

***JOINT MEETING OF GREATER ALBANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (GAPS)
BOARD
and
ALBANY CITY COUNCIL
Albany City Hall, Council Chambers
Wednesday, December 1, 2010
7:15 p.m.***

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Konopa called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Konopa led the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

INTRODUCTIONS

Introduction of City Council: Mayor Sharon Konopa, Councilors: Ralph Reid, Jr., Dick Olsen, and Bill Coburn

Introduction of School District 8J Board Members:
Board Chair Liisa Reid, Board Members: Bill O'Bryan and Jerry Boehme

Introduction of Staff: City Manager Wes Hare, Parks & Recreation Director Ed Hodney, Finance Director Stewart Taylor, Transportation Systems Analyst Ron Irish, Management Assistant/Public Information Officer Marilyn Smith, District Superintendent Maria Delapoer, Deputy Superintendent Steve Kunke, Director of Business and Operations Russ Allen, and Human Resources Director Randy Lary

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

No one wished to speak.

REPORTS

Deerfield Park Purchase/Timber Ridge "Community" Track

School District 8J Director of Business and Operations Russ Allen explained that the City and the District entered into an agreement that included the City contributing \$300,000 to the school in exchange for Burkhart Park and a lease on Deerfield Park. Built into the agreement was the possibility of the City being able to purchase Deerfield Park for a reduced price. Now, with the cost of constructing the track at Timber Ridge School coming in much higher than expected, the District would like the City to consider purchasing Deerfield Park. By purchasing it now, the City could take advantage of the discount on the park and allow the school district to put in an all-weather track that could be used year-round.

Parks & Recreation Director Ed Hodney said per the Council's request, staff will be bringing funding options available for the purchase to the Council at the next work session, December 6.

School District 8J Board Member Jerry Boehme mentioned that GAPS had an opportunity to build a cinder track, an all-weather track, which would have advantages and uses for the kids and the community. Everyone involved thought it would be a win/win project.

Allen mentioned that they are close to construction of the track. There is also a soccer field in the same area that they have no ability to irrigate. The additional funds will help with those costs.

Professional Learning Communities Initiative

School District 8J Superintendent Maria Delapoer provided a "Professional Learning Communities" brochure (in agenda file) for the Council and staff. She explained that the kindergarten through grade 12 program stresses continuous improvement by becoming lifelong learners. Teachers gather data, discuss and share, implement best practices, work in teams, and challenge each other and their students. The District believes it is the best use of teacher's time and allows the District to harness collective knowledge. Outside groups are providing activities for the students that they may not have had an opportunity to participate in. Since the inception of the program 250-300 students have stayed at school to participate in the activities and there is evidence that students are learning. A side benefit has been that organizations have an opportunity to interact with school staff and students.

Deputy Superintendent Steve Kunke gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining the Professional Learning Community (PLC) concept (in agenda file). The three big ideas of the PLC are:

- Focus on learning.
- Build a collaborative culture.
- Focus on results.

Each PLC is organized into a series of high-performing collaborative teams which meet on a regular basis to focus on student learning. Each team uses four questions to review data, drive reflection, identify essential learning, and develop teaching lessons and assessments, which result in improved student learning. The four questions are:

- What do we want our students to learn?
- How will we know they are learning?
- How will we respond when they don't learn?
- How will we respond when they do learn?

The process will move teachers from an isolative relationship to a collaborative one. He added that it can be done with essentially no cost.

Liisa Reid said one of the reasons the Board supported the program was because it allowed the teachers to work in teams.

City Manager Wes Hare commented that data collection, comparison to other cities, and measuring outcomes is something the City is doing as well.

Kunke said it is a cultural change for the District.

School District 8J Board Member Bill O'Bryan said business is driven on this continuous learning model. This concept is familiar to him. It is not a program but a process. He said in the past, teachers worked in isolation. This process gives them peer support and sounding boards. The School Board's responsibility is to support them in this program – a five-year process, and to provide the resources needed and give clear expectations.

Budget Outlook for 2011-13

Hare said the City budget process will be starting soon. The Budget Committee meets in May and the budget must be adopted by the Council by June 30. The City has some positives and is in pretty good shape. We

have cut back on staffing, gone through reorganizations, instituted a voluntary separation incentive program, and implemented some layoffs. Unlike the school district, the City has not seen a reduction in our primary revenue source. What there has been a reduction in is the rate of increase in the primary revenue source; property taxes. If that changes, costs will be hard to control. Currently the City is able to maintain service levels. When explaining governmental budgeting to the general public, it is important for staff to convey that the City actually has multiple budgets, including budgets with designated funds. Hare believes the City will see continued stress for funding police and fire services and will face uncertainty regarding property taxes.

Delapoer said that schools completely rely on income tax from state allocations. The last two years have seen significant reductions and the next two years will as well. Staff is valuable, but they are the greatest expense. They are going to have to restructure.

Allen and Human Resources Director Randy Lary provided a PowerPoint presentation (in agenda file) explaining the budget ups and downs for the School District. There is very little staff can do to generate revenue. The District is dependent on state revenues. Allen explained how the State of Oregon's quarterly forecasting affects the District's budget. With income taxes down, their revenues go down. Also, a portion of the allocation formula is dependent on the number of students in the District. GAPS enrollment has gone down, which contributes to the loss of revenues. On the expenditure side 89% of their budget is spent on staff. They had a significant increase in their Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) rate as well. They are currently facing a \$7,000,000 operating deficit in FY 2011-2012. That is equivalent to 100 teachers.

Lary said collective bargaining agreements all expire this summer. The District has reached Memorandums of Agreement with the unions for a status-quo salary and benefit package. They have used this status quo base for their forecast modeling.

Liisa Reid said the School Board wants every community member to be a stakeholder in the schools. They would like this presentation out in the community.

O'Bryan said 100 teachers equals 21 cut days. The budget is more than a one-year challenge, it is ongoing. The Board and the District Administration have been asking for input. This is a community issue, not just a school issue.

Delapoer said that they, of course, would not be terminating 100 teachers. They could not function. But, there is the possibility of some layoffs as well as cut days.

Olsen asked, did all employees take the same status-quo freeze? Lary said yes. There followed discussion regarding PERS costs.

Konopa said, let the City know what it can do to help.

Delapoer said staff will be taking the presentation out again to the community when they decide what they will propose to address the issue.

Olsen asked, what is the average class size? Lary said it varies. He thinks it is 26.5, but a classroom could have up to 34 students.

Konopa asked how the schools System Development Charges were doing. Allen said they would be doing better if there were more building going on. They too have taken a dip. He reminded the Council and the Board that those collected fees can only be spent on capital projects.

BUSINESS FROM THE COUNCIL AND THE BOARD

There was none.

ADJOURN

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Betty Langwell, MMC
City Clerk

Reviewed by,

Wes Hare
City Manager