



Budget Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 16, 2011

Estacada High School Choir Room

Budget Committee Members Present: Bob Austin, Laurie Hull, Bill Elliot, Scott Jury, Kelly James, Angela Long, Steve Guthrie, Ralph Branson, Steve Woods, Leslie Andre, Sherri Graham

District Representatives Present: Superintendent; Howard Fetz, Business Manager; Donna Cancio, Recording Secretary; Julie Theander

Meeting called to order at: 6:35 p.m.

Summary of Discussion:

The meeting opened with public comments. Isabelle Jauron, parent of a student at Clackamas River Elementary, was the first speaker. Isabelle stated her concern with the amount of time given for the community to apply for a position on the sub-committee and requested information as to what the criterion was for acceptance and who was responsible for the selection of candidates. She then requested information regarding expected student enrollment and other information necessary to consider possible school closure. She completed her statement with questions concerning the blending of classes: a) training for teachers, b) district wide program, c) curriculum, d) budget distribution.

The second speaker was Cory Riedel, parent of a student at Clackamas River Elementary. Cory stated that the District's answer to why one elementary principal was being eliminated was not sufficiently addressed. He also had concerns with the District's blending of classes' labeled "shared teaching". Last, Cory commented on the agenda for the Sub Committee meeting, where he emphasized his wishes to speak collaboratively not negatively.

The last public speaker was Rachel La Medica, parent of a student at Clackamas River Elementary. Rachel found data on the Estacada School District Web site: a) 10 year master plan, b) 2003 Estacada School District Population Trends Findings and Recommendations, which she found informative and questioned if this information was being utilized in decision making. She then pointed out that the data reinforced the idea of closing a school at that time.

Donna Cancio reminded the audience that all suggestions and comments are welcomed at the Budget Sub-Committee meeting that will be held on May 23, 2011 at 5:00 in the High School Choir room.

Donna then reemphasized the spiraling revenue forecast, coupled with declining enrollment which had prompted the District to conduct midyear layoffs and the reduction of some employees' hours. A summary has been placed on the District web site that states the changes in personnel during the 2010 - 2011 school year. She reminded the Committee that they are only responsible for approving the total budget.

Questions were then invited from the Budget Committee. Bob Austin questioned if a strategy was in place concerning the decrease in student enrollment. He also pointed out the charter school's student enrollment was $\frac{1}{4}$ of the District's student population and wondered if there were strategies for retention. Donna answered that we had a study conducted reflecting positive findings of continued retention with the charter school option.

Estacada's enrollment has fluctuated over the past few years as seen in the enrollment charts provided. This past year reflected a drastic drop in enrollment probably due to the economy. Again the question was raised; "what about the houses being built in Estacada?" Bill Elliott responded that over 50 homes had been sold, but that the city is unaware of how many residents had moved away from Estacada.

Steve Woods stated that population growth is a “moving target” that is very unpredictable. He also expressed that reaching out to home schoolers in the District is very important. Howard Fetz shared that tracking of students K-12 has shown that students are attracted to charter schools which had prompted the District to produce alternatives to cater to the special needs of parents.

Bob Austin asked if a school was closed due to declining enrollment, would programs be maintained at a certain level and if a study had been conducted concerning this. Howard responded that a study had been completed, but that “closing a building itself, does not save the District much money; the way we save money is by the loss of personnel.” However, the main concern is to have the least harmful effects to the students. Closing a school could increase class size significantly. Maintaining programs with personnel is essential.

Scott Jury stated that according to the enrollment graphs Eagle Creek Elementary has been maintaining stable enrollment throughout the years even though the 2003 Population Trend recommended to close the school, while both River Mill and Clackamas River have shown declining enrollment. Ralph Branson commented that closing Eagle Creek has come up in the past and had caused a commotion in the community.

Scott Jury then commented on the document that reflected the “Current Recommendations for Proposed Budget Reductions” where 29.6 positions were eliminated and asked what real impact this will have on students. Howard Fetz replied that consideration was given to continuing services to our students, but that declining enrollment constituted the necessity of loss of personnel to balance the budget. Leslie Andre commented that we may be facing this same process again for year 2012 - 2013.

Bob Austin moved to approve the budget as it stands. The Motion was seconded and a showing of hands for the approval was conducted. 11 hands were raised; the motion was passed.

Special School Board Meeting/Workshop: Monday, May 23rd at 6:00 pm, EHS
Choir Room

Meeting Adjourned: 7:20 p.m.