

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

20 West Wood Street

December 13, 2016

The Youngstown Board of Education met in regular session at the I.L. Ward Building on December 13, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by the Board president Ms. Kimble. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

In absence of the regular Treasurer, Sherry Tyson, Ms. Adair made a motion for Mr. Shadd to act as Treasurer pro tempore to record the minutes and other necessary things; it was seconded by Ms. Kimble.

Roll call for the vote:

Ayes: Shadd, Adair, Kimble, Murphy

Nays:

Abstain: Hunter

Absent for the vote: Sanderson, Williams

Mr. Williams entered arrived at 5:34 pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Murphy motioned and Ms. Kimble seconded to approve the agenda for December 13, 2016. On discussion Mr. Hunter stated there were a number important issues that were not included on the agenda such as the recent announcement of the YCSD strategic plan introduced by CEO Mohip, continued violence at East and transportation issues that had still not been addressed that he had requested information on at a previous board meeting. Ms. Adair added that there are numerous issues that the body needed to discuss and she would hope at some point they would have an opportunity to talk about these issues and make their recommendations whether they are listened to or not.

Roll call for approve the agenda:

Ayes: Shadd, Kimble, Murphy, Williams

Nays: Hunter

Abstain: Adair

Motion passed.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Mr. Hank Zimmerman, a resident taxpayer of Youngstown addressed the board. Mr. Zimmerman stated he had no children or grand children attending Youngstown City Schools but

felt that all children were his children and expressed his concern that the functions of the district were too political. He was concerned that the politics were impacting educating children. He wanted to know how he could get copies of the agenda. Ms. Kimble told him that those copies are usually set outside on the table at each meeting. He stated that there had been three questions from a previous meeting that he felt had not been answered and he wanted to know what the outcome of the following: addressing violence in the schools, the bus scheduling problem, and the new graduation requirement. Mr. Zimmerman felt that as a tax payer he had concerns and that the communication to the public was very poor. He also felt that as a tax payer he should be able to find out what is happening and did not understand why any of this information would be a secret. He thanked the board for being dutiful to their positions.

Mr. Zimmerman would like an answer either written, a phone call or at a meeting in the future.

At this time Mr. Shadd recognized that roll call for attendance was not taken and completed that action.

Roll call for attendance:

Shadd, Adair, Hunter, Williams, Murphy, Kimble

Ms. Kimble announced that there would be an OSBA training at 6:00 and asked to move the approval of the minutes up.

Ms. Adair had some questions about the treasurers' recommendations that she stated she would like to talk about at a later date.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was motioned by Mr. Murphy and seconded by Mr. Williams to approve the corrected minutes from September 27, 2016 and the minutes from November 22, 2016.

On discussion Ms. Adair asked questions about a number of checks listed in the report. Ms. Kimble noted that Mr. Mohip was not in attendance at the meeting and not available to answer questions. Ms. Kimble said that there has to be transparency. Ms. Adair had questions about employees being hired, promotions and salaries. One concern was an employee who was a listed as substitute teacher and a social worker; she wanted to know which one of these jobs was this employee working. She said she found it very distressing being kept in the dark about things happening in the district.

Mr. Shadd reminded the board that they had not voted on the minutes. Ms. Adair stated that she has still not received a copy of the statement Mr. Mohip made to the board regarding his HB70 rights. Mr. Williams asked if the board members needed to have a special meeting with Mr. Mohip to find out how the board is to receive information.

Mr. Hunter stated that we still needed to vote on the minutes. Mr. Zimmerman asked a question about voting on the minutes and Ms. Kimble explained that the audience could not speak at this time but she would address his questions after the meeting.

Roll call to approve the minutes:

Ayes: Shadd, Kimble

Nays: Williams, Adair, Hunter, Murphy

Motion Failed

Ms. Adair made a motion to suspend the business of the board until after the board returned from training. It was seconded by Mr. Murphy.

Roll call:

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

Nays:

Motion passed

Ms. Kimble stated that formal action may be taken when the meeting resumed and it would deal with the tax abatements. The board entered the caucus room for training.

The board members entered into a training session – Leadership and Communication presented by Teri Morgan from the Ohio School Boards Association.

After training the meeting was called backed to order at 7:41 pm.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Kimble reopened the meeting by stating that the tax abatement was for Double Tree Hotel.

It was motioned by Ms. Adair and seconded by Mr. Murphy that the board members enter into a lengthy discussion and debate about their position on this abatement.

Roll call for the vote:

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

Nays:

Motion passed

Ms. Adair was against giving a 100% abatement as she felt it was corporate welfare and the poor people would have the burden of still paying taxes.

Mr. Williams would only be in favor of an 100% abatement if our students would totally benefit in this endeavor through future employment and career enhancement.

Mr. Hunter was against the 100% abatement and stated that we are in the business of educating children, not private business gain. He is not in favor of using funds for the prosperity of a business instead of safe guarding the funds to educate our children.

Mr. Murphy stated that this was all a moot point because the City was going to go for a 75% abatement and there was nothing the board could do. They did not even need to vote.

Mr. Shadd said that there have been a number of tax abatements that have come to the district and he felt that the board should have another conversation with the owner of the building to see if they could come to some agreement about the 100%.

Mr. Murphy said he thought it would be a waste of time because he could not see all members ever agreeing and Ms. Adair stated that she thought 75% was outrageous and there was no talking that would change her mind and she was voting no.

Mr. Hunter said tax abatements are happening all across the nation and Youngstown is a typical target being a low wealth community. Mr. Murphy said 75% was enough and no more. Mr. Williams still felt it might be worthwhile to talk to the developer again if the talk would end up being something that would help our students.

Ms. Adair made a motion to vote no for an %100 abatement. She rescinded her original motion and revised the motion that the board vote on the issue of the tax abatement for the Double Tree Hotel. It was seconded by Mr. Hunter.

After some additional discussion Ms. Adair restated her final motion to vote on the 75% tax abatement offered by the city for the Double Tree Hotel; seconded by Ms. Kimble.

Roll call to vote on the 75% abatement:

Ayes: Shadd, Williams, Kimble, Murphy

Nays: Adair, Hunter

Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

The board talked about setting a special meeting to discuss several other tax abatements. All members were in agreement for December 20, 2016 at 5:30 PM.

Ms. Adair wanted to set a meeting to discuss the following issues:

1. Tax Abatements
2. Reports from staff at board meetings.
3. Ongoing special education problems.
4. Fights and all other dysfunctional activities at East.
5. Rumors Filipovich and Howse promoted with substantial raises.
6. Other department raises without evaluations and justifications.
7. Additional administrative staff without justification or a staffing plan. What is the impact on the districts bottom line for salaries and benefits. District has been told it is over staffed so why are we doing this. Ex. Duplication of services. – Denise Dick, Tony DiNero, Stephen Stohla.
8. Removal and reassignment of African American staff, why? No movement of our white employees who have not been able to prove a competent level of performance.

Ms. Adair stated she would request an executive session to discuss these issues if necessary but she wants an open public discussion about some of the items listed above. She sent this information to the board members on December 8, 2016.

Mr. Williams mentioned again that the board needs to ask the CEO for a meeting to discuss communications to the board. Ms. Adair asked if a facilitator was needed. Ms. Kimble said she did not think that would be necessary. Mr. Hunter said he believes in communication and keeping an open mind but he feels that CEO Mohip is not interested in open communication. Ms. Kimble felt that CEO Mohip was open when he first came and she hopes he returns to that type of communication. Ms. Adair feels that CEO Mohip should extend the olive branch first since he has defined his authority. Ms. Adair and Mr. Williams both agree that if the board is still going to be held accountable for the district in any way during the time that the CEO is in control then the CEO needs to work with the board.

Mr. Murphy left the meeting at 8:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned 8:41 p.m.

All in favor: Shadd, Adair, Williams, Kimble

Board President

Treasurer