

**MINUTES OF THE CLEVELAND HEIGHTS-UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Special Meeting of April 2, 2008

The Board of Education of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, Cuyahoga County, held a Special meeting with Cleveland Heights City Council at Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education, 2155 Miramar Boulevard, University Heights, Ohio on Wednesday, April 2, 2008, to enhance communications on topics of mutual interest as well as to discuss any business that may be lawfully conducted.

The Special Meeting began at 6:05 p.m.

Present at Roll Call: Mr. Michael Cicero, President
Mr. Kal Zucker, Vice-President
Mr. Eric Coble, Board Member
Ms. Nancy Pepler, Board Member
Mr. Ron Register, Board Member

Also Present: Mayor Edward Kelley
Vice Mayor Phyllis Evans
Bonita Caplan, Council Member
Nancy Dietrich, Council Member
Kenneth Montlack, Council Member
Dennis Wilcox, Council Member
Representative from the City of Cleveland Heights

Absent: Mark Tumeo, Council Member

The attendees engaged in informal conversation during dinner.

District Security Concerns

Board President Michael Cicero reported that administration has been working with the teachers' union to address recent security concerns at Heights High School. The security monitors are represented by the teachers' union. Some current procedures are being changed. This would not have been possible without the cooperation of Chief Lentz and Captain Cannon of the Cleveland Heights Police Department.

Two off-duty Cleveland Heights police officers are at the High School between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. One officer is posted in the social room cafeteria, and the other is patrolling as needed. Mr. Cicero spoke with Brian Loretz, Director of Safety and Security for the District, who said that this process is going very well since school resumed after Spring break.

Students must have their school I.D. with them in order to enter the lunchroom during their assigned period. If they do not have their school I.D., students will be escorted to a room where they will be monitored by an administrator for the entire period.

Mr. Cicero stated this problem is not exclusive to Cleveland Heights High School. These types of problems are common across other school districts. He pointed out that of all the students at Heights High, 48% of students have never attended our elementary or middle schools. Students coming from other districts have not been indoctrinated on our District's behavioral expectations. There are clear behavior expectations that are posted, and the teachers and staff are supportive. As part of these changes, security monitors will be held much more accountable.

The 5133 Committee (Student Code of Conduct) will be meeting to ensure consistent enforcement of this policy. More than half of the security monitors have received additional security training. The District mailed a letter to parents explaining these changes.

Councilperson Nancy Dietrich asked whether there are security measures in place outside the school building, especially with warmer weather approaching. Michael Cicero responded that the bigger problem has been inside the building, during lunch periods. The distraction to the learning environment is the real problem.

Some security monitors across the District have been receiving overtime pay to patrol outside during dismissal. There was a recent incident where the University Heights Police Department was called to move students along who were fighting and blocking traffic on Cedar Road. The security monitors were apparently not present during the incident.

Councilperson Dennis Wilcox asked if there had been any feedback from parents regarding police officers at the school buildings. Board Member Ron Register stated he has personally received some negative feedback that having armed police officers signals an unsafe environment. Mr. Register feels that once parents understand some of the issues prompting having the officers at the schools, they will actually feel safer.

Mr. Cicero commented that these changes are not necessarily permanent, but it is necessary to impress upon everyone the behavior expectations of the District. Board Member Eric Coble mentioned that these are simply the first steps, but the District is looking at the bigger picture.

Councilperson Bonnie Caplan asked if the District was working with the libraries since many students go to the library after school. Ms. Caplan commented that in the past, South Euclid and University Heights each had police officers that really paid attention and knew the students in the Cedar Center area. She thought this was helpful. Michael Cicero said he spoke to Brian Loretz about this. Last year, an incident report form was generated for police officers to use, even when no criminal activity occurred. If the officer was able to identify the student, he would do a write up on the student and fax the form in. Cleveland Heights, University Heights and South Euclid were all supposed to follow this procedure. However, Brian Loretz informed Mr. Cicero that the incident reports have not been forthcoming, specifically from University Heights. He stated the Cities did not think anything was happening with the forms. Mr. Cicero said because of this they are establishing a follow-up system that lets the departments know that a course of discipline is taking place when incident referrals are received.

Councilperson Ken Montlack commented that he was happy to hear that the District was taking that course of action.

New Principals

Michael Cicero, Board President, reported that the Board approved two new principals. Kelli Cogan, current Principal at Roxboro Elementary, will become the new Principal at Wiley Middle School. Patrick McNichols was hired as the Principal at P.R.I.D.E. School.

City Budget Cuts

Mr. Cicero stated he was disappointed that the tax measure for the City of Cleveland Heights did not pass. He asked where the City was in the process of determining what it plans to do at this point.

Mayor Ed Kelley distributed a synopsis of the proposed cuts. He mentioned that City staff has been or will be notified about these cuts. On Monday, April 7, City Council will vote on a salary ordinance, which lists all employees, positions and salary ranges. Mayor Kelley discussed many of the cuts the City will be making.

Mayor Kelley mentioned cuts that would directly impact the District. These include:

- Elimination of childcare at the Community Center at the end of the school year. This will affect 80-90 children.
- Basic patrol officers will be reduced to 103 from 108.
- Crossing guards will be eliminated at the end of the school year. Guards cost the City approximately \$100,000 per year. A list will be provided to Superintendent Delisle showing the intersections where guards are posted.
- High School sports teams will be charged \$100 per game to use the ice skating rink and Denison soccer field. There will be no charge for practice time and no charge for baseball fields or tennis courts.

Board Member Ron Register asked if the City would experience any state cuts in this fiscal year. Councilperson Dennis Wilcox responded there were not as of this time.

Mr. Cicero asked if Council will go back on the ballot. Mayor Kelley responded they would not go back on in August, but November might be an option.

District Budget Cuts

Michael Cicero mentioned the state is proposing to eliminate the state foundation guarantee. Foundation money is based on enrollment. The District's previous enrollment of 6,600 has declined to 5,966. The District may lose \$5.4 million in FY 2009. Mr. Cicero said Scott Gainer, Chief Financial Officer, is already beginning to look at budget cuts.

Housing

Dennis Wilcox reported on the HUD home inventory. HUD has a large inventory of homes. HUD policy is if a house is on the market for six months and is vacant, they will offer it to another governmental unit. The City is in the process of buying about 30 homes. Seven or eight of those homes are targeted for demolition. The City hopes to find non-profits that can rehab the remaining HUD homes. Mr. Wilcox stated they are looking at property tax implications concerning these homes.

Mr. Cicero mentioned the idea of having students from the Career Tech Program at Heights High help to develop these houses. Mr. Zucker brought out potential significant liability issues. Ron Register suggested collaborating with or modeling similar construction programs utilizing students. It was pointed out that students recently went to New Orleans to work with Habitat for Humanity; students should be allowed to do the same things with homes in their own community. Mr. Cicero stated it would take time to implement such an educational program with classroom as well as field experience. Ron Register indicated that it could be a potential gold mine if the District would market this type of program, remove the stigma associated with Career Tech, and help students learn carpentry, plumbing and other home building and repair skills.

Good News from the Board

Board Member Ron Register reported that our boys' indoor track team did really well. Heights High student **Jared Hall** has the fastest time in the country. Jared has received a track scholarship.

Heights High senior **Alex Kraus** was named a candidate for the 2008 Presidential Scholars award and was accepted to ten of the eleven schools to which he applied.

Councilperson Ken Montlack asked if the District could inform the City when students receive academic achievements so the City can recognize the students at City Hall. Mr. Montlack said this would send a very positive message to families and to the community.

Nancy Dietrich acknowledged the District's change of Board meeting nights from the 1st and 3rd Monday each month to the 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month. She suggested Council and the Board take turns going to each other's meetings. Ron Register mentioned that the first meeting of the month would be the one to attend, as the second meeting of the month is typically a work session.

Kal Zucker, Board Vice President, mentioned that Scott Gainer, Chief Financial Officer, and his staff once again won the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting (CAFR).

Miscellaneous

Nancy Dietrich inquired about use of the Heights High indoor pool by the public. Michael Cicero responded that he had not taken the opportunity to speak with Superintendent Delisle or Athletic Director Kristen Hughes. He promised to get back to her with an answer.

Mr. Cicero stated he read in the newspaper that plans had been resubmitted for the Fairfax bus turnaround. Kal Zucker clarified that the plans were not new; the plans were about the curb cuts already being discussed.

Eric Coble mentioned the City cuts being discussed, particularly in the area of streamlining communications and publications. Mayor Ed Kelley said he believed e-mail was a good choice for future communications. Michael Cicero offered to put a scan of the Focus Magazine on the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District website. Mr. Cicero also mentioned sending it to Michael Dougherty to air on Channel 22. Bonnie Caplan said building an e-mail base would be a challenge.

Michael Cicero inquired about the status of the City of University Heights and the salt dome issue. Mayor Kelley said the two cities worked to develop a contract, but University Heights law director was pushing for a lifetime contract that was not practical. Mayor Kelley was certain that sharing would occur; it is just a matter of when it will happen and the length of time for the contract.

It was asked whether Mr. Cicero wanted to meet with the City of University Heights alone before have a social gathering of the different political bodies and the School Board. Mr. Cicero felt he should proceed with the reception. Kal Zucker mentioned that Superintendent Delisle and Scott Gainer had recently requested available dates from the City of University Heights. Mr. Zucker felt that we should at least give University Heights the opportunity to respond before setting a date for the social. Mr. Cicero re-iterated that he would rather proceed with a date. The reception was scheduled for Wednesday, May 28, 2008, at the Cleveland Heights Community Center, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Dennis Wilcox gave an update on the Derbyshire Road project. The City is working on re-habbing one of the homes it owns. The work is funded by a block grant.

Mayor Kelley mentioned that a monument will be erected in front of City Hall in honor of the late Officer Jason West. This will take place in late May or early June 2008. Michael Cicero mentioned the scholarship fund established by the High School in Officer West's honor.

Vice Mayor Phyllis Evans reminded everyone of the Cleveland Heights Memorial Day Parade. She invited the Board to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Michael Cicero, President

Scott Gainer, Chief Financial Officer