

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT
Budget Meeting – December 3, 2013
Long Hill Administration Building
Lorraine R. Smith Assembly Room

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

Members present:

Members absent:

D. Herbst, Vice Chairperson
L. Chory, Board Member
J. Donofrio, Board Member
S. LaFrance, Board Member
J. Peddle, Board Member
R. Seaman, Board Member
M. Ward, Board Member

Agenda Item I – Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Vice Chair Mrs. Herbst.

Agenda Item II – Preliminary Business

A. Salute to the Flag - The Public Session began with a salute to the Flag. At this time, it was moved (Chory) seconded (Ward) to take Agenda Item IV-B out of order. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Agenda Item IV – Reports/Action Items

B. Election of Officer—Board of Education— Vice Chair Mrs. Herbst conveyed that with the addition of new members to the Board, an election of officers must take place. Mr. Ward nominated Mrs. Herbst for position of Board Chairman, seconded by Mrs. Seaman. Mrs. Herbst commented that she is honored to be nominated for Board Chair and will continue to do her very best for Trumbull students. With no further nominations, Mrs. Herbst unanimously was voted to the position of Board Chairman. Mrs. LaFrance nominated Mrs. Chory for the position of Board Vice Chairperson, seconded by Mr. Donofrio. Mrs. Chory commented that she is honored to be nominated for Vice Chair and will continue to do her best to serve the students, staff and citizens of Trumbull. With no further nominations, Mrs. Chory unanimously was voted to the position of Board Vice Chairperson. Mrs. Chory nominated Mrs. Seaman for the position of Board Secretary, seconded by Mrs. Herbst. With no further nominations, Mrs. Seaman unanimously was voted to the position of Board Secretary.

Agenda Item II – Preliminary Business

B. There was no correspondence this evening.

C. Comments –Board Chair Mrs. Herbst conveyed that due to the lengthy agenda for tonight’s meeting, Public Comment would be limited to 30 minutes, with each speaker allotted two minutes for comments. She asked that tonight’s speakers sign in before speaking. She also noted that for future meetings, people wishing to address the Board in Public Comment must sign in at the podium before the meeting begins and will be called to speak at the appropriate time. Speakers will be allowed two minutes for comments. Mrs. Herbst further emphasized that only Trumbull residents will be allowed to address the Board in Public Comment. She noted that in the event a non-resident, including Board of Education employees, wishes to address the Board, it will only be allowed at the request of the Superintendent. At the request of the Superintendent, Mrs. Herbst read a letter from Trumbull High School (THS)

Principal Marc Guarino addressed to students, parents and the Trumbull community explaining the rationale for the cancellation of the THS spring musical, Rent, The School Edition. Mrs. Herbst further conveyed that the Board supports Mr. Guarino's, the Superintendent's and Assistant Superintendent's position on this issue. Jane Helfgott spoke in support of reinstating Rent and would like an explanation of the plan referred to in Mr. Guarino's letter. Angela Bulkley, parent, spoke in support of funding ancillary activities such as elementary strings, marching band and spring musical since students may be excluded from these programs due to family financial difficulties. Lainie McHugh, PTA Council President, spoke in support of expanding the Board's budget request to fund additional programs such as elementary foreign language, expanding high school course offerings and to eliminate pay to participate fees. Mrs. McHugh also reminded the Board of their responsibility to further what is in the best interests for the approximately 7,000 students of Trumbull. Larissa Mark, THS student and President of the THS Thespian Society, spoke in support of allowing Rent to proceed as the 2014 THS spring musical. Jon Tropp, parent of THS students, spoke in support of reinstating Rent and questioned why they [administration] consider the subject matter in Rent controversial. Hannah Pirozzoli, THS student and Co-President of Gay-Straight Alliance, spoke in support of Rent and asked the Board to allow this musical to be performed this year. Andrea Gottschall, parent, stated that she and her husband had an excellent meeting with Mr. Guarino regarding the production of Rent. She questioned Mr. Guarino's reference in his letter to being presented with a plan and conveyed that the director, producer and lighting designer have already shared hundreds of pages of information and Thespian members also provided information to him. She noted the media coverage given to this issue and questioned why Mr. Guarino has not provided any comment to the media. Janet O'Donnell, parent of former THS students, also spoke in support of reinstating the production of Rent.

Agenda Item III – Consent Agenda

- A. Personnel—There have been no changes since the last Board meeting.
- B. Approval/Minutes – Regular Meeting – 11/13/13 By unanimous consent of members present at that meeting, the minutes were approved as presented.

Agenda Item IV – Reports/Action Items

- A. Approval/2014 Dates for Board of Education Meetings— In accordance with Section 10-218 of the CT General Statutes and the By-laws of the Trumbull Board of Education, the Board shall adopt a meeting schedule for the ensuing year. It was moved (Ward) seconded (Chory) to approve the Board of Education Meeting Dates for the calendar year 2014 as presented. Vote: Unanimous in favor.
- C. Facilities/Maintenance Committee—Dr. Cialfi conveyed that due to recent retirements of maintenance personnel, the administration is in the process of restructuring responsibilities of the Plant Operations Department. Dr. Cialfi asked the Board to support seeking assistance from the Town for a period of 30 to 60 days since the winter season is approaching and due to the lack of manpower. It was moved (Peddle) seconded (Donofrio) that the maintenance of buildings, grounds and equipment of the Board of Education be turned over to the responsibility of the Town of Trumbull's Department of Public Works for a period of no less than 30 days and not to exceed 60 days. Discussion ensued regarding the length of time needed for assistance. Mr. Donofrio commented that according to State Statute and Town Charter, the Town Council must approve the takeover of the Board of Education's maintenance responsibilities by the Department of Public Works. Further discussion ensued regarding the time involved in securing Town Council approval. It was moved (Chory) seconded (LaFrance) to amend the motion to add the wording "effective upon Town Council approval." Vote: Unanimous in favor. Vote on original motion as amended: Unanimous in favor. Mrs. Herbst expressed her desire to establish a Board committee to review the facilities/maintenance operations and examine the processes/procedures and ultimately make recommendations for Board action. She noted that this would not be a standing committee of the Board. She appointed Mr. Peddle and Mr. Ward to be on the

Facilities/Maintenance Committee and asked them to seek several community members to join the committee and present those names to the Board at their December 10, 2013 meeting. Discussion ensued regarding the charge of the committee including examining the process of facilities maintenance and making recommendations for the restructuring of the Plant Operations Department. It was noted that the committee will be working collaboratively with the Superintendent on this issue; once the restructuring is complete, the Plant Operations Department will be under the supervision of the Superintendent.

- D. 2014-15 Budget Presentation and Discussion—Superintendent Dr. Cialfi welcomed the new Board members and congratulated the new officers. He gave a Power Point presentation on the 2014-15 administration’s proposed budget request in the amount of \$96,392,885 or 3.69% increase over this year’s allocation. He reviewed the district’s mission, objectives, accomplishments, and the district’s goal focus on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the Administrator/Teacher Supervision, Evaluation and Professional Learning Plans, and continuous improvement in the Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI) process. He reviewed the need to support CCSS with curriculum revisions, updated classroom supplies, textbooks, online subscriptions, professional development and technology. He also reviewed the areas to support the new Administrator/Teacher Supervision, Evaluation and Professional Learning Plans including teacher/administrator training, testing materials, and resources for increased observations and reviews of practice. Dr. Cialfi further conveyed rationale for increased positions in the following areas: Pupil Personnel Services, Technology Integration Specialists, high school teaching staff, maintenance and central student registration. He commented on Trumbull’s rank in per pupil spending in most Fairfield County districts and all districts in DRG B. Discussion ensued regarding the increase in staffing and transportation costs. At this time, a brief recess was called at 8:23 p.m. and the Public Session resumed at 8:30 p.m. A motion was made to take review of the elementary schools’ budget at this time. Dr. Cialfi, along with Business Manager Sean O’Keefe, reviewed the Elementary budget, with a focus on technology integration specialists. Discussion ensued regarding the job description of technology integration specialists and how they will assist students and staff. Both Jane Ryan Principal Mrs. Bolton and Daniels Farm Principal Mr. Kunschaft spoke in support of adding these positions so teachers can take full advantage of the technology available for lessons. Trumbull Early Childhood Education Center (TECEC) Coordinator Dr. Wheeler briefly reviewed the program and conveyed that tuition paid by parents of regular education students is given directly to the Town. Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) Director Ms. Smith, along with Assistant Superintendent Dr. McGrath reviewed the increase in PPS staff, out of district tuitions, professional development for staff regarding CCSS, legal fees, amount of one-on-one para-educator support, the need for additional clerical support, compliance issues and the establishment of a program (Track 18 to 21) to meet the needs of Specialized Resource Program (SRP) students 18 to 21 years old. Discussion ensued regarding tuition costs and State/Federal mandates for special education students. Mr. O’Keefe and Transportation Manager Mrs. Perkins reviewed the Transportation budget. Discussion ensued regarding increased costs, bus contract, field trips, bus monitors and cameras. Mr. O’Keefe reviewed budget figures including health insurance costs and leasing of computer equipment. Discussion ensued including the projected decrease in elementary enrollment, elementary teacher staffing, and the elementary enrollment study. Mrs. Herbst asked that any questions Board members may have should be sent to her and she will forward to the Superintendent for a response. She also asked the Superintendent to forward responses to Board members’ questions to the full Board.

Agenda Item V -- Other

There was no business under this agenda item.

Adjournment

Board Members gave unanimous consent to adjourn the Public Session at 10:08 p.m.