next year will be his senior year. Was the district going to take these types of concerns into consideration on how this type of move was going to affect the children? She stated that she thought it would be terrible for them not to be able to finish out what they are doing over at the VPA School.

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

Ms. Sanderson announced that Magistrate Anthony Sertick had a prior engagement and would not be able to make his presentation but it would be done at another time.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ms. Tyson notified the board that the district had purchased the services of an outside firm to create the five year forecast and that it should be ready for presentation at the next CEO meeting and at the first board meeting in May.

BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS

Mr. Hunter commented about the reorganization of the district stating that he felt having neighborhood schools was a positive step however considering other issues such as low scores and students who are leaving and going to other districts, it does not appear to be of enough benefit to put the district in this kind of upheaval right now. Mr. Hunter went on to say that since someone was brought in solely for the purpose of turning this district around academically then the primary focus of that new regime should be attacking whatever is standing in the way of our student academic achievement. He said he did not see a clear connection between the school change, or a plan for the academic slide of our children and if he did see it then he felt it would be alright to put students through the upheaval because of the potential for a brighter future. Mr. Hunter said he did not see a plan and he was worried that the new regime was willing to put the district through so much change for so little achievement. He said it worried him that the new regime was more interested in window dressing than really tackling the issues that will lead to our children performing better, learning better and growing. Mr. Hunter named several issues that he thought should have been addressed first such as bullying and college readiness.

Mr. Shadd talked about the reconfiguration and addressed the issue of students walking out at Chaney and said that he wishes the students had had an opportunity to be heard prior to this rollout. Mr. Shadd said he had a concern about the students who attend YEC being moved, they pay tuition and they should not be treated as second class students to YSU. He felt like the students gain a certain amount of maturity being involved in the campus environment and he is not against extending the program but he is against moving the program from YSU campus. He stated that when he thinks about HB70 and the father of that plan he wonders if this is what YSU gets out of the deal for being involved with the plan is to get our students off the campus. Another concern was how the CEO planned on having enough seventh and eighth grade teachers for all the buildings in his K-8 reorganization plan as well as the ability to give all students the

comprehensive services they need. He was also concerned about the routing of children from K to 8 schools to the high schools stating he did not feel that there was going to be racial balance in classrooms when students are moved, however he did like the fact that the bus rides would be shorter and that there would be more sports. He said he felt afterschool programming should have been addressed as well.

Mr. Murphy said he is in favor of neighborhood schools if they are truly neighborhood schools. He said his problem with the plan was YEC, he did not want it moved from the campus and he cannot see why a program that is doing well would be changed. Mr. Murphy said he would like to know the true cost of putting this building back into action for students compared to what we spend for the students to stay on campus. He also stated that the CEO committee would be meeting with Mr. Mohip the next day (Wednesday) and they would dig into the question deeper.

Mr. Williams said his biggest concern about the reorganization plan was that the board had been left completely out. He said he understands we have a CEO but they are the elected officials that represent the community and it appears to him that a lot of the people making the plans are not elected officials and may not know some of the history or issues our district went through. Moving our students again that is where the board could have said that is a problem. He said if we are struggling with academics then that is the job of the leadership team to make it work. Mr. Williams said again we do have a CEO but with respect to the board he could have said let's sit down together and save our kids. He said we have to work together and bring all the players to the table. He also said Mr. CEO has the final say so but he may not have the proper information because he has not been around here that long to know it. No disrespect to the CEO but when you make those decisions everybody needs to be at the table.

Ms. Adair started by saying that her fellow board members had covered much of what she wanted to say. In terms of the reconfiguration of the district, she had told CEO Mohip that neighborhood schools were a good idea but her concern is how much? She addressed the issue of YEC moving to the Ward building by stating that the board paid roughly \$30,000 to two consultant firms to tell us what it would cost to move out, what we would save to move out a half million or more. Ms. Adair also said the consultants told the board that there is plenty of room over at East to accommodate all the offices. She went on to say now we are not going to move out and the senior team wants to bring YEC over to this building from YSU campus. She said she did not remember what the quote was for the bathrooms, Ms. Kimble said the quote was around \$250,000 just to do the restrooms and make them handicap accessible. Ms. Adair then said she is a tax payer in this City and said she is not going to support another property tax levy until she sees some academic improvement, stating that we spend \$16,000 per student and we are still in the academic swamp. She questioned the CEO on how the district was going to get 650 children to come to the school at the rate we are losing students even though YEC is a good program. She said it is Mr. Mohip's decision but she does not see where moving the students from the campus is beneficial.

Ms. Sanderson said she wanted to talk about the safety and security of our students in the district. She is concerned about students being placed in a preK-8 building and stated there is no research as far as she knows that shows that being able to walk to school will help you learn how to read or change the report card. She said she had thirty police calls in her hand from one school that the board did not know about. She went on to say that there is this perception that the board will not work with them but this is not true, the incidents had been covered up. She said if you cannot keep high school students safe how could she trust that you can keep the littlest students

safe. She said there were some serious concerns listed on the reports, criminal assault and criminal trespassing. She did not want the parents to think that the board did not care, they just did not know. Ms. Sanderson said her daughter was attacked and nothing was done, three people attacked her and she was suspended for fighting them off. She said she spoke to administration and they would not comply with police or turnover any video tape, also the incident was posted on social media which is cyber bullying. She said the US Supreme Court has ruled that schools may be liable for failing to address student on student harassment at school. Ms. Sanderson said there is more than one reason why we are losing students or why students are failing, they need to feel safe; they cannot learn if they do not feel safe, that should be our first objective. She ended by saying this would be her daughters last school year at the district because she was pulling her out.

Ms. Kimble said she felt the same as the rest of the board members, especially about Youngstown Early College. Why would you dismantle something that works because you can expand without dismantling Youngstown Early College and regardless to some of the comments she has heard from the senior administration the program is great. She said the last Ohio Schools Board banquet she attended the State of Ohio gave the program an award so how are we arguing with that fact. Ms. Adair said she felt the program should be left alone and left where it is. The students have opportunities to attend different functions on the campus that they will not have if they are in this building. She said they are taking the early college experience away and she thinks that it is a poor move. Ms. Kimble said that when HB70 was meeting she received several letters from someone that was a part of building that law and in the notes it said to keep the successes of Youngstown Early College a secret, because they did not want Youngstown City Schools to look like they were making any progress in any manner or in any way. Ms. Kimble said she would think that academics would be the most important thing worked on for our students. Ms. Kimble asked that the numbers of student leaving the district during fiscal year 15 and 16 be checked. Ms. Kimble said the district did not have to bring back pride because they already had pride. Ms. Kimble said parents have told her that they did not have a say, they attended meetings and answered a questionnaire but did not get to speak. Ms. Kimble ended by saying if this is a community thing then who in the community is approving this.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Kimble said she had listened to Mr. Hunter give a great report on what the finance committee was trying to accomplish and wanted to hand out the attached print out with information that would let the Mr. Shadd and Ms. Adair know what issues they should address under HB70. This would help the HB70 and Finance committee not to overlap as much and enable Mr. Shadd and Ms. Adair to be more effective in their duties with the HB70 committee.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business listed but Mr. Shadd started to talk about YEC moving to the Ward building and whether it would give the CEO power reallocate this building or to give the building to YSU or someone else. He said part of what his committee would be doing is looking into what happens to this building when deemed a school and what the authority of the CEO is now to move that property.

Ms. Adair said there was a 100% tax abatement request that did not need to go to executive session and she would like to go into executive session for a complaint about an employee. Ms.

Kimble said the boards' representative from the distress commission was there and she wanted him to come to the executive session.

Ms. Adair said the request is for 100% from Wells Associated Renaissance Partners, LLC. Mr. Murphy explained that this was the Wells building downtown across from the Voinovich building. Ms. Adair said she is not in favor of people with millions of dollars asking for abatements to support their financial situation on the backs of poor folks and she is a taxpayer who pays taxes and is asking that the board say no by resolution or motion vote no on the 100%.

Mr. Hunter stated that he is not in favor of any tax abatement. He said the bottom line is if you really love our city and love our children then pay the taxes and support their education because the average Youngstown home owner is despite the fact that the median income is \$24,000 they are paying the taxes to support our children. He said the levy issue is important because are we passing levies to subsidize private business since that money is coming out through tax abatements. Mr. Hunter said as a board and community we need to stand against those who want to prey on our children through tax abatements that take money out of the coffers for our children.

Mr. Williams said he has a problem with the tax abatements because the city does not enforce the best effort of the vendors to make them fulfill their commitment. He said you have to look at each case separately but if we are giving the dollars away then we need to look at how are our children will benefit from this action. He said he agrees with Ms. Adair that it may be a little bit of corporate welfare.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was motioned by Ms. Adair to adjourn to executive session for the purpose of an investigation of an employee and to have our member of the academic distress commission speak to us on matters that should be addressed in executive session. Mr. Hunter asked for more clarification on the motion. Ms. Adair restated the motion to adjourn to executive session for the purposes of investigation of charges or complaints against an employee and for legal information that I believe belongs in executive session by a member of the academic distress commission. Mr. Hunter said that the second part of the motion was not covered by executive session, it was too general. Ms. Adair then restated saying matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or rules or state statute. It was seconded by Ms. Kimble.

Roll call vote results were as follows:

Ms. Kimble stated there would be no formal action taken when the regular meeting resumed.

The board entered executive session at 0:00 p.m.

The board exited executive session at 0:00 p.m.

Motion by Ms. Adair, seconded by Mr. Shadd to adjourn the April 25, 2017 Regular Meeting, all members were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 0:00 pm.

President

Treasurer