

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

**Special Meeting of September 16, 2008**

The Board of Education of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, Cuyahoga County, held its Special meeting in the public meeting room of the Board of Education building at 2155 Miramar Boulevard, University Heights, Ohio, on Tuesday, September 16, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Michael Cicero, Board President, called the meeting to order at 7:04 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:** Mrs. Deborah Delisle, Superintendent  
Mr. Scott Gainer, Chief Financial Officer  
Members of the Central Office Staff  
Patrons of the School District  
Representatives of the News Media

Michael Cicero, Board President, reported that Jim Rokakis, Cuyahoga County Treasurer, was unable to attend the Board meeting due to an emergency. Mr. Rokakis is tentatively rescheduled for the October 7 Regular Board meeting to discuss the status of tax collections and the impact the foreclosure crisis has specific to the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

Mr. Cicero provided an update on the current status of negotiations between the Cleveland Heights Teachers' Union and the Board of Education. Mr. Cicero submitted a letter to the Sun Press editor in order to clarify and correct several pieces of misinformation in a letter that was printed in the September 11 issue.

Mr. Cicero stated, "this Board of Education takes very seriously its fiduciary responsibility to our communities. We are in the midst of difficult economic times that cut across all socio-economic backgrounds. As a large school district, we experience the same significant increases in utility rates and other costs, as do our residents. High foreclosure rates, which we will find out about more in detail at the next Board meeting, have affected the amount of taxes, specifically property taxes that we are able to collect." Mr. Cicero also said that cuts in State funding would impact us.

Of all the negotiations, which began in March 2008, only the teachers and the security monitors have not reached agreement. Board President Cicero described the offer that was accepted by all other bargaining units.

Mr. Cicero said the Board respects and appreciates all District employees and recognizes the important work each employee does. The Board believes it has offered a very fair and reasonable offer as evidenced by the fact the four bargaining units accepted this offer over three months ago.

It is in the best interest of both parties to bring these negotiations to a resolution. "Our team will be prepared to meet with the teachers' union bargaining team again when called upon by the federal mediator," Mr. Cicero said. In the meantime, residents can be assured the mission of this District will continue to be carried out daily to support students' learning, growth and academic achievement.

Each Board member acknowledged being apprised of the status of every stage of the bargaining process and affirmed full support of its negotiating team.

### **WORK SESSION – TOPIC: Budget**

A. Scott Gainer, Chief Financial Officer, conducted a presentation on the District Budget and discussed Permanent Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 (see official minutes).

Mr. Gainer explained that an appropriation, or budget, is defined as the legal authority to spend. Mr. Gainer briefly described the unsettling economic times, in particular the high number of residential foreclosures and the resulting declining property values.

Chief Financial Officer Scott Gainer introduced Paul Gnatowski, Assistant Treasurer, and acknowledged Paul's work on investments and cash flow analysis.

Scott Gainer explained that 80% of the budget is composed of salary and benefits, which has already been approved through staffing. The budget process begins with zero-based, non-salary, budgeting by budget managers. Scott credited Superintendent Delisle for spending time with him to review each budget, historical budget data, and three-year cost comparisons.

Pending approval of the budget, data will be used to develop the five-year forecast that will be brought before the Board in October.

Mr. Gainer also defined in detail prior year encumbrances. If money is to be spent, a requisition has to be entered. If there is budget available, the requisition is reviewed, approved, and then becomes a purchase order. The purchase order is a liability to the District, a commitment to the vendor that the funds are available to pay. At the end of a year, many times a vendor may not have invoiced the District for services they have provided or materials we have received, and the District must carry those encumbrances, and enough budget to cover them, over to the following year.

The account structure required by the State is based on a combination of codes that supply different elements of information. The last four digits of the 32-digit account string are added by the District to differentiate between persons responsible for multiple funds within the budget.

Superintendent Delisle pointed out that the District is establishing a priority list for all furniture and technology requests. Business Services and Information Technology will review these budget requests to determine what is really needed.

To cause budget managers to be more careful and strategic in planning their budgets, Scott Gainer said that budget transfers would no longer be done as easily as in the past. All requests for transfers between accounts must be submitted for review and approval by the Chief Financial Officer and the Superintendent. Zero-based budgeting really forces budget managers to look closely at budget items.

### **Permanent Appropriations**

Chief Financial Officer Scott Gainer described the breakdown of permanent appropriations by fund, by object and by function levels.

Board President Michael Cicero complimented Scott Gainer and Paul Gnatowski for a thorough presentation. Mr. Cicero stated he implores the Ohio State legislature and the federal government to fix school funding. He sees the budget growing but does not see revenue increasing, without having to go to residents every three years for a new levy.

It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the Permanent Appropriations for fiscal year 2008-2009, as presented.

### **No. 08-09-118**

It was moved by Ms. Peppler, seconded by Mr. Zucker, that the Permanent Appropriations be approved.

Vote on the Motion was as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Cicero, Mr. Register, Ms. Peppler,  
Mr. Zucker, Mr. Coble

Nays: None

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Tuesday, October 7, 2008 – Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, October 21, 2008 – Special Board Meeting – TOPIC: Academic Achievement

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

It was recommended that the meeting be adjourned.

**No. 08-09-119**

It was moved by Mr. Coble, seconded by Mr. Zucker, that the meeting be adjourned.

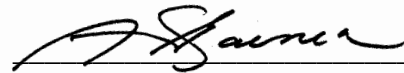
Vote on the motion was as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Register, Mr. Coble, Ms. Pepler,  
Mr. Zucker, Mr. Cicero

Nays: None

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

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Michael Cicero, President



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Scott Gainer, Chief Financial Officer