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TWINFIELD UNION SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 20, 2015

Twinfield Union School Library

PRESENT: Patrick Healy, Dan Gadd, Jill Wilson, Anh Ducharme, Dan Towner **Administrators:** Nancy Thomas, Superintendent; Christina Kimball, Business Manager; Pat Johnson-Knoerl, Curriculum Director; Bob Gulardo, Assistant Principal; Mark Mooney, Principal **Absent:** Samantha Lege, Bridget Couture, Monica Light

Call to Order: Patrick Healy, Chair called the meeting to order at 7:50 p.m.

Public Comment:

- Mary Lou Wells voiced her concerns in the rise of the property taxes and what that might mean for herself as well as her neighbors and community members. She would like to see the budget reduced by 2% and offered some ways in which this could happen. "You guys were talking about new laptops for everybody, well that is a wonderful thing but right now might not be the time to do that. Everyone I know has access to one here or at home."
- Tim had some concerns about the busses and looking at leasing or buying a new bus. He suggested that the board and administration looking into speaking with someone in the trucking industry to offer some advice. He also asked that the administration look into reducing the bus routes.
- Tim also questioned the board about the previous deficit and wanted to know what was being done to prevent this from happening in the future. Christina said that she will be reporting on December at the next board meeting but as of the last report they were operating within 2% of the budget.
- Beth suggested that both Cabot and Twinfield should be working hard to synchronize their schedules for next year. By doing this she hopes to see more collaboration. She understands the cut to foreign language with the class sizes being so small. Beth also shared with the board that she had talked to her two sons about whether or not that they felt prepared for college. Both of her children felt prepared but felt they had missed out by not starting college with AP credits or other college credits. Beth suggested that the administrators look into collaborating with other schools so that students are able to take AP courses.

Board Discussion

a. Board Conduct

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- Patrick shared a letter to the board about what is to be expected of board members and a discussion about the code of conduct for board members followed.

b. FY 16 Budget

- “We are spending more on the facility than we need to. The pie chart presented includes almost no money for facility maintenance. Boiler system is inefficient. Pellets cannot heat the entire building on a cold day. Is there a plan for the boiler? Do we have a capital plan?”
- There is currently a capital plan in place. There is \$83,000.00 included in the budget to cover facility’s maintenance. Some of these items include: new doors in the elementary wing, paving projects, boiler evaluation, new thermostats, panel boxes, furniture replacement, etc.
- “Why do students leave TUS and why do they come here?”
- Currently this year there have been 6 students to visit Twinfield as potential students. These students will be included in the upcoming lottery. Big draws for students are the drama and music programs.
- “Can we do a study or form a committee to collect information about combining with other school districts?”
- “We need to have willing partners. The legislature will be looking at this very question and discussing what is to come down the pike for smaller schools and supervisory unions.”
- “Can we buy a bus outright?”
- “We are currently leasing to own the busses. We can look into what the costs are and how many years of use we are getting out of the busses once they are paid off. We are also looking into reducing some of the bus routes for next year.
- “Why were wages for custodial staff increased by 3.1% while teachers increase by 3.5%? We should bring the bottom up.”
- The board agrees and this is a point well taken. These increases are something that is negotiated and will look at this in the future.
- “We can protect culture and benefit from sharing resources.” (e.g. Cabot Music Program)
- Mark discussed some collaboration ideas between Cabot and Twinfield. Such as course work, synchronized schedule, music, drama and new sports programs.
- Patrick made a motion that the administration look at what it would look like if 1% were to be cut from the budget. Jill seconded the motion. This information will be presented next week.

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Future Agenda Items: Facility Needs, Equipment/Capital 5-10 year plan, Audit Findings, Food Service Program, Red School House and Facility Use Policy.

Adjournment:

Patrick made a motion to adjourn at 8:54 p.m. Jill seconded.

Respectfully Submitted

Amanda LeBlanc, Transcriber