

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT
Regular Meeting – May 18, 2010
Long Hill Administration Building
Lorraine R. Smith Assembly Room

The Trumbull Board of Education convened in the Long Hill Administration Building for a Regular Meeting.

Members present:

E. Lovely, Chairperson
D. Herbst, Vice Chairperson
T. Kelly, Secretary
L. Chory, Board Member
L. Labella, Board Member
M. Ward, Board Member
S. Wright, Board Member

Agenda Item I – Preliminary Business

- A. Salute to the Flag - The Public Session began at 7:05 p.m. followed by a salute to the Flag.
- B. Correspondence – Tom Kelly reported that several emails were received from parents asking the Board to fund all after school programs, freshmen sports and golf.
- C. Comments and Questions – Lainie McHugh, PTA Council Co-President, 132 Fresh Meadow Drive, urged the Board to use unspent monies from the 2009-10 budget to supplement the 2010-11 budget, to have a dialogue between the Board and Athletic Director regarding proposed athletic cuts, to consider increasing pay-to-participate fees for sports and clubs, and to carefully weight the impact of any cuts that are made. The following students spoke in support of the THS Boys' and Girls' Golf Teams— Sarah Longwell, Caitlynn Longwell, Ashley Pekera and Patrick Adams. Caitlynn Longwell also spoke in support of the gymnastics team. Students Ryan Freeland, Nick Targonski, and Neeraj Ramachandran, along with other members, spoke in support of the THS Boys' Varsity Swim team, noting that Nick received a scholarship to Pace University for swimming due to his participation on the team. Students John Delfino, Nick Antonelli, Sam Choi, Alex Florio and members of the freshman and sophomore football teams spoke in support of both those teams. John Bach, 36 Mount Pleasant Drive, and Cindy Penkoff, 101 Columbine Drive, spoke in support of the THS Golf Teams, citing that golf is a sport that most students, even those with health issues, can play. Todd Gallo, 150 North Stowe Place, also spoke in support of the THS Golf Teams, noting both boys's and girls' have been one of the most successful teams in their division, and that more than one-half the cost is supported by participation fees. Robin Diamond, 20 Highgate Road, and Jane Marella, Varsity Cheerleading Coach, 1 Stonewall Lane, spoke in support of the JV Cheerleading program and the freshman and sophomore football teams. Matt McCabe, 102 Crabapple Road, spoke in support of middle school basketball teams. Kate Chapman, 29 Walker Road, spoke in support of middle school softball, freshman softball and girls' hockey teams. Marilyn Polito, 141 Oldfield Road, spoke in support of the freshman and sophomore football teams. Mary Spiegel, 16 Plumb Creek Road, spoke in support of keeping all sports as they are important on college resumes. Kate Donahue, 83 Meadow Road West, asked for the restoration of monies for taping school programs to be shown on Channel 17. Magda Lowenberg, 25 Placid Street, spoke on behalf of a Middlebrook teacher who received a non-renewal letter. Cindy Katske, PTA Council Co-President, 129 Meadowview Drive, spoke in support of the Board of Education in their efforts to work with the budget they received while

maintaining class sizes especially at the elementary level. She also urged the Board to consider increasing participation fees for sports or reducing the number of coaches so that teams can be maintained. Linda Bartolucci, 129 Freshmeadow Drive, Cindy Katske, and Lainie McHugh thanked the parents and students who came to the meeting, urged them to get involved in the budget process at the beginning, advocating for education and to voice their opinions to the Board of Finance and Town Council. Vicki Tesoro, 133 Beechwood Avenue, thanked the Board for the difficult job they have to do with the budget and noted that the charge of the Board is educating children. She urged the Board to consider saving all teaching positions and asked the audience to support the education budget from the beginning of the process. Teacher Board Representative Darlene Ference reported that the teachers are saddened by the budget process and the negative publicity they have received in the media, especially being called selfish. She reported that teachers are appreciative of the Board's support for small class sizes and trying to preserve all personnel. She also noted that the teachers are supportive of the Board's decisions.

Agenda Item II – Personnel

- A. Personnel – A Revised Personnel Agenda was distributed. It was moved (Herbst) seconded (Ward) to accept the resignation of Gail Karowski, Principal, Daniels Farm Elementary School since August 26, 1993, retiring effective June 30, 2010. Vote: unanimous in favor. It was moved (Herbst) seconded (Ward) to accept the resignation of Beverly DuBour, Head Start Teacher at the Trumbull Early Childhood Education Center since December 11, 1978, retiring effective June 30, 2010. Vote: unanimous in favor. Both Mr. Iassogna and Mrs. Herbst noted that Mrs. Karowski is a wonderful educator, has done an outstanding job for the district, and will be missed.

Agenda Item III – Consent Agenda

- A. Approval/Minutes-Regular Meeting– 5/04/10 – Mr. Kelly requested that the minutes be amended to read under Agenda Item V – New Business as follows: “It was moved (Ward) seconded (Wright) to approve the fee increases as proposed. Vote 6 in favor (Chory, Herbst, Labella, Lovely, Wright, Ward) 1 opposed (Kelly). Motion passes.” It was moved (Labella) seconded (Chory) to accept the minutes of the 5/4/10 meeting as amended. Vote: unanimous in favor.
- B. Approval/Financial Reports – Mr. Sirico reviewed the reports which indicate as of 4/30/10, there is \$1.8 million in unspent monies. It was noted that a safe figure for unspent monies as of year end 6/30/10 would be between \$1 and \$1.2 million as there are expenses that will be incurred before 6/30/10. Following discussion, it was moved (Chory) seconded (Herbst) to accept the Board of Education Expense Report for the 10 months ended 4/30/10 as presented. Vote: Unanimous in favor. It was moved (Herbst) seconded (Chory) to approve the Grant Expense Report for the 10 months ended 4/30/10 as presented. Vote: Unanimous in favor. It was moved (Ward) seconded (Herbst) to approve the Consolidated Financial Statement for the 10 months ended 4/30/10 as presented. Vote: Unanimous in favor. It was moved (Chory) seconded (Herbst) to accept the Board Of Education Program Details Report as of 4/30/10 as presented. Vote: unanimous in favor.
- C. Approval/Finance Committee of the Board of Education Transfers— A copy of the April 29, 2010 minutes of this Committee was included in the Board packet for this meeting. Mrs. Labella noted that there was 1 transfer for March and 13 transfers for April that required full Board approval. Following discussion, it was moved (Labella) seconded (Wright) to approve March transfer (996x) as recommended. Vote: unanimous in favor. It was moved (Labella) seconded (Chory) to approve April transfers (1014x, 1017x, 1018x, 1022x, 1023x, 1024x, 1028x, 1029x, 1030x, 1031x, 1032x, 1033x, 1034x) as recommended. Vote: unanimous in favor.

Agenda Item IV – Reports

There were no reports on the agenda.

Agenda Item V – New Business

- A. Race ToThe Top (RTTT) – Mr. Iassogna noted that at the previous Board meeting, State of Connecticut Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan reviewed this initiative which has been modified since first proposed. RTTT will provide all school districts with what is described as “a new roadmap and vision” by restructuring state educational priorities and linking this forum with reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Dr. Cialfi reviewed the major points of this initiative which is aligned to new Connecticut legislation regarding education which districts will be required to implement whether they participate in RTTT or not. Mr. Iassogna noted that if Trumbull were to participate in the Race to the Top, approximately \$140,000 over 4 years would be available to the district to partially offset program implementation. He also noted that the TEA (Trumbull Educator’s Association) has already signed off on the Memorandum of Agreement. Discussion ensued. It was moved (Ward) seconded (Kelly) to approve the participation of the Trumbull Public Schools in the Race To The Top Program. Vote: 5 in favor (Kelly, Labella, Lovely, Ward, Wright); 1 opposed (Herbst); 1 abstention (Chory). Motion passes.
- B. RFP—Insurance Proposal – Mr. Kelly recused himself from this discussion as he is an employee of a vendor being considered for providing health care for the district. Mr. Iassogna reviewed the process involved in selecting a vendor, noting interviews were conducted with Cigna, United Healthcare/Oxford (UH/O) and Anthem Blue Cross (A/BC). Both UN/O and A/BC proposals were very similar, both monetarily and benefits provided, and both would only commit to a 1 year contract, as rates are based on client experience. Both companies’ rates would have a minimal impact on the 2010-11 budget. Following discussion, it was moved (Ward) seconded (Herbst) to approve a one-year contract with Anthem Blue Cross as the healthcare provider for the Trumbull Board of Education employees. Vote: 6 in favor (Chory, Herbst, Labella, Lovely, Wright, Ward). Motion passes. Mr. Kelly did not vote as he recused himself from this agenda item.

Agenda Item VI – Old Business

- A. Approval/Town of Trumbull Retirement Plan Resolution—Mr. Iassogna noted the Town has requested the Board to address and approve a Resolution to the Town’s Retirement Plant. The Resolution contains technical changes required to comply with Federal law and to ensure favorable tax treatment for employees. He also noted that Attorney Dugas has reviewed the Resolution for compliance with bargaining unit labor agreements. It was moved (Ward) seconded (Wright) to approve the Trumbull Retirement Plan Resolution as drafted by the Town. Vote: unanimous in favor.
- B. Approval/2010-11 Budget Discussion – Mr. Iassogna stated that this year’s budget process has been very difficult, complex and anxiety-ridden and certainly will leave its mark on our school system—both next year and in the years to come. He noted this is not only the case in Trumbull, but throughout the area and State as municipalities and districts struggle with the economic reality of some very trying times. He further noted that there should be no doubt that without the use of ARRA/ECS monies from the Federal and State government to supplant programs/services to students, the district would be facing immediate disaster. Mr. Iassogna reviewed the 3 key guidelines the administration utilized in presenting their recommendation to the Board including: maintaining class size, particularly at the elementary level; sustaining basic operational needs, particularly those related to safety, fundamental procedures, or those items that save the district more money than they cost to run; and striving to retain as many staff as possible as they are key in working with students and allow the district to operate efficiently and without disruption. Further, Mr. Iassogna reviewed the Budget Graph contained in the agenda packet and noted that the Board must decide first on how to use the unspent monies and then follow with recommendations to achieve the approximate \$1.2 million cut to the budget. A lengthy discussion ensued including the

administration's recommendations as outlined on the Budget Graph, the use of 2009-10 unspent monies to supplant the 2010-11 budget, use of ARRA and ECS monies, proposed cuts to teaching and custodial positions, and proposed cuts to sports. It was moved (Wright) seconded (Ward) to use \$1.2 million of unspent monies from the 2009-10 budget to supplant the 2010-11 budget. Discussion ensued including special education transportation costs and the \$216,000 that the Board already committed to returning to the Town. Mr. Wright amended the motion, seconded by Mrs. Labella, to read as follows: to use no less than \$984,000 of unspent monies from the 2009-10 budget to supplant the 2010-11 budget, thereby reducing the amount to be cut (\$1,225,074). Mrs. Labella thanked the audience for their support of the Board and noted that using unspent monies to supplant the 2010-11 budget may create a disaster for 2011-12 budget, as this will create a funding cliff for next year. Mrs. Chory suggested that monetary efficiencies could be found in purchasing, transportation, and maintenance. Student Board Representative Christopher Romano noted that this Board has done a great deal to put efficiencies into place and asked the Board to utilize the unspent monies supplant the 2010-11 budget to save staff and programs and to do what is right for the students. Mrs. Chory stated that she would only support using unspent monies up to the amount cut by the Town Council (approximately \$500,000) and both Mrs. Chory and Mrs. Herbst wished to go on record as not being supportive of the motion on the table. Vote: 5 in favor (Kelly, Labella, Lovely, Ward, Wright); 2 opposed (Chory, Herbst). Motion passes.

A brief recess was called at 10:17 p.m. and the meeting reconvened at 10:27 p.m.

Further discussion took place concerning the allocation of unspent monies and budget reductions. It was moved (Labella) seconded (Wright) to direct the Superintendent to identify approximately \$242,000 in cuts to the 2010-11 operating budget and to make a recommendation regarding the balancing of the following accounts which are outside the operating budget: THS Athletics, Summer Explorations, Adult Education, Elementary Pay to Play Music, and THS musical. Vote: unanimous in favor.

Agenda Item VII – Receive And File

These items were received and filed.

Adjournment

Board Members present gave unanimous consent to adjourn the Public Session at 10:40 p.m.