

The Regular Meeting was called to order by the President @ 7:00 P.M.

Roll Call: Mr. Petek, present; Mr. Kelly, present; Dr. Wingenbach, absent; Mr. Houska, present; Dr. Christopher, present.

The next meeting held will be the Organizational meeting on January 4, 2010 in the High School Media Center at 7:00 P.M.

ADDITION(S), CORRECTION(S) AND/OR DELETION(S) TO THE AGENDA

Addition – Item E - Superintendent’s Agenda - Approval to Modify Bus Routes

Mrs. Rachel Gamin, Orchestra Director, led the orchestra members in a holiday song for the Board and community members.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

APPROVAL OF MINUTES 09-12-159

Mr. Kelly made a motion, seconded by Mr. Petek that the Board of Education approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held November 16, 2009, as presented.

Mr. Kelly, yes; Mr. Petek, yes; Mr. Houska, yes; Dr. Christopher, yes.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT 09-12-160

Mr. Houska made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kelly that the Board of Education approve the November, 2009 Financial Report, as presented.

Mr. Houska, yes; Mr. Kelly, yes; Mr. Petek, yes; Dr. Christopher, yes.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL TO AMEND FY10 APPROPRIATIONS – ADDENDUM #I 09-12-161

Mr. Kelly made a motion, seconded by Mr. Houska, that the Board of Education amend the FY10 Appropriations, as presented in Addendum # I.

Mr. Kelly, yes; Mr. Houska, yes; Mr. Petek, yes; Dr. Christopher, yes.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR – ADDENDUM #II 09-12-162

Mr. Kelly made a motion, seconded by Mr. Houska that the Board of Education approve the “Resolution Accepting the Amounts and Rates as Determined by the Budget Commission and Authorizing the Necessary Tax Levies and Certifying Them to the County Auditor” be approved, as presented in Addendum # II.

Mr. Kelly, yes; Mr. Houska, yes; Mr. Petek, yes; Dr. Christopher, yes.

Motion carried.

AUTHORIZATION TO HOLD SALE OF OLD UNIFORMS BY THE ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT 09-12-163

Mr. Houska made a motion, seconded by Mr. Petek that the Board of Education authorize the sale of old uniforms by the Athletic Department.

Mr. Houska, yes; Mr. Petek, yes; Mr. Kelly, yes; Dr. Christopher, yes.

Motion carried.

#### BOARD MEMBERS' AGENDA

- Mr. Kelly commented on the upcoming Wadsworth/Highland Girls' Basketball game being held at Wadsworth on 12/23. At the game they will be selling red and green T-shirts to benefit the Wiita family. Their goal is to raise \$20,000 to \$25,000. Mr. Kelly said he would love to have more green shirts than red shirts at the game.

#### HEARING OF INDIVIDUALS AND/OR DELEGATION REPRESENTATIVES

- Kyle Brooks, high school teacher and former HEA President said every morning when he walks through the doors of Highland High School, he walks under a banner proclaiming Highland as an Excellent school district, and within the past year, an Excellent with Distinction school district, and it has been that way for the past 10 years. Not many in the State can make that claim, other than his colleagues'. With the levy failure, he is aware that the Board will have to look for places to cut costs and understands that this may be necessary. He is aware the Board may have to make cuts to the staff, but asked the Board to fully consider all options, and particularly the options that will have the least impact on the educational foundation that has taken so many years to build.
- Mr. Brooks asked the Board to explore every possible option before considering any staff cuts. He suggested when cutting staff expenses, to strongly consider a buyout to encourage teachers with 30 or more years to retire, and then rehire them at roughly ½ their salaries. He said the HEA and HSSA have brought this to the Board on other occasions, and that other districts exercise this option. For every teacher that the Board can encourage to take the option mentioned above, this could mean another tutor or paraprofessional who can stay in the classroom, giving individual attention to the students who most need it. He said everyone would like to see that class sizes be kept smaller.
- Dr. Christopher thanked Mr. Brooks for his passion for the district and that it is unmatched and the Board appreciated his counsel over the years and has enjoyed their relationship. He said the Board has considered a variety of options, and suggested that staff cuts have been one item that has been discussed. Mr. Brooks said the Board should really take a look at how many people would be eligible to retire and to try to encourage the staff to do this before any cuts are made.
- Mrs. Aukerman added that this would be under consideration but it will be in addition to some reductions that we will have to take, and she will be outlining cost savings measures that the district will have to take later this evening.
- Mr. Kelly said this has not been an easy task, we are by no means close to being where we need to be, we are talking about trying to preserve the Highland we have known for years, and is afraid that this will not happen. If the District does not receive new money this year, there will not be enough cuts to be made to save this school from the State coming in. The Board welcomes anyone to come in to look at the forecast and he will make sure that they understand it. Between now and the end of the year, this will be the most trying times any Board at this district has had to deal with. Our district is in grave jeopardy of losing what we've been so proud of for years.
- Aaron VonHarten, 5413 Stillwood Drive, Montville Township, said he and his wife moved here 5 years ago, because of the schools and location. He thanked the Board and the educators that have made a difference and an impact in his children's lives over the past 5 years, and said that because of our educators, this is the reason for our districts excellence. He said he cannot imagine our lives anywhere else. He said he does everything in his power to help his children and their educators to instill academic discipline and excellence, and it has spilled over to many other children that he has seen in his life. He said there are people out here that don't want to see taxes go up, or to spend another dime, because they are suffering too, and said it is disappointing to see that type of attitude anywhere in the Highland District. We should all be proud of what we have, and thanked the Board for the support that has been given to him as a

parent to instill academic discipline into his children, where other school districts in Ohio that his family has lived in, have failed. He applauded the school districts efforts for this, and petitioned the Board to do the best job you can do with what you have and that you have our support. He has a child in the Strings program and said he will not allow the momentum to be destroyed by a couple of people that have bad attitudes towards our education. He added that could be applied to Speech and Debate, mathematics, robotics, and any of the specialties we have at Highland. When parents are trying to instill academic discipline, it is because we want them to grow up to be able to handle well paying jobs in good locations that they can perpetuate our way of life and their families. We cannot do this as parents unless we have the academic programs and it is being taken away if we do not do something about this and is asking everyone to go out and talk to people about what we need.

- John Horne of Hinckley, said he takes exception that people who are against the levy are against the school district and said we all recognize your excellence, but the fact is the cost of that excellence has brought us to bankruptcy and we now have to face the facts. He said a levy is unconstitutional according to the Supreme Court of Ohio and has been since 1997. He asked the Board to look at alternative funding methods instead of levies; to consider asking the 40% of community members who voted for the levy to give donations and to put it on the website; to put a sales tax on because it's fair and not a burden to property owners; and to say that the budget for salaries and benefits are out of control.
- Dr. Christopher said the Board was elected and the teachers have been hired to provide excellence, and believes the core academic program is sacred and if we do not have that, we are not a school, and believes strongly that we are not complete in our responsibilities if we do not supplement the core with values that were available to his children and himself. Dr. Christopher said his family moved into the district 18 years ago because of the school and the reputation of the school. In addition to the core, there are other academic offerings that he is intensely concerned about that in order to produce the complete student who is prepared for life-long learning, whether entering college or the work force, and said extra curricular activities are critical to the full development of our young adults, and moving forward, we are faced with very difficult decisions. Dr. Christopher said we are taking full accounting of the inventory of offerings in the District, and with all due respect for the contributions and commitments people have made to their program or what they do here, for the District, community, and for the students, but the fact is the funding system is broken and Mr. Horne is an advocate for that, and he encouraged Mr. Horne to take that same passion, speech and comments to the State. The Board does the same thing, we lobby the State. The Board committed as a part of the Strategic Plan to be an integral part of this community. There are a variety of value-added programs that come from the school that was our objective. The one variable that is entirely out of our control, which is the economy, and we all remember what has happened during the past 14 months, and there was no anticipating that and we, like so many employers, businesses, and families, are now faced with making adjustments. This is unfortunate and it does affect the school and the programs that are offered. With all respect, this is being done with due diligence and patience, and said every move that the Board makes will have downstream implications, we have to be very clear about what the implications are and the affect it will have on our curriculum and the product of the curriculum and the students.
- Mr. Devon Griffin, 1585 Forest Drive, Granger Township, said his family moved to Ohio in 1991 and within a couple of years were introduced to a school funding system, state-wide, which we had absolutely no familiarity. From the different part of the country where we came from, the schools are funded, not lavishly and where, in general, the school funding is among the lowest per pupil cost in the nation, and on the other hand, they have some of the highest high school graduation rates, but the funding is a statewide income tax. We cannot do anything about that in Ohio. We are constrained by the State legislature. The ruling that was referred to was against the State legislature and the Governor, and not against this School Board. This School Board is operating within the bounds that are set in Columbus, and for the people who are angry, who are hurting, and those who want redress, need to drive 110 miles to the South and let the legislator have it! He said we should thank Mr. Voinovich for not letting taxes

increase incrementally with inflation. Rather his gift to Ohio is that we have to overtax, spend off the surplus, go into debt, and do it all over again, because that is the only way that it is proven to work around here! He said he has heard the School Board, he has seen this school in action, and this is an excellent district. His last child graduates in June and he supports the levy and he will pay a lot of money, but said this is unfortunately a microcosm for this Country. If we cannot figure out that our competition is not local and that it is really about motivated and hungry guys in India that speak English who want our jobs, and that if we do not educate our kids, it will not matter, because we will not have property anymore. We will have to be teaching Mandarin Chinese and Indian languages because they will be the boss. This is an investment in our future, unfortunately it is painful and the economy is not in good condition right now, but we have to rise up and make the sacrifice. He is grateful for those who went before and made the sacrifice so that he could get educated, he is grateful for the signers of the Declaration of Independence were willing to pledge everything they had for our freedoms – can we do no less, not for mine, but for everyone else's children and for the future of our country.

### OLD BUSINESS

None

### NEW BUSINESS

#### PRESENTATION OF NEW AND/OR REVISED DRAFT POLICIES

New and/or Revised Draft Policies were presented to the Board in preparation for the 1<sup>st</sup> reading at the next Board of Education Meeting to be held on January 4, 2010, for adoption at the February Board Meeting. This process has taken approximately one year to complete, with the last extensive policy revision being done in 1998.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA

#### BUDGET REDUCTION – DISCUSSION

Mrs. Aukerman discussed budget reductions, cost savings and cutting measures that the Board will need to consider as we move into the remainder of this school year, as well as going into next school year. Mrs. Aukerman said she appreciated the large number of staff members attending this evening and added that she made a commitment to every staff member that they would be the first to be aware of these cuts as it relates to personnel.

- Personnel – Support and certified – Approximately 13 support staff and 9 certified staff will be impacted in January, with a savings to the district of \$870,000 annually.
- Transportation – The Board will be asked this evening to modify the current bus schedule by consolidating bus routes and bus stops, beginning January 19, 2010. All bus stops will be consolidated up to ½ mile in neighborhoods and cul-de-sacs where there are less safety concerns, and that on state routes, no one will be walking. A letter will be sent to parents outlining the new start and stop times, as well as new locations for their stop, if necessary.
  - Dr. Christopher suggested that this is an interim measure, saying there are a variety of other options available to the district that have been discussed, but do not plan to implement at this time.
- Additional options as it relates to the transportation department for next year could include: Re-designing the elementary and middle school routes so they are combined to one route, and consideration to have no transportation for high school students, which is not required from the district.
- All non-essential field trips have been eliminated and will no longer transport students. The District will continue to transport and support the athletic programs that are already in season and will fulfill the commitment to the Suburban League.
- Facilities - Between now and the end of this school year, the goal is to remain cost neutral. Several groups that use our facilities before and after school, and/or weekends, will no longer have any fees waived, and will have to pay to

use the facilities, which begins January 4, 2010. The Board will also need to consider some drastic measures for next year which could include no activities within the school once the school day is over.

- Pay to Participate Fees - The Board will need to consider a pay-to-participate fee structure for athletics and any/all co-curriculars, such as band or marching band. For discussion purposes, high school student fees would be approximately \$200 per student/ \$600 maximum per family cost; middle school student fees would be approximately \$150 per student/\$600 maximum per family cost; and \$50 fee per club or other co-curricular activities. Effective January 4, 2010, the district will begin to implement the pay-to-participate fee which would include all spring sports that start after January 4, 2010. Club participation fees will not take place until next school year. If the levy passes, there still would be a need to consider some fee to participate, but if the levy fails, the amount charged would increase.
- Payschools Program – As a convenience to parents, the district has paid the 3.5% administrative fee, but as of January, the district will move to a newer version with a different format and at that time, the administrative fee will be passed along to the parent to pay.
- Instructional Programs – Middle school students attend a trip to Washington, D.C. every year, but unfortunately because of finances, the trip has been suspended. The student pays for their portion of the trip, and the district pays the staff cost, which we will be unable to pay at this time. Refunds will be issued immediately to parents for the installment payments which have already been made. Hopefully, in the near future, this trip would be something we could restore.
- Summer School – This school year, summer school will be eliminated. There are other districts in the area that do offer a fairly comprehensive program, so any students who would need a summer school opportunity will need to contact other districts.
- Other savings realized – Fleet, property and liability insurance have been reduced by \$20,846, which hopefully will save some positions, and building budgets have been reduced by \$5,000 each, saving another \$25,000.

Mrs. Aukerman said this is approximately a \$1.2 million dollar annual savings, based on these preliminary recommendations. All contracts, if looked at to suspend or reduce prior to the next school year, will need to happen in March and April. We will not know the outcome in March or April so there will be another extensive round of reductions this school year, in preparation for the next school year, as we will not be able to carry those contracts over with an uncertain outcome to the levy. We will continue to make cost savings measures across the board, and probably will come back to the Board each month with additional recommendations. Mrs. Aukerman regrets having to make these cuts, and said these are all positions and activities that our students and community have come to appreciate and rely on, and that it is very unfortunate that these recommendations are being made this evening.

#### CHANGES TO THE 2010-2011 HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Mr. Ulrich, Principal summarized the changes made to the Program of Studies, and said there will be no additional courses added or significant changes made.

- Mr. Kelly asked Mrs. Aukerman that if the levy fails, many of these programs that were offered this year will probably have major changes for next year. Mrs. Aukerman said there would be reductions, and that we will continue to outline that for the community.
- Dr. Christopher said that if no legislative action is taken on H.B. 318 by the end of the year, the district stands to lose another \$500,000 that has been committed by the State to support this school district. The District has lobbied State Senator Gibbs. In FY11, failing action by the end of the year, another \$682,000 will be lost that have been previously committed and would not be forthcoming to the District, which means another \$1.1 million lost to the District over the next 18 months. Add to that unfunded mandates from the State and requirements for curricular offerings, this is the situation we find ourselves in as a community, district and as leaders.
- Mr. Kelly wished everyone in this room would contact our legislators. If this bill does not pass by the end of this year, we lose \$1 million more in the next 18 months, that we only learned about on Thursday. He said the Board wishes

there was another way to fund our schools, but there is not, so we are limited. If changes are to be made with funding, the State Legislator needs to be contacted.

- Mrs. Aukerman said if anyone has any questions on how the District is funded, that the Board, herself and the Treasurer would be happy to explain to the best of their ability, the craziest funding system probably in the United States so the community can understand what they are working with on a daily basis.
- Kathryn Laugesen, Hinckley resident and employee, asked why we are cutting positions, and not sports. Mrs. Aukerman said a host of reductions that are made across the board, some now and later, and that during the middle of the season for sports, we will not stop for our students. The Pay to Participate will help offset the costs that are associated with extra-curriculars, and is part of a larger picture.
- JoAnne Borovka wanted to know how this will affect contracts with employees. Mrs. Aukerman said there is a provision within the negotiated agreement, that for financial reasons, permits the District to suspend or reduce contracts, which we will work on this in the weeks to come.

ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS 09-12-164

Mr. Houska made a motion, seconded by Mr. Petek, that the Board of Education accept the following donations, as listed:

<u>TO</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>ITEM/VALUE</u>
Highland Robotics Club	Edith Coman	\$ 15.00
Highland Athletic Dept.	Sandra S. Frommeyer	\$ 25.00, In memory of David Eisenhart
Highland Athletic Dept.	Barbara Reynolds	\$ 20.00, In memory of David Eisenhart
Highland Athletic Dept.	James & Phyllis Harrison	\$ 40.00, In memory of David Eisenhart
Highland Athletic Dept.	Kay & Donald Beavers	\$100.00, In memory of David Eisenhart

Mr. Houska, yes; Mr. Petek, yes; Mr. Kelly, yes; Dr. Christopher, yes.

Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS FOR USE OF FACILITIES/WAIVER OF FEES 09-12-165

Mr. Petek made a motion, seconded by Mr. Houska, that the Board of Education approve the following requests for use of facilities and waive associated fees, **with the noted exceptions**, as listed:

HIGH SCHOOL

- HS Cafeteria – Friday – 12/11/09 – 2:30 PM – 9:00 PM – Band Fruit Fundraiser Distribution – Ed Marquette
- HS Gym Lobby – Saturday – 1/30/10 – 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM – RAH Girls Softball Registration – Brent Belsole
- HS Main Gym – Mondays & Thursdays – 1/7/10 – 2/25/10 – 8:00 PM – 9:00 PM – Highland Athletes Training – Corey Miller

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- MS Gym – Tuesdays/Wednesdays/Thursdays – 11/09 – 3/10 – 6:00 PM – 9:30 PM – Highland Travel Basketball – Tom Harrington
- MS West Gym – Thursdays – 12/10/09 – 3/18/10 – 7:30 PM – 10:30 PM – Highland Men’s Basketball League – John CizMadia
- MS Choir Room – Friday – 11/20/09 – 7:00 PM – Piano Recital – Emily Miller

GRANGER ELEMENTARY

- GE Gym – Tuesdays/Wednesday/Thursdays – 11/09 – 3/10 – 6:00 PM – 9:30 PM – Highland Travel Basketball – Tom Harrington
- GE Gym – Wednesdays – 11/09 – 3/10 – 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM – RAH Girls Softball Pitchers & Catchers – Brent Belsole

#### HINCKLEY ELEMENTARY

- HE – Kitchen/Cafeteria/Art Room/Gym/Room 211 – Saturday – 3/20/10 – 7:00 AM – 2:30 PM & Sunday – 3/21/10 – 5:30 AM – 4:30 PM – Buzzard Day – Martha Catherwood **(Facility Costs Waived)**

#### SHARON ELEMENTARY

- SE Garden & Classroom – Tuesday – 4/27/10 – 3:45 PM – 6:45 PM – Wild Teacher Workshop – Elizabeth W. Schnabe

#### FEES NOT WAIVED

- HE – Kitchen/Cafeteria/Art Room/Gym/Room 211 – Saturday – 3/20/10 – 7:00 AM – 2:30 PM & Sunday – 3/21/10 – 5:30 AM – 4:30 PM – Buzzard Day – Martha Catherwood **(Custodial Costs)**

Mrs. Aukerman said anything we are acting upon this evening was submitted prior to the recommendation to remain cost neutral as it relates to facilities, so any group that is currently waived, we will need to revisit. She said we will need to renegotiate the facility costs with the Buzzard Day Committee, since we will no longer be waiving any facility costs, and that there will be some fees assessed. When this item was placed on the Agenda, we had not reached a decision with the facilities. We will retroactively contract and make adjustments as necessary through Board action to charge.

Mr. Petek, yes; Mr. Houska, yes; Mr. Kelly, yes; Dr. Christopher, yes.

Motion carried.

#### APPROVAL TO MODIFY BUS ROUTES 09-12-166

Mr. Petek made a motion, seconded by Mr. Houska, that the Board of Education delegate the Superintendent, and/or designee, the authority to consolidate current bus stops beginning on January 19, 2010 through June 3, 2010. [Ohio Pupil Transportation Operation and Safety Rules – Section 3301-83-13, Section B (1) – School Bus Stops.]

Mr. Petek, yes; Mr. Houska, yes; Mr. Kelly, yes; Dr. Christopher, yes.

Motion carried.

#### CONSENT AGENDA – CONTRACTS/AGREEMENTS 09-12-167

Mr. Houska made a motion, seconded by Mr. Petek, that the Board of Education approve the following contracts and/or agreements for the 2009/2010 school year, items A through D, as presented:

- Kent State University Field Experience/Student Teaching Agreement
- Achievement Center Agreement to increase the amount of time in the Adult Workshop for a student with disabilities
- Achievement Center Agreement to conduct a 90 day assessment for a student with multiple disabilities
- Achievement Center Agreement to provide transitional work experiences to select Highland students

Mr. Houska, yes; Mr. Petek, yes; Mr. Kelly, yes; Dr. Christopher, yes.

Motion carried.

#### CONSENT AGENDA – PERSONNEL 09-12-168

Mr. Petek made a motion, seconded by Mr. Houska, that the Board of Education approve the following personnel items A through D, as presented.

Mr. Petek, yes; Mr. Houska, yes; Mr. Kelly, yes; Dr. Christopher, yes.

Motion carried.

EMPLOYMENT - CERTIFIED SUBSTITUTES/HOME TUTORS – ADDENDUM # III

Approved the attached list of certified substitutes/home tutors for use for the 2009/2010 school year, as submitted by the MCEC.

EMPLOYMENT – STUDENT WORKER

Employed Victoria Teresko as a Student Worker, \$7.30 per hour, in the Special Education Department on an “as needed basis”, effective January 4, 2010 through February 22, 2010.

EMPLOYMENT – CLASSIFIED SUBSTITUTES

Employed the following classified individuals, on one-year limited contracts of employment on an “as needed basis” for the remainder of the 2009/2010 school year:

1. Melinda Bazemore – Sub Aide - \$8.00 per hour
2. Christine Koehler – Sub Cook - \$8.00 per hour

EMPLOYMENT – CO-CURRICULAR/SUPPLEMENTAL

Employed the following on one-year limited supplemental contracts of employment for the 2009/2010 school year, as listed:

1. Adam Cestaro – HS Freshman Football Coach - 0 yrs - \$3,869.00
2. Kathy Fisher – HS Drama Director Spring – 22 yrs - \$3,869.00
3. Bruce Hulme – HS Asst Wrestling Coach – 0 yrs - \$4,229.00
4. Ken Lane – HS Weight Room Supervisor ½ - 4 yrs - \$1,394.50
5. Gus Matheou – HS Robotics Advisor – 0 yrs - \$2,429.00
6. Amelia Reynolds – HS Asst Volleyball Coach – 1 yr - \$3,869.00
7. Tom Sours – HS Asst Wrestling Coach Volunteer - \$0

ALL EMPLOYMENT ITEMS ARE CONTINGENT ON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS AND PROPER CERTIFICATION WHEN APPLICABLE.

ADJOURNMENT

With all in agreement, the meeting was adjourned at 8:27 P.M.

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President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Treasurer

(A TAPE OF THIS MEETING IS AVAILABLE IN THE TREASURER'S OFFICE)