

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

20 West Wood Street

August 8, 2017

The Youngstown Board of Education met in regular session at the I.L. Ward Building on August 8, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 4:31 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: Murphy, Williams, Adair, Kimble

The following members arrived as follows:

Sanderson (4:35 pm), Shadd (4:37), Hunter (4:33 pm)

**APPROVE AGENDA**

It was motioned by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Mr. Williams to approve the agenda for August 8, 2017.

On roll call the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Murphy, Williams, Adair, Hunter, Kimble

Nays:

Absent for vote: Sanderson, Shadd

Motion passed.

**APPROVE MINUTES**

It was motioned by Mr. Williams and seconded by Mr. Murphy to approve the minutes from June 2, 2017, June 13, 2017 and June 19, 2017.

On discussion Ms. Adair asked that the minutes be put off until the next meeting because she had not had an opportunity to digest the minutes.

It was then motioned by Ms. Adair and seconded by Mr. Hunter to hold the minutes until the next board meeting so everyone would have a chance to read them.

On roll call the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Murphy, Williams, Adair, Hunter, Kimble

Nays:

Absent for vote: Sanderson, Shadd

Motion passed.

## CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION

No request to address the board.

## BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

Ms. Kimble presented a resolution addressing the concern of the board members regarding the finances. (Exhibit I)

Ms. Sanderson said she had presented a resolution that had some of the same wording in it and it had to have a second opinion and right now it had not moved forward so she would like the resolution reviewed by another legal source to make sure that everything is okay with the language in the resolution. Ms. Kimble explained that the resolution had been prepared by the board's attorney and it is according to what the ODE has reported out. Ms. Sanderson asked for the resolution to be tabled. Mr. Hunter asked if the resolution was drafted by a board member or just the attorney. Ms. Kimble replied that she was there when it was created so it was not drafted by the attorney alone. Mr. Hunter said he was a little concerned because when a resolution was brought before the board about some of the overreaching the response from some of the members of the board was that it needed to be legally reviewed and he did not understand why a measure by one board member in the same direction did not required the same prudence.

Mr. Murphy said that he felt there was a big difference in the two resolutions. The one brought forward by Ms. Sanderson attacked the CEO and this one does not do that, this is to protect our financial interest. Mr. Hunter said so your problem is what you perceive as a personal attack against the CEO and frankly he did not see how this resolution was any different. Mr. Hunter said he did not know where recognizing something as being unconstitutional to be a personal attack against anyone. Mr. Hunter said we should have had an executive session to discuss this resolution with our attorney before this was just dropped in front of the board.

Ms. Adair asked if anyone had a copy of Ms. Sanderson's resolution so that the members could stop trying to go from memory about what it said. Ms. Sanderson did not have a copy with her. Ms. Sanderson it had however been amended but not presented since the changes occurred. Ms. Kimble then stated that what she could remember from the resolution is that it said the members would ignore the powers of the CEO, ignore HB 70, and the board was going to run the district because this was unlawful. Ms. Sanderson sad no but Ms. Kimble said she believes it did. Ms. Kimble said we cannot ignore the law. Ms. Kimble brought up conversations from the finance committee and Mr. Hunter called a point of order stating unrelated information.

Mr. Shadd said a lot of the conversations we have are related to the amount of money being spent and he wanted to know what made this resolution bad to say that we recognize that we know we had an almost \$22 million surplus but now we do not. Mr. Shadd we have a lawsuit right now challenging HB70 but it is the law. Ms. Sanderson found her resolution and read it to the members and said that this was a direct result of the two resolutions that the board passed and that Mr. Mohip said he would not approve.

Ms. Kimble asked did the members want to vote on the resolution or go into executive session.

# **EXHIBIT I**

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE  
YOUNGSTOWN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Youngstown, Ohio

Resolution No. 08.08.2017- 01

**RESOLUTION OF OBJECTION AND CONCERN**

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WHEREAS, as enacted, Am. Sub. HB 70 had the express purpose of ceding complete operational, managerial, and instructional control of the Youngstown City School District to the Chief Executive Officer appointed by the Youngstown Academic Distress Commission; and

WHEREAS, the actions of the CEO involve adoption of a District budget, the expenditure of monies and the creation of contracts and obligations on behalf of the District; and

WHEREAS, as enacted, Am. Sub. HB 70 offers virtually none of the long-standing controls or restraints on spending, contracting or obligations otherwise imposed on school boards of education and school administrators, including accountability to District taxpayers and voters through the ballot box; and

WHEREAS, as enacted, Am. Sub. HB 70 does not modify the District's reliance on local property taxes for District funding or establish additional state funding for District operations, nor does it establish protections or indemnification of the taxpayers of the Youngstown City School District for the obligations, liabilities, or deficits created by the Chief Executive Officer; and

WHEREAS, prior to the CEO taking office, the District's budget was in the black through FY 2020, with a 21.85 million dollar balance at the beginning of FY 2017; and

WHEREAS, the Board is concerned that recent expenditures, and creation of contracts and obligations by the CEO, are leading to both short and long term fiscal instability for the District, which will degrade the education received by the children attending District schools; and

WHEREAS, the Five Year Forecast from the District's CFO dated May, 2017 confirms these concerns, reflecting that by FY 2019 under CEO/ADC management the District will operate at a 1.69 million dollar annual deficit, increasing to a deficit of 2.92 million in FY 2020, and a deficit of 6.984 million in FY 2021; and that even if a replacement levy is passed, the Forecast still reflects a 4.251 million dollar annual deficit for FY 2021.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT,

1). While the Board continues to challenge the constitutionality of Am. Sub. HB 70, the Youngstown City School District Board of Education is the duly elected voice of the residents of the Youngstown City School District;

2). Due to all managerial, operational, and instructional control having been wrested from the Board, the Board disclaims responsibility or accountability for fiscal deficits created by the CEO, or for any obligations or liabilities created by the CEO that may later be deemed to be unnecessary, wasteful, exorbitant, or unlawful;

3). The Board hereby expresses its collective concern for and objection to the CEO's management of the District;

4). The Board urges the CEO to exercise fiscal and educational prudence.

\_\_\_\_\_ moved and \_\_\_\_\_ seconded the Motion that the above Resolution be adopted.

Upon roll call on the adoption of the Resolution, the vote was as follows:

Yeas: \_\_\_\_\_, Nays: \_\_\_\_\_

It was then motioned by Mr. Hunter and seconded by Ms. Adair to table the resolution pending a discussion as a board in executive session with legal advisement and all board members present.

On roll call the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Sanderson, Adair, Hunter

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

Motion to table failed.

It was motioned by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Ms. Kimble to pass resolution 08.08.2017-01 – RESOLUTION OF OBJECTION AND CONCERN.

On discussion Ms. Adair said she would still like to go into executive session to discuss the legal aspects of the resolution. Ms. Adair then made a motion to go into executive session but her reason did not align with the allowed categories; she withdrew her motion. Mr. Hunter made a new motion and it was seconded by Ms. Sanderson to enter into executive session to discuss complaints against an official.

On roll call the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Sanderson, Shadd, Williams, Adair, Hunter, Kimble

Nays:

Abstain: Murphy

Motion to enter executive session passed.

Executive Session Time In: 5:10 pm

Executive Session Time Out: 5:55 pm

The meeting was called back to order at 5:58 pm.

Ms. Kimble called for the vote on the resolution.

On roll call the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Murphy, Shadd, Williams, Adair, Kimble

Nays:

Abstain: Sanderson, Hunter

Motion to pass resolution passed.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

The treasurer announced that there were two donations: \$60 from Ruth Stillerman of the Ohio Lottery Office to parent pathways for supplies and \$17,000 from Youngstown Foundation for musical instruments. The treasurer discussed the Actual General fund balance compared to the forecasted balance as of June 30, 2017. (Exhibit II) She also talked a little about the deficit spending projected for FY 19, FY 20, and FY21 according to the current forecast. Ms. Adair

asked if the chekpy report could be separated by fund when being presented to the board and if there was any idea how much it will cost to renovate 20 W. Wood Street. Ms. Tyson did not know how much the cost would be but thought that the superintendent may be of help getting the information. Ms. Adair also wanted to know are required by law to keep a certain amount of money as a reserved balance in the district? Ms. Tyson said there are best practices but did not know of a set amount.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Meranto said he was working with Mr. Mohip to define his role but he hopes to be the conduit between the board and the CEO. He talked about the recent parent retreat he attended held by Linda Hoey and Parent Pathways. He said it was very well attended, a lot of fathers attended the session and he was very impressed with what he saw. He talked about the cleanup that took place by the community to clean the walk ways that go up the hill by East. He reported that all elementary schools were going back to K to 8. There would be open houses at every school. He reported that Mr. Olverson was taking over operations and they were working to put in place operation guidelines to help the schools be more secure.

Mr. Shadd welcomed Mr. Meranto to his new position. He said he appreciated getting information about things that are going on in the district. He asked about athletics at Chaney. Mr. Meranto said the sports would probably not start there until spring and when he knew more he would give them the information timeline for the next meeting. He asked about the new position for Mr. Olverson and asked if they were going to bring in another person to replace the position left by Mr. Olverson but Mr. Meranto said it is just the shifting of people but no added positions. He said he would provide the board with an organization chart.

Ms. Adair said she wanted to know about the academic plans for the district and wanted to know what Mr. Meranto could tell them. He said there would be more help in the buildings with principals, assistant principals and deputy chiefs of transformation. Mr. Meranto said the framework looks good on paper and the district has to put the plan in place and make it work.

Mr. Hunter called a point of order to make a motion to extend the meeting pas the two hours. It was seconded by Ms. Adair.

On roll call the vote was as follows:

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

Nays:

Motion to extend the meeting passed.

Ms. Adair asked Mr. Meranto if there were any figures on enrollment. She said it would seem premature to discuss more athletics when we do not know how many students will be attending the district. She wanted to know where the district stood with the large loss of teachers and Mr. Meranto said he would get that information.

Mr. Williams stated that there were certain documents that the superintendent had to sign off on and he was concerned that if Mr. Meranto was not involved with the day to day operations of the school district how would he sign off on the documents. Mr. Williams said when you accept the

tile of Superintendent you also accept the liability. Mr. Meranto said he can assure the board that he is not signing off on anything that he does not know what he is signing, he is not signing things blindly and he takes his role seriously.

Ms. Sanderson asked Mr. Meranto if he had signed a contract to become superintendent and he replied no that he was waiting for the lawyer to draw the contract up. Ms. Sanderson said by law your contract should start August 1 and has to be signed by the board president and the treasurer. Mr. Meranto said he would pass that information on.

Mr. Hunter asked Mr. Meranto how long had he worked for the district and how long had he lived in the district. He then asked him how he felt knowing he was assuming the position of Superintendent by virtue of a state takeover that takes control away from your fellow citizens. Mr. Meranto replied it is not sometimes how you get the position but what you do with it when you get it. He said someone had to do it and you may not have been for him but he will work with the board. He said he is working with the board and Mr. Mohip but he is working for the kids.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to move new business in front of board members comments; it was seconded by Ms. Kimble.

On roll call the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Murphy, Shadd, Adair, Hunter, Kimble

Nays:

Abstain: Sanderson

Absent for vote: Williams left at 6:34 pm.

Motion to move new business passed.

Mr. Murphy asked Mr. Morvay to come and speak because he heard that the high school principals want the metal detectors removed. Mr. Morvay said the principal at East wanted to use the detectors in a different way. Mr. Morvay said buildings have to address threats and vulnerabilities. He said you need the element of surprise because if you do the same thing every day then people get used to that and start to think of other ways to accomplish what they want to get done. He said there are cameras, fob cards, making sure all people go through a main entry and a new manager system just purchased for all schools that generates a visitor pass card. He said that he is working with Mr. Meranto to keep improving the security for the schools.

Mr. Murphy left at 6:44 pm.

### **BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS**

Ms. Adair said there is still an issue between the communication between the CEO, his staff and the board. She thanked Mr. Meranto for attending the meeting but said she would prefer to hear answers from the CEO. Ms. Adair said she was made aware of a meeting that the CEO recently had with the NAACP officers and a group of community members. She said CEO Mohip met them at their headquarters and was very open with them. He informed them of the appointment



of Nick Santucci to the commission, but the board had not been informed. She said 50 to 60 teachers needing improvement will be assigned a mentor and she said he informed them about the number of people that had volunteered for his citizens committee and how many of them he would keep. Ms. Adair said she strongly believes that the citizens group is his latest attempt to keep the board in the dark. She said she knows that he did not tell these folks if they want answers they have to attend his meetings. She said she knows he has not told these groups that he will only accept written questions twice a month and to expect answers in ten days after written requests are submitted. CEO Mohip has not provided answers in ten days or for that matter at all. Ms. Adair said she had been waiting for answers to several questions since the fall. Ms. Adair said that most board members had not been waiting as long as she had but long enough to trigger a law suit to have the CEO provide the documents, why do we have to do that? Ms. Adair stated that under HB70 the board, not the NAACP or the citizens group will be held accountable for the academic failure of this CEO and his staff. Ms. Adair said elections in this county are supposed to mean something but under these circumstances she guesses not.

Mr. Williams had no comment.

Mr. Murphy said we share an HR person with the county but with a school district this size he said he thinks the district needs their own HR person so that they can answer questions that the teachers have about their contracts and they will not have to wait until the day she is in the districts office.

Ms. Sanderson said she did see in the minutes of June 13, where Ms. Adair requested specific evaluations and the CEO is well over his 30 days to respond. Ms. Sanderson also said she had just received the request regarding Ennis Britton and it was only 50% of what she really wanted and could not see where the firm had earned the amount of money the district has paid. She commended the Amanda, the Vindicator reporter for the article she wrote on the kickback money scheme some issues that were prompted from Dario Hunters public record request about some of the contract and ties the district was coming into with Mr. Mohip. She stated that there were concerns about contracts being entered into by Mr. Mohip and the money being spent on the law firms. She said the taxpayers have a right to know and if is not lawful she does not want to be a part of anything that is not lawful.

Mr. Shadd said he was still upset with the situation going on with the senior class and how Mr. Mohip said he is going to refuse to provide transportation to those children. We transport over 5,000 kids outside of our district daily and we need to help our seniors through this last year so that they can graduate and achieve all the things they want to do. They should be able to do that in the environment that they have been accustomed to being in and his stipulation and requirement of 95% attendance, 2.0 GPA and that the parents transport these children is ridiculous. He said we should stick with the children and let them stay in the school that they have been going to for the past years. He said he did not see how moving those students would be good for their success. He said part of HB70 taking place is Choffin being run by MCCTC. Mr. Shadd said he has requested a copy of the strategic plan and any contracts that MCCTC has entered into that will impact Choffin but he said he has not received any response from the yet but there time was not up. He said they needed to have a meeting with the managerial team over Choffin to find out more about that relationship. The contract is for three years and as a board Mr. Shadd they needed to be able to monitor that process to see if is beneficial to continue in a fourth year or even a second year. Mr. Shadd said Mr. Mohip had made a comment about not having math teachers in certain areas for four years and he requested the evidence to support

those statements. He wants information to find out if all the people that he has in place meet all the necessary qualifications and he has requested that data too.

Mr. Hunter thanked his fellow board members for their many concerns and demonstrating that an elected board can put forward concerns that speak to the general public's concerns of our children's future and our city's future. He said I think some people are beginning to forget that — thank you for reminding them. Mr. Hunter said when you work with children you have to be in it for the right reasons, you have to take the right approach and you have to have a real plan for doing so. Ms. Hunter said it is appalling that apparently the CEO is allegedly taking kickbacks from a company that we contract with. He said the CEO has admitted that he has been working for, has received pay from a company that is connected to a company we contract with. He said it is highly unethical and extremely unfortunate and a sign of someone not being in it for the right reasons. Mr. Hunter said Ms. Adair alluded to a lawsuit he had filed in the Supreme Court of Ohio had to do with the fact that Mohip would not give over public records relating to Atlantic Research, the same company the district contracted with which is connected to a company that is paying him and we all know now clearly why he did not want to turn over those records because the request he made was getting a little too close to home. Another person who worked for this company was the disgraced former superintendent of Chicago Public Schools who was sent to prison. Mr. Hunter said we have enough corruption in Youngstown and we do not need any Chicago style, prison bound kickback scheme. When you ask for public records you should be able to get them. Mr. Hunter said he hopes they get to the root of this kickback scheme and that all parties involved get the full weight of the justice system brought upon them. Mr. Hunter said he is dismayed about all the violence in the district and he is concerned that they are moving away from the clear book bags. Mr. Hunter said it has come to light that some members on the board were involved with making sure certain candidates end up on the ballot for school board by finagling petitions. A complaint/protest has already been filed with the board of elections. It involved one family circulating petitions for a fellow family members or affiliates for their cause. Mr. Hunter said part of the reason he brought this up is because the board has been dysfunctional for years and part of the reason for that is because people are busy spinning their own personal agendas and family agendas. He ended by saying when are we as a community going to say enough , when are we as a community finally going to make the most of our elected members while we still have them.

Ms. Kimble said the appointment of the fifth member of the academic commission was unethical. She said Nick Santucci was hired by the Youngstown Warren Regional Chamber and the Youngstown Foundation and was hired during the time of the creation of HB70. Ms. Kimble said Mr. Santucci is not in favor of Youngstown City Schools. Ms. Kimble said he spoke to her and told her she needed to shut her mouth, shut down the preachers and be a part of bringing the CEO into the district. Ms. Kimble talked about an article that was in the paper regarding the finances of the district and a resolution that was voted on by the board that CEO Mohip commented on eluding that the board did not understand the resolution. Ms. Kimble said they understand that they turned the district over to him in the black and as elected officials they will continue to monitor tax payer's dollars that are spent in this district and hold him accountable. She said this is about our children and ended by saying he was brought her for academics not business.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Adair said she was still not receiving robo calls and she wanted to know what was happening with the lawsuit over the student dragging incident and she wanted some clarification about what the board was going to do about Marty Hume.

## NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Shadd asked Ms. Adair for time that their committee could meet. Ms. Adair said she was reneging from the committee because she felt HB0 would be better handled by a lawyer. Mr. Shadd then asked if anyone else would like to be on the committee and Ms. Kimble said she would be willing to be a part of the committee.

Ms. Adair spoke about the CEO's association with a company that he is working as a no fee consultant. Ms. Adair said it is rumored that this company has a million dollar contract with the district to provide training for principals to improve their performance. Ms. Adair said the board has to be diligent in asking for information regarding these contracts. Ms. Kimble said that even if you are a consultant you should not enter into a contract with the district because it is unethical.

## ADJOURN MEETING

Motion by Ms. Adair and seconded by Mr. Hunter to adjourn the meeting. The five remaining members were in favor.

Ayes: Sanderson, Shadd, Adair, Hunter , Kimble

Nays:

Mr. Williams and Mr. Murphy had left.

Motion passed; meeting ended at 7:45 p.m.

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President

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Treasurer