

**Huntington School Board Meeting  
December 8, 2009**

Present: Andrea Ogilvie, Rebecca Golden, Lisanne Hegman, John Alberghini, Gail Webb, Joanne Machia, Mike Dooling, Jen Peterson

Guests: Barbara Felitti, Becky Cozzens, Alison Forrest, Heather Godin, Tom Bailey, Helen Keith for the Times Ink

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 P.M.

**Public Comment:**

**1. Public Comment - Budget:** Barbara Felitti expressed appreciation to the board for their hard work on the budget. She urged prudent belt-tightening and requested clarification on a few budget items:

- (1) The reason for keeping paraprofessionals at BPMS when the students move to middle school. John stated that no final decisions were made on this. Andrea added that the school had an investment in the paraprofessionals, and that their role in catching lower- performing students early would be important. A determination of how to fund them would need to be made.
- (2) How the decision was made to re-allocate a portion of the \$29K (savings from staffing changes) to supplies rather than returning the money. Andrea stated that the board deemed this use to be important and would have put these items in next year's budget. Based on the recommendations from Gail Webb, some of this money was earmarked for reading materials, spelling texts and sorely needed furniture.
- (3) An understanding why there was an increase in funding for substitutes so that teachers could get professional development and what were the guidelines/ limits for teacher training. John stated that 5 days of professional development approved by the principal were allowed each year.

Barbara requested judiciousness in authorizing cost increases, and encouraged working towards zero budget growth.

The request for zero budget growth (promoted by the commission of education) was discussed. Andrea stated that the only way to achieve a zero increase when there are increasing costs is to take items away, such as field trips, furniture, etc.

Barbara Felitti suggested looking at budget cuts in CESU. Andrea stated that as part of CESU, that they were a member of a cohesive group, and needed to stay consistent with the union, and not be a stand-alone. One advantage of the union that was mentioned was that special ed costs could be assessed proportionally rather than the entire cost resting on one school. John also stated that Central Office had budget cuts in several areas including transportation and staffing. The board noted that increasing student enrollment in BPMS and decreasing enrollment in many other CESU schools meant a bigger share of CESU funds.

2. **Public Comment - Minutes change:** Heather Godin requested the November 10, 2009 minutes be changed in the 2010-2011 Budget Development section, paragraph #4 to read: .....since teachers *have been required to attend more ½ day trainings (taught by CESU staff) in math and science this year,.....*

3. **Public Comment - Other items:**

Alison Forrest discussed:

1. The Beef fund raiser. Beef would be purchased from Maple Wind Farms, with the expensive cuts sold at an increased cost to subsidize the ground beef that the school keeps.
2. The Holiday cookie sales
3. Alison stated that the new lights worked great and were well received. Tom Bailey was also pleased and said he was a happy neighbor.

**2010-2011 Budget Final Review:** Joanne Machia presented Draft 3 of the budget for board review. The budget included 2 half-time aides, and the summer school expenses were significantly lower than the original, putting the budget bottom line at a 0.97% increase over the current year. The budget was reviewed line by line.

Andrea questioned the large increase in water and sewer expenses, and Joanne explained that a licensed person is now required to perform work, that different water tests are required each year, and that there was a \$500 pump issue. Andrea requested that the new budget be lowered by \$500, as the pump was fixed and was not expected to require additional funds.

Joanne explained the 2.96% increase in teacher salaries came from many different areas including moving the music teacher salary from a different line item to the teacher salary line, and reducing teacher salaries due to staffing changes.

Summer school tuition was discussed. Andrea suggested that the amount seemed low. The board discussed the philosophy of pay now (\$) or pay later (student performance). Rebecca asked that the specific criteria on how students are chosen be spelled out. John stated the criteria exist and had been tightened. The board agreed to increase the summer school tuition from \$395 to \$800.

Barbara Felitti asked if the Instructional Materials could be cut by 10% since the \$29K (savings from staffing changes) was used towards this. Gail Web responded that the Instructional Materials budget is typically spent on consumable items like workbooks, paper, and classroom supplies that needed to be replenished each year. Each year this is depleted, and teachers often use their own money towards classroom supplies. Some of the surplus would be used for books and supplies that are used more than one year which there never seems to be enough in the Instructional Materials budget to purchase. After more discussion, however, the budget for Instructional Materials was reduced from \$22,100 to \$20,000.

Many aspects of the cost of Computer Systems were discussed, from laptops and purchasing/leasing computer equipment, to delaying the decision until a detailed breakout of the computer systems budget could be made and analyzed. Jen brought up the point about not

wanting to lose technological ground by cutting the budget on this. After much discussion, it was decided to cut the Computer Systems budget by \$2,000.

John repeated that it was a tough year with many hard choices, and that they have never gone through a budget year like this. John had given Gail the task to size up what areas could be cut to achieve exactly zero increase. This was a very difficult task, requiring painful cuts of approx \$15K. Gail outlined her priorities, stressing that children came first. Buildings and supplies could be cut first, but student programs and teachers should be cut last. It was noted that the effects of budget cuts on students are not as readily apparent as, say, an unrepaired broken window, but the effects are far-reaching. Gail also stated that her proposal was not what she recommended, but what it would take to reach zero budget growth. Gail outlined many possible cuts to the budget. Andrea, with agreement from the board, stated not being comfortable with the severity of the cuts.

Joanne presented the savings of \$4241 from cutting ½ hour per day from 2 instructional aide positions, and noted that this sum was a total of many separate lines including salary, benefits, FICA, etc.

Joanne inputted all the recommended changes, and the new budget totaled \$1,824,753, a \$9175 (0.51%) increase over the current year.

*A motion was made by Mike Dooling to approve the 2010-2011 Budget of \$1,824,753, a 0.51% increase over the current year; seconded by Lianne Hegman. Motion passed.*

**Consent Agenda:** *A motion was made by Jen Peterson to accept the consent agenda with the exception of the principal's report and with revisions to minutes; seconded by Mike Dooling. Motion passed.*

**Principal's Report:** Reconfiguration of the gym is still being analyzed for use of Live Y'ers. Another use of space is the 12-15 students who wait for 45 minutes for the afternoon bus. Two to three adults are required to watch these students. Using classrooms for these students becomes problematic for teachers using their classrooms at this time. Andrea stated this wait time was excessive, and should be reviewed.

**BPMS Warrants:** *A motion was made by Andrea Olgivie to approve the monthly warrants in the amount of \$107,189.97; seconded by Mike Dooling. Motion passed.*

### **Superintendent's Report –**

- 1. Governance:** John stated that all schools voted to move forward with the Governance Planning Committee to investigate merging all of the individual CESU school districts into one larger school district. Huntington gets one representative on this committee. This person must be a board member and would be required to attend 1-2 meetings per month for one year starting in January. This will be discussed further at the January Board meeting.

2. **Energy Efficiency Grant:** Due to a very short time to submit applications for this grant, John submitted the applications on behalf of 7 schools in the district. This grant could cover efficiency retrofits (Huntington boiler) and outside LED lights (which could have a 75% energy savings). These grants require schools to make a 10% match, and these funds must be in the budget.

*A motion was made by Andrea Ogilvie to move forward with the Energy Efficiency Grants; seconded by Mike Dooling. Motion passed.*

**Old/New Business – School director’s report:** A preliminary outline/ draft of the school director’s report was handed out and the final draft is due January 10<sup>th</sup>. Lisanne Hegman will drive the work on the report with a target completion date of 1/1/10.

*A motion was made by Mike Dooling to adjourn the meeting at 10:05; seconded by Andrea Ogilvie. Motion passed.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Furland

Unofficial until approved