



PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
May 6, 2008
7:00 p.m.

Albany High School

PRESENT: William Barnette, President
Barbara Gaffuri, Secretary
Dr. Mark Barth
Judy Doesschate
Melissa Mackey
Wayne Morris
Dr. Eva Joseph
Joseph Dragone
Linda Jackson-Chalmers
James Matthews
Jeff Honeywell

ABSENT: None

2008-2009 BUDGET HEARING

The proposed 2008-2009 School Budget in the amount of \$206,741,488, indicating a budget-to-budget increase of \$17.9 million and a tax levy increase of 2.49% was presented to the public. More than half of the spending plan goes to Instructional Program Costs (59%); Capital & Other Costs (21%); Charter School Costs (12%) and Administrative Costs (8%). The budget maintains and expands programs effective in improving student performance and contains spending to keep pace with increases in charter school costs with other cost saving measures. The presentation continued with a listing of proposed instructional expenditures; new initiatives for 2008-2009; major budget increases and reductions; estimated state aid and estimated revenue. The tax rate impact is expected to increase \$39 on a property value assessment of \$100,000. This figure does not reflect STAR tax relief figures. If the budget is not approved, the Board of Education will have three options (1) Put the same budget up for a re-vote (2) Present a revised budget for voter consideration (3) adopt a contingency budget that restricted public use of school buildings, eliminated student supplies, equipment and non-union raises. The 2008-2009 contingency budget figure would be \$350,351 less than the budget proposal up for vote May 20. Budget propositions were reviewed along with polling locations and changes.

- Marlin Anderson asked what efforts have been made to get the public on board with this budget. This budget presentation begins a series of informational sessions in the community. The district is available to conduct informational sessions to any group that is interested in hearing about the budget.
- Beverly Padgett asked if the proposal presented is covered under the Contract For Excellence. How will the increased attendance monitoring be handled as well as suspended students? The budget includes an attendance teacher, working closely with the Truancy Abatement program. Suspended students will be included in this effort. The district has an obligation to expand program improvements or creating new program opportunities to the amount of \$1.5 million. The district has far exceeded that figure with this budget proposal. The specific Contract For Excellence will be developed before its submission date of July 10, 2008. Expenditures for alternative education programs have relevance to suspensions.
- Paul Swyer discussed the estimated tax bill based on \$100,000 assessment. The dollar amount per \$1,000 assessment, which is a change of \$39. The 2.49% increase is based on the total tax levy.

- Felicia Green spoke about the requirement for public input in the Contract For Excellence. That process will be defined prior to submission of the contract in July. Strategies will be forthcoming.

Those interested in hearing a presentation on the budget were encouraged to contact the superintendent's office to schedule the meeting can be scheduled.

Budget hearing concluded at 7:55 p.m.

Board of Education Meeting

Call to Order:

- Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Members of the audience were welcomed and thanked for taking the time to attend the meeting.
- Mission Statement was read.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- The Albany High School Theatre Ensemble presentation of Pippin was outstanding. Congratulations go to the entire cast and crew and to Mr. Ward Dales, the Executive Producer and Director. The student performers demonstrated amazing talent.
- The 1st Annual Professional Development session was a wonderful event put together by Albany administrators and teachers for Albany administrators and teachers. There were over 120 participants. It was an excellent endeavor. The program was tremendously comprehensive and much appreciation and congratulations go to Dr. Dragone, Mrs. Rudnick, Ms. Floss, other teachers who participated along with the members of the Professional Development Committee chaired by Mrs. Rudnick and the APSTA group. The keynote speaker was Dr. Robert Drowns, Interim Dean for the School of Education at UAlbany.
- A listing of the budget presentations is being distributed to Board Members. Community Meetings include the African American Clergy for Empowerment, in collaboration with the district. The Strategic Direction will also be shared with this group.
- Mr. William F. Hogan is scheduled for appointment this evening as the new Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs. Dr. Joseph introduced Mr. Hogan.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Ms. Rouse is unable to attend the meeting this evening. No report.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Maria Alfonso addressed the board regarding the Contract For Excellence.
2. Paul Swyer addressed the board regarding staff reductions.
3. Marlin Anderson addressed the board regarding the budget.
4. John Amidon addressed the board regarding the Our Children's Future Resolution.

INFORMATION ITEM

Board Candidate Statements

Board candidates, Maria Ivette Alfonso, Susan Bartle, Rose Brandon, Daniel Egan, Edith Leet, James Lembo and Daniel McGinn presented statements to the board and others present regarding their desires to be appointed to the vacant board seat. Ms. Motley, Ms. Jackie Jenkins-Cox and Maurice Cohen were unable to attend the meeting. Board discussion will take place at the executive session on May 15th.

ROUTINE CONSENT ITEMS

Routine Consent Items were presented for approval, including Proceedings of Meetings, April 1, 2008, April 10, 2008 and April 24, 2008; Resignation; Terminations; Vacated Position; Transfer; Leave of Absence; Appointments (Administrative, Administrator Probationary Extension; Probationary, Miscellaneous, Coaching, Intramural Program, Continuing Education, Tutors, Itinerant Substitutes and Emergency Conditional Appointments); Attendance at Conferences; Treasurer's Report, Budget Transfers under \$10,000, Budget Status Report – 03/31/08, Real Property Tax Adjustments, Central Treasurer's Report for Extra Classroom Activity Fund; Bid Awards; Actuarial Services Contract (BPA Harbridge Consulting Corp.), Disposal of Assets, Charter School Public Hearing Resolution; Contract for Grants and Special Projects (Mulhall & Associates).

Dr. Barth made a motion to approve the Routine Consent Items as listed. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion. Ms. Doesschate asked to set aside the proceedings for April 1, 10 & 24, 2008.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion, absent those items set aside.
Motion passed.

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve the proceedings for April 1, 2008. Ms. Mackey seconded the motion. Discussion took place regarding clarification and accuracy of information contained in these proceedings. Dr. Barth made a motion to table the proceedings for April 1, 2008 for reasons noted above. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.
Motion passed.

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve the proceedings of April 10, 2008. Dr. Barth seconded the motion. Ms. Doesschate noted she would be abstaining on this motion due to her absence at that meeting. Dr. Barth made a motion to table the proceedings based on clarification of items. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion.

The board voted (6-0) to approve the motion.
Motion passed.

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve the proceedings of April 24, 2008. Mr. Barnette seconded the motion. Discussion took place regarding clarification and accuracy of information contained in these proceedings. Ms. Doesschate made a motion to table the proceedings based on clarification of items. Ms. Mackey seconded the motion.

The board voted (5-1-0) to approve the motion.
Motion passed.

Dr. Barth was opposed. Pending the proper documentation of the resolution related to the board vacancy and the recorded vote on the motion, Dr. Barth would agree to table the minutes. Minutes will be reviewed.

FACILITIES PROJECT REPORT

Action Item Related to the Facilities Project

Change Orders

Change orders for Hackett Middle School and New Scotland Elementary School (School 19) were presented for approval. Ms. Doesschate made a motion to approve the change orders. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. It was noted that the change orders are standard for both Hackett and New Scotland Elementary School. It was further noted that #119 at Hackett is the implementation of the change orders approved by the board regarding the changes in the auditorium flooring.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

Information Item Related to the Facilities Project

Minority & Women Owned Business Enterprises Report

MWBE report dated April 30, 2008 was presented to the board indicating that the current active projects, Hackett Middle School Phase II and School 19, the minority workforce participation is 14.70% and 1.02% and 16.25% and the 2.25% respectively. The average total for all minority workforce participation on all projects is 14.79%, exceeding the goal of 10% and 2.74% against 10%. The total combined goal is 20% and total actual figure is totals 17.53%. This figure is the highest in the area.

The chart showing the minority business and women business enterprises indicate the Hackett Middle School Phase II project has a participation rate of 7.28% for minority business enterprises and 8.09% for women owned business enterprises. School 19 figures indicate the minority business enterprises participation rate is 12.76% and women business enterprises participation rate is 8.09%. The average total for all minority business enterprises and women business enterprises is 13.46% minority and 6.84% women, a combined total of 20.3% against a total goal of 20%.

The report also included the total dollar amounts of contracts related to the facilities plan and the total MBE and WBE contract amounts. A total of 53 MBE firms certified in New York State have received contracts in the facilities projects to date. These participating firms are very thankful for the work and the opportunities they have had because of their collaboration with the district.

- Has there been a decrease in business out of the area traveling to our construction sites due to the increased costs of fuel? There has been some impact. More local firms have shown interest because the projects are in their back yard.
- This is something that should be publicized in the district newsletter and possibly on the district website.
- We have improved as the projects have progressed in reaching these goals. Another outcome of this that the Albany City Library Board has looked at what the district has done and has followed the district's example with their building project. The efforts of the school district have raised the minimum expectations for participation to a higher bar.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Middle School Math & Algebra Textbook Adoption

The Board of Education heard a very comprehensive presentation summarizing the adoption process, identifying team membership and outlining the other products that were reviewed. The recommendations from the textbook review committee for adoption are:

- Prentice Hall Mathematics, Courses 1, 2 and 3, New York Edition
- Prentice Hall Mathematics Integrated Algebra, New York Edition

Materials were made available for review and will remain available over the next month for additional review if requested. Approval will be scheduled on the June 3, 2008 meeting agenda. Implementation is scheduled for September 2008.

- What is happening at the elementary level? Things have evolved over the past six years and the department has worked hard to make the alignment.
- Will these textbooks be available to the elementary school students? Yes, along with the curriculum work.
- These are very busy textbooks. Many of the features in the text help students to work with the materials. Things are clearly identified and highlighted.
- What are some of the downsides that have been identified and how will you address them. Some of the areas that were assumed to have been covered in prior grades are being revisited as part of the learning standard. The readability may also be difficult for some students. These areas need supplementation.
- It may be appropriate for students even at the high school level to use Course 1, 2 or 3, depending on how successful they have been in Math up to that point. Is that accurate? We have to have a credit-bearing course at the high school. Students have to have three credits of Math, which no more than two can be from Integrated Algebra. So we have to look at how are we going to have them enrolled in Integrated Algebra to get the student to the mark where they need to be.
- Parents need to know how their kids are learning Math. Communication is very important. That is a very important component.

This item will be on the June 3, 2008 board meeting for action, following approval of the budget.

ACTION ITEMS

Administrative Appointment

A resolution to appoint William F. Hogan to the position of Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs was presented to the board for approval.

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that William F. Hogan is appointed to the position of Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs for the period June 30, 2008 through June 30, 2011.

An employment agreement setting forth Mr. Hogan's terms and conditions of employment is also approved and the President of the Board of Education is authorized to execute said agreement on behalf of the District.

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve the resolution. Dr. Barth seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

2008-2009 School Calendar

The 2008-2009 School Calendar was presented for approval. Mr. Morris made a motion for approval. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion.

- Concern has been presented relative to the parent's conference day. How is that going to be resolved? This is not the first year the district has eliminated that half-day in the spring. The district eliminated that half-day in the spring and replaced it with a full day on Election Day. The half-day was only at the elementary level and didn't allow an opportunity for teachers to capture all the students. Typically the half-day in the fall and the spring limited the amount of time, leaving some students without parent conferences. The initial parent conference day for a full day in the fall was significant. Conferences were expanded through grade 12 as well and engaged many more parents because of the flexibility that full day allowed. In the construct for the middle schools, a team planning time is scheduled, which allows a reserve time for conferences to be scheduled.
- Why can't the district use one of the recess days for teacher conferences? It would involve an additional workday for teachers, which would exceed the contractual days for teachers.
- Is it possible for the district to designate a two-week period of time for parent/teacher conferences? The expectation is that every parent is afforded the opportunity for a conference. There are many instances when these conferences are schedule before or after the designated day indicated in the calendar.
- Do we have data related to the percentage of students have parent/teacher conferences? The district keeps records from the conference day in November. District wide there is a summary report of conferences held in the fall. This data should be tracked to compare with the goal of 100%. That a parent/teacher conference occurs annually for every student.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

Revised Budget Notice

A revised budget notice was presented for approval. Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve the revised budget notice. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. Fortunately, the budget notice is mailed following the budget hearing, which took place earlier in this meeting. The district received notice of the change in the contingent budget figure, which resulted from a recalculation by the State Education Department in time to change the budget notice prior to this mailing. The new figure indicates that the contingency budget amount would reduce the budget by \$350,351 rather than \$7,133,789 previously reported in the budget newsletter. This information is noted in the notice.

- It is important that the public knows that the initial information was based on figures from the State Education Department and that the district learned of the recalculation after the budget was approved and the budget newsletter was mailed. This is very frustrating in terms of credibility.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

Ms. Doeschate requested that the item of High School Busing be presented as a future agenda item. With other board members in agreement, this item will be scheduled.

Adjournment

Mr. Morris made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.