

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

**20 West Wood Street**

**May 9, 2017**

The Youngstown Board of Education met in regular session at the I.L. Ward Building on May 9, 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: Adair, Hunter, Kimble, Murphy, Sanderson, Shadd, Williams  
Members absent: None

**APPROVE AGENDA**

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

Roll call vote results were as follows:

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

Motion passed.

**APPROVE MINUTES**

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

Regular Meeting  
April 25, 2017

On roll call vote the results were as follows:

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

Motion passed.

**CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION**

Mr. George Freeman, Jr., president of the NAACP, Youngstown chapter said he was glad the board had moved out of the way of the CEO so that he can do the job he was hired to do.

Mr. Clarence Boles thanked the board for believing in free speech before speaking about community involvement. He announced that on May 11, at 6:00 pm, his group, The Public Square Foundation would be holding a presentation at Mt. Gilead Baptist Church on infant

mortality to discuss the premature deaths of our black children. The guest participating in the discussion would be Dr. Rodney Hill, OBGYN and Michelle Edison from the county infant mortality hub. Mr. Boles addressed some personal feelings that he had in regard to Charles Hudson addressing students at East High. He told the board he was not hard to find, they should look for him; they need to talk to him because he is part of the community and he has solutions for their answers.

Gerald Price, a concerned parent who works for the Youngstown Water Department said his daughter is a senior and runs tracks for East. She is a long jumper who went to state last year for long jumping. He was upset that the coach had only had his daughter practicing the long jump once a week and he did not feel that this was enough time spent on long jumping to get his child back to state this summer. He spoke to the coach and also tried to get in touch with CEO Mohip but he had not returned his calls. He said he would come to the next board meeting and hopes that the CEO is in attendance.

Jakeisha Cundiff started her conversation off by stating that she felt it was disrespectful that the CEO did not attend the only meeting where parents are allowed to speak. She said if he really wanted to hear parent concerns he would be at the board meeting. Her concern was the changing of schools because parents were not notified and they found out just like the public by TV. She stated that she was still waiting for a confirmation of where her children will go to school because living on the grey line leaves doubt where your child will go to school. She said as parents they should not have to wait until summer to find out what will happen to their children and for her this is an issue because she needs to make arrangements for her childcare. She also said she felt parents are being cut out and the decisions that are being made by the CEO do not include what they want. She said that at some point in time someone has to hold the CEO accountable and she would like a call because she has left her number numerous times and has not received any answers.

Ms. Kimble said she would give their requests to the CEO committee and they would try to get answers for each parent who spoke.

### **BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS/PRESENTATIONS**

Ms. Kimble opened the floor for conversation about the Wells Associated Renaissance Partners LLC tax abatement.

Ms. Adair said she was upset that our city fathers can see fit to lend companies money out of the water fund yet they will approve tax abatements so we the people, us poor and working poor people have to, through our property taxes support the school system. The water portion of your water bill is being reduced but the sewer cost is going up exponentially. Ms. Adair said the approval of tax abatements for multi-millionaires with the promise of jobs that never materialize and the promise of improving the downtown area and she said she does not live downtown and has pot holes up and down her street but yet we the poor and the working poor have to support the schools through our property taxes. Ms. Adair said she would ask her fellow board members to vote no on the 100% abatement and let city council approve their 75% portion to the detriment of the rest of us property tax payers. Ms. Adair ended by saying if these companies want to come in and live off the fat of the land, make them pay their fare share.

Mr. Hunter shared some facts and figures about other monies that the Wells Building Development had received a grant for \$520,000 dollars in 2016 from the waste water fund. If you put this in the context with some other stark factors like the median household income is \$24,000 and the price of some houses in certain parts of the city being no more than \$3,000 to \$5,000 and of course the rising cost of your water bill which is where this money is coming from it is really unconscionable to have this money squeezed from the taxpayer to be given to private development. Mr. Hunter said he felt it was a use and abuse of public funds and now the same people abusing funds want to come and take money away from our children. Mr. Hunters said he believes this project has not met its deadline and money has been going towards this project since 2013. He said he wished there was someone there to defend this request. Mr. Hunter said one of the developers called him to explain why he should support this multi-million dollar venture and he said he will tell the public as he told the caller, not one dime, not one cent to be taken from our children's education for private venture in this city. He ended by saying, if you really love this city, if you love its children and you really want to aid in its development you will help fund the education that builds an educated, motivated, successful workforce in this city.

Mr. Murphy said he would agree with his two fellow board members for once and say that nobody building new, going into business or rebuilding needs a to have a 100% tax abatement. He said he would go along with 75% because you have to but nobody needs 100%.

Mr. Shadd state that we do need to be able to work with businesses when they are coming into the city but he was not in support of this abatement. His concern was that the board is no longer in control over the district and right now he says he does not know where they are in the budget with the current changes. Originally there was a surplus of over \$20 mil that they were assured would last for four or five years. The board set the budget up to reduce health care and a number of other things to make sure that more funds were available for the classroom. He said he did not want to be charitable to other entities right now until he gets a stronger hold on where the budget stands.

Mr. Williams said the problem with abatements in our area is the policing of the abatement. The city has what is called best effort. What does that mean if the 75% is not enforced? He said companies come into our area making promises and what good is it if we do not police them. If they do not do what they promised all they have to say is that they made their best effort. Best effort is not good enough for our kids or our community. Mr. Williams said that is why he is saying no.

Mr. Hunter said this company also got \$1 million dollars from the state.

Ms. Sanderson said when they promise jobs we ask questions about minorities being hired, people with disabilities and they say yes, but when you do your research you find out that this has not happened. She said we have previously approved tax abatements this year and last year and we need to send them a message not to send these back across our desk anymore.

Ms. Kimble said after listening to the five year forecast presented at the CEO's meeting by 2021 the district will be in trouble even if the board decides to place a tax levy on the ballot. She said we need to draw every possible dollar that we can to make sure that our children have what they need to move forward in academics, not in business, but in academics.

Ms. Kimble ask for a motion to vote on the abatement.

It was motioned by Ms. Adair and seconded by Ms. Kimble to vote no on the 100% abatement.

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

Nays:

Motion approved.

### **BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS**

Mr. Hunter said it was his pleasure to attend the Youngstown Early College graduation. He said the students have a great start with a college education, but because of the reorganization of the district YEC is going to be negatively affected, it is going to be moved; that is the projection at this point. Mr. Hunter said YEC works and so why doesn't the CEO understand that. He said it is unfortunate and as a board member he will do everything he can in his power to speak out against it and fight it. Mr. Hunter said there seems to be a glut of tax abatements coming to the board and does not recall there being this many tax abatements until we got a corporatist minded CEO running the district. Mr. Hunter continued saying someone mentioned the board getting out of the CEO's way and he said that anyone who feels that that is a necessary step for the CEO to do his job has not read HB70. The CEO has been given far reaching, sweeping powers and the only thing that seems to get in his way is his failure to get in touch and in step with the community in making the decisions that he makes to ensure that our children get the bright future they deserve. Mr. Hunter announced the finance committee would have their May meeting on May 24, 2017 at 6:00 pm.

Ms. Sanderson said she wanted say that her understanding was anyone that is interested in being the mayor as of right now does not have an interest in HB 70 and taking elected officials ability to represent the district.

Mr. Shadd said that the Young Scholars were also homered at the graduation services. They are students who earned a four year scholarship to attend Ohio State University. Mr. Shadd said we had 13 children and he read the names of the students. He stated that he wanted everyone to be aware of the synergies happening in Youngstown City Schools to ensure that our children have an opportunity for a post secondary education prior to them leaving high school. Mr. Shadd said of the 51 individuals from YSU's associate graduating class, 39 were our students, so indeed this program works and it should remain unchanged.

Ms. Kimble said this was the first year that students have not been allowed to come to the board member to be congratulated, she was very sad about that and she has put a call in to the head of the Young Scholars program to see if they can attend the next meeting.

Mr. Murphy attended the YSU graduation services and said he was glad to see 39 or our students walk across the stage. He said the first CEO meeting was short. He and Mr. Williams brought a lot of items up about YEC and principals. He said he is changing principals but not one principal would lose their job, they would be reassigned. The starting date for the school year would be Sept. 5, 2017. Early college was brought up a little bit but nothing was finalized. He said they would discuss more things at the next meeting. Mr. Murphy said he attended the teacher appreciation dinner and we have a lot of gppd teachers in the district.

Mr. Williams said the concerns of the public would be addressed and he would let the CEO that the public wants him at their meetings. Mr. Williams mentioned that the CEO had a meeting on Monday but it really was not a community meeting. Mr. Williams said if the CEO cannot come here then you have to go to his meetings because on his agenda there is a part for community participation. He said we cannot be silent so as a community we need to go to his meeting and stand up if he does not come to the board meetings.

Ms. Adair said she has yet to see a staffing plan and that is what should determine whether or not we keep these principals. Ms. Adair said many of them have not done their jobs, stating that there is still no law and order at East. She said if you cannot get the job done in two years you have to go. She would like the CEO committee to see if they can obtain a staffing plan for her. Ms. Adair said she was pleased about the election results and who may or may not be the mayor in the fall. She said part of the HB70 amendment says after three years under the CEO if there is no marked improvement the board can be disbanded and a new board can be appointed by the mayor. Ms. Adair said we just finished year one and academics does not look good. She also says she feels that the board will have a better working relationship with whoever becomes the next mayor and she is thankful for that.

Ms. Kimble presented a slide in order to show how dirty things were done to create HB70. Ms. Kimble showed a list of the people who attended the 88 meetings. She read some notes from the meeting. Ms. Kimble said she has talked to Dr. Hathorne several times and he has said he was used by the state and he did not know what was going to happen to the district. Ms. Kimble said anyone who would like a copy of what she was presenting could have a copy. Mr. Shadd asked that Ms. Kimble use alleged comments while speaking and reading the notes. Ms. Kimble read the minutes from the last meeting held in May and said if this was such a great thing for our children then why was it hidden? She just wanted to remind people about how dangerous HB70 is, also saying maybe we needed some help but this is not the help we needed. She said that because of what is happening in Youngstown City Schools she has heard that the person who hired to come to Lorraine City Schools will not have the same power.

Ms. Adair asked about the law suit that the board has against HB70 and Ms. Adair said it is still in court.

Ms. Kimble called for old business and then new business; there was none.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

It was motioned by Ms. Adair and seconded by Ms. Sanderson to temporarily suspend regular business so that we can enter into executive session for the purpose discussion of complaints about employees, including administrators and also the legal complications of a pending lawsuit filed by a parent of a preschool student. Ms. Sanderson asked for the motion to be amended to add matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or rules or state statutes. Ms. Adair told her she could restate the motion.

A motion was mad by Ms. Sanderson and seconded by Mr. Hunter to amend the motion to go into executive session for complaints against and employee or official and also matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or rules or state statutes. The motion was

Roll call vote results were as follows:

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

Nays:

Motion passed.

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

The board entered executive session at 6:31 p.m.

The board exited executive session at 6:48 p.m.

Motion by Ms. Adair, seconded by Mr. Shadd to adjourn the May 9, 2017 Regular Meeting, all members were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

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President

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Treasurer