

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

20 West Wood Street

September 12, 2017

The Youngstown Board of Education met in a regular meeting at the I.L. Ward Building on September 12, 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:

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mr. Williams to approve the agenda for September 12, 2017.

Roll call to approve the agenda:

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

Nays: Hunter

Motion passed.

BOARD MINUTES

The treasurer gave the board members a folder with minutes from the later part of June and both meetings in August to review.

Ms. Adair asked the board to consider getting a stenographer to help the treasurer with the preparation of minutes during busy times. Ms. Tyson was going to look into the cost.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

There were no requests to address the board.

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

There were no recommendations or presentations.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The treasurer reminded the board of the Capital conference and reported that six members had asked to attend and she would present a resolution at the next meeting. She spoke about the implementation of Arbitrator Pay for officials and sports workers. The treasurer announced that Ms. Kimble, board president, is being honored as one of the NEOSBA Outstanding School Board Member recipients at the Northeast Region OSBA Fall Conference. The conference will be held in Wadsworth, Ohio on October 4, 2017.

Ms. Adair was asked about the pre-audit. The treasurer explained that the district has always waived the pre-audit meeting but she could call Nick Economou, Audit Manager with any questions or concerns. Ms. Sanderson added that you can also email him because that is what she had done. She called him and sent emails with her concerns of issues in the district. Ms. Adair asked again for a hard copy of fiscal year 17 and fiscal year 18 budget. Ms. Tyson said there was a public records request and she had sent that information out but she would also supply this information to Ms. Adair.

SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT

Mr. Meranto talked about the start of the school year and said he felt it was one of the smoothest starts he has seen in his 14 years with the district based on the amount of phone calls and complaints. Mr. Meranto said there had been an increase of 311 students and all the math positions were filled. He talked about the new communication addition that the district has called "Let's Talk" which is now on the district website. He said the football team is not doing too well but both home games were packed. He said they were trying to create a positive culture and climate in the district and so far the school is off to a pretty good start with not too many discipline issues.

The board members asked about staffing, job postings, student achievement and report cards that Mr. Meranto answered.

BOARD MEMBERS COMMENTS

Mr. Hunter gave a update from the last finance committee meeting. He discussed the transportation finance questions that he asked of Mr. Slemons and the reply he received. He told the members that he had emailed them the questions and the answers for them to review at their pleasure. He also spoke about the documents he requested regarding the CEO and his relationship to Atlantic Research, a firm that has supplied some services to the district and that the CEO had received some payment for work he had done with the company. Mr. Hunter stated that his lawsuit against the district regarding a public records request had seen some movement in compelling the district to comply with the request. Most of the information was a string of two emails but none of the financial information he requested and he was somewhat disappointed about that. Mr. Hunter said no one should have to take the district to court to obtain information

that they are entitled to receive. Mr. Hunter said they want to dig into the cost of logos and mascots at the next finance meeting.

Mr. Shadd thanked all the district employees and the community for getting the school year off to a good start. He asked about the increase in cost to \$120 for substitutes was a high cost and paying a company to get those substitutes is an additional administrative cost. Mr. Shadd asked Mr. Meranto if he could find out how much the company that provides the substitutes is being paid. Mr. Shadd talked about an article in the Tribune that was addressing race related to faculty in Warren and they talked about Youngstown. They said Mr. Mohip could not be reached for comment on the topic but Mr. Shadd talked about what the district had done prior to the arrival of the CEO. Mr. Shadd asked Mr. Meranto if he could find out what is our approach to identify minority candidates and also working with local institutions to have forums to persuade students to consider education as an occupation.

Ms. Sanderson said that some of the issues she was seeing with the information she received from her request for financial information regarding Ennis Britton was that there were no billable hours only totals. Also there was a contract with the firm for the board and the district. Ms. Sanderson said the board did not hire Ennis Britton law firm to represent them and there should be no contract that includes their names. She went on to say that while she knows the board is looking at other law firms outside of Attorney Roberts, she really urged the board as a whole to think seriously about seeking other legal counsel to take care of some issues they are facing on a daily basis.

Mr. Murphy and Mr. Williams had no comments.

Ms. Adair disagreed with Mr. Meranto stating that she did not hear that the school district got off to a good start. She said in the first week of school there were three fights at three different schools; teachers not sure about what they were required to do and classes did not have books of chrome books because they were still locked in carts. Ms. Adair went on to say there were staff members who had not obtained competency or effectiveness in their positions had been retained, promoted and given substantial raises. Ms. Adair said she felt the most outrageous step the CEO/state has taken to date was establishing a citizens committee which is another failed attempt to exclude the elected board from all things relevant to the operations of this district. Ms. Adair said this board has been relegated to a group desperately trying to assist him in bringing our children up to academic standards demanded by the state. He has included the citizens committee and by taking this step he has chosen to ignore the will of the voting public. Ms. Adair said the members of the board had to campaign for their positions and were elected by the public to represent and do the will of the people. If the school district fails, the board will be replaced not the citizens committee so why has he chosen to work with them and not the board; she ended by asking did this make any sense.

Ms. Kimble said the board has discussed the matter before about the board being held accountable for the failure of the CEO and the Academic Distress Committee and have talked about writing a resolution to send to the OSBA legislative committee. Ms. Kimble said she spoke to Damon Asbury about this and he thought it was a really good idea and Canton along

with some other districts that are not currently affected by HB70 had already sent in some information. She said she would like the board members to think about getting something together for the next board meeting to send to OSBA and they would tweak it. Ms. Kimble asked if they had any ideas to email her and she would send them on to Mr. Asbury. Ms. Kimble said Mr. Asbury was very excited and that this effort would not be overriding the law but would amend that section of the law in HB70.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Adair asked about robo calls and Attorney Hume. Ms. Kimble said no calls had come out recently and Attorney Hume would be something to discuss in executive session.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Adair asked was questioning the rationale for giving employees administrative leave with pay and asked how would they get information about this issue. It was determined that this would be a discussion for executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was motioned by Ms. Adair and seconded by Ms. Sanderson to enter into executive session to discuss a complaint about an employee and an official.

Roll call:

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

Nays:

Motion passed.

Ms. Kimble announced there would be no formal action taken when the meeting resumes.

The board entered executive session at 6:30 and ended at 6:45.

Mr. Shadd and Mr. Sanderson left at 6:31 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

It was motioned by Ms. Adair and seconded by Mr. Murphy to adjourn the meeting the five members still remaining were in favor.

President

Treasurer