

MINUTES

Murfreesboro City School Board
5:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 21, 2015
MCS Administrative Offices

ATTENDANCE

School Board: Chair Butch Campbell, Vice Chair Nancy Rainier, Jared Barrett, Andy Brown, Phil King, Nancy Phillips, Collier Smith

Staff: Shavon Davis-Louis, Lea Bartch, Ava Jordan, Karen Hawkins, Caresa Dodson, Greg Lyles, Lisa Trail, Joe Marlin, Kim Frank, Robin Newell, Ralph Ringstaff, Pam Holden, Beth Prater, Gary Anderson, Linda Gilbert, Sandy Scheele, Scott Campbell, Kristina Maddux, Roseann Barton, Gene Loyd, Karen Loyd, Crystal Farris

6:05 p.m. Chair Campbell began the meeting by inviting Mr. Anderson to present the new budget information. Mr. Anderson said the state is over and above revenue projections. He said the first release of BEP funding numbers was at 7 p.m. Friday night, and they had over 100 emails from schools saying something was wrong. The special education numbers were incorrect. They redid the BEP numbers. We took that information, information from the state and the City, and growth money of \$800,000, and we put all into the budget. After meeting with the City, we had been very conservative on property tax estimates -- up over nine percent (9%) of where we were last year and budgeted a little over eight percent (8%). With the revised revenue numbers, the budget can be balanced and we anticipate a little more between now and when the budget is turned in to the state August 1, and the City requires it May 1. As the budget stands now, we are going to be able to make the state's minimum requirement of three percent (3%) of expenses to move forward. Mr. Anderson said there is less money in reserve, but in the past the City has always advanced us money each month to make payroll, adding that the cash flow right before holiday seasons tends to be low and the City always advances us.

Chair Campbell clarified that everything can be done as requested in this budget. Mr. Anderson confirmed. Ms. Rainier asked if this means in the long range, we will receive the additional \$500,000 from the City or was more requested. Mr. Anderson said we were fine with the \$500,000. Ms. Smith asked if this included the discussions from the last meeting about Dr. Gilbert's contract. Ms. Baker said 15 days public notice must be given before extending the contract, so that will be put on the agenda for another meeting. Ms. Smith asked if faculty and administrators had the opportunity to input on the budget. Dr. Gilbert said that she did seek their input. Ms. Phillips asked how much the student population increase. Dr. Gilbert said 10.9 percent or 819 students from the projections in the 2013-14 budget to projections in the 2015-16 budget. Ms. Phillips said that if you look at expenditure highlights that could seem substantial unless you look at the student increase. At that rate, Ms. Phillips said we would have a doubled budget in six years.

Ms. Phillips said she was still thinking about the custodial issue. She said that if we were going to save in excess of over \$100,000, and we offered each principal \$10,000, would they use it on a custodian or something else. She said she was one of the people who fought it last year. Ms. Phillips said that if we are going to get a \$500,000 increase from the City, it is hard not to use it in the classroom. She said she wants things pristine in the schools and would also like to see the fund balance increased, because it barely meets the minimum, leaving no wiggle room for roof leaks or HVAC problems.

Dr. Brown asked what happens if the state comes back at the end of four cycles and says we do not have as much money as we were told originally. Mr. Anderson said you have to have revenues or cut expenses. Dr. Brown said this year there are new textbooks, buses, and several large capitol items. He asked what is anticipated for next year's budget, and where will the money come from if we do not have additional revenues. Mr. Anderson said we are anticipating more money, but also saving on expenditures. His example was if a teacher retires and we bring in a teacher lower on the pay scale that is approximately \$10,000 difference. He said there is the potential to get more growth money because we grew almost 50 students from second period to third period. Mr. Anderson said we were told there would be an 8-12 percent increase in insurance, but it was not that much. Dr. Brown asked about major expenses for next year. Mr. Anderson said other than the addition to schools and buses, nothing has come to our attention. He added that, for the most part, we are in pretty good shape on roofs because we went through a cycle a few years ago of getting them replaced.

Ms. Smith said that Mr. Barrett has been pushing for, and she agrees, that we need to map this out farther than tonight perhaps at retreat. She added that MCS has a big vision and we need to see what that is for the next five or 10 years at least.

Mr. Barrett said, regarding custodial services, that he emailed all the principals. He said if we do the services in-house that we need to make sure there are enough people in the buildings to cover shifts. Mr. Anderson said a higher pay schedule was built-in to keep better people longer. Mr. Barrett asked if a custodian wants to come back in-house from GCA, will their experience count. Mr. Anderson said that it would. Chair Campbell said that of the people he talked to, not many people were happy with the service. He said the chain of command is not good. He added that principals used to do the hiring of the custodians, the interviewing, and they know whom to go to get things done.

Ms. Rainier said she has had discussions with people about the proposed six academic coaches. She said some say yes, definitely, but another feeling is that maybe additional teachers could suffice for that. Dr. Gilbert said she feels strongly about academic coaches. She said the principals and education have become so specialized that if you are looking at hitting individual children, the knowledge base of teachers has to be pretty remarkable. Dr. Gilbert said the benefits from having the current coaches have been visible. Ms. Rainier asked how many we have now. Dr. Gilbert said there are three. Ms. Rainier said that if we think it is a need for our system, she thinks we need one in each building. Dr. Gilbert agreed. Ms. Rainier asked how will it be determined who gets a coach. Dr. Gilbert said she thinks if we could have a reading coach and a math coach the teachers would jump up and down and hit the ceiling, adding that half time

does make a difference. Ms. Rainier asked what it would cost to get one in every building. Dr. Gilbert said it would be the salary of a teacher.

Ms. Rainier said she has a question or concern when talking about new additions at Hobgood and Black Fox-- will we be talking about rezoning again. Mr. Anderson said this is an issue at John Pittard and Reeves-Rogers because they are at capacity. He added it might have to trickle down. Ms. Rainier said it would not be citywide then. Mr. Anderson said it would not. Ms. Rainier asked if we still are planning maybe two years after this for an additional school. Mr. Anderson explained in year one Bradley, in year two Black Fox, and in year three building a new school. Dr. Gilbert said it would depend on how fast things will come on. She said there is an interesting prediction of a slow down of about a year and a half. She added that with the new annexation law where folks have to be requested to annex in, there is about a six-month time line from when they start and getting done, so there are a lot of factors we do not know yet that will wash out next year. She said that we think we know we will have to have a new school in about three years, but we don't know where that will be. Mr. Anderson said there are three controlled choice schools so we can control where they can come in. He said that Black Fox has a subdivision being annexed into the City, which is why we have to add to that school.

Dr. Brown said he supports the coaches, and think there are a lot of positive things we can say they can do. He asked Ms. Rainier about how many years she thinks one can teach before having reached maximum effectiveness at teaching. Ms. Rainier said it was hard to say, but she thought about five or six years. Dr. Brown said he is concerned that teachers may have frustrations and quit before getting that help to where they will feel comfortable, adding that it is not that they are not already great teachers but the job of a teacher now is not easy. Ms. Rainier said she also thinks the mentoring program would be helpful, and she thinks Dr. Brown is correct. She said she thinks that is why people are burning out--some get three years and say it is not for them and they are gone. Ms. Rainier said this is a nation-wide problem.

Dr. Brown said that he is still concerned about page 23 under office of principal that we are spending \$65,000 on long distance phone bills. He said it seems that you could buy a cell phone for each school with unlimited calling. He said he is also concerned with cutting \$25,000 out of the budget for bus fuel. He said he hopes costs stay down, but they may not. Mr. Anderson advised that the \$65,000 is long distance calls, but also fax lines, alarm lines, and multiple-lines systems.

Dr. Brown said he thinks Sandy Scheele's salary should be discussed in this budget. Dr. Gilbert said when you look at salaries for this area, Sandy's is very low, and she would like to increase it by \$5,000. Dr. Brown moved to increase Ms. Scheele's salary by \$5,000, making it retroactive to April 1, 2015. Mr. Barrett seconded the motion. Chair Campbell asked for a roll call vote.

Jared Barrett	<u>Yes</u>	Andy Brown	<u>Yes</u>	Phil King	<u>Yes</u>	Nancy Phillips	<u>Yes</u>
Nancy Rainier	<u>Yes</u>	Collier Smith	<u>Yes</u>	Butch Campbell	<u>Yes</u>		

Ms. Rainier said she had a question about the videographer. Ms. Smith said she did too, but when you look at it, it makes sense. Ms. Phillips asked Dr. Gilbert if we are we having a hard

time getting good people at the job fairs. Dr. Gilbert said the numbers that we are seeing are not as good because of competition. She said we are struggling with special education, ESL, and counselors-- like everything else, she said, you have a stellar group, a mediocre group, and a failing group. She added that teaching is becoming much more difficult to find exemplary teachers.

Ms. Phillips said going back to reading, we are going to have reading coaches then PLCs then LTRs training. She asked if there is any way to evaluate what is working with so much training going on. Dr. Gilbert said that as far as when you look at PLC, it is just the way we do business-- meet once a week. She said as far as the new stuff we hit last year was RTI. She said we are still struggling with that--not with what we are doing but with state requirements. Ms. Phillips said we have always been late notifying teachers. She said she believes if we let people know earlier we might get the pick of the litter. Dr. Gilbert said that is what we are doing now. She asked Mr. Ringstaff how many we have already. Mr. Ringstaff said nine. Ms. Phillips said she appreciates coaches, but she also appreciates not getting more. She said she would like to see us do a little more evaluating for data to see what is effective. She said she does not mind paying for stuff if it works.

Mr. Barrett said he looks at it as an investment in the children and the staff. He said we'll still have to look at it next year; there is no fluff, and there have been pretty healthy discussions about it. Dr. Gilbert said she appreciates the support of the Board. It prepares us for the next five years by building on the foundation of the last five years. Mr. King said this budget is an investment. He said that at the end of the day he firmly believes the schools are what stands out and makes Murfreesboro a better place to live.

Mr. Barrett moved to approve the budget. Ms. Phillips said she would ask that it be done on public television. Chair Campbell said the Board has reviewed the budget line-by-line, and there is no reason to wait especially since the City needs it as soon as it is approved. Ms. Rainier seconded the motion. Dr. Brown said he does not feel as strongly about approving the budget on television as discussing it on television. Chair Campbell said there are a motion and a second on the floor. Dr. Brown said he wants everyone to know that teacher Rebecca Few is his daughter, but he does not think that will influence his decisions. Chair Campbell called for a roll call vote.

Jared Barrett	<u>Yes</u>	Andy Brown	<u>Yes</u>	Phil King	<u>No</u>	Nancy Phillips	<u>No</u>
Nancy Rainier	<u>Yes</u>	Collier Smith	<u>Yes</u>	Butch Campbell	<u>Yes</u>		

The motion to approve the budget passed with a vote of five (5) yes and two (2) no.

Chair Campbell stated that the budget sessions were advertised, and Dr. Gilbert can make a presentation at the next Board meeting. Ms. Smith said she even tagged it on Facebook. Ms. Smith suggested a press release be sent out to the media to put the bulk of the budget language in our own words. Dr. Gilbert added that she would be on WGNS Monday. Ms. Smith also suggested presenting on *In the City*. Chair Campbell commended the Board. He said everybody had the opportunity to ask questions and did ask questions. He noted that the people in attendance at the budget meetings were MCS employees, and that the majority of the people do

not pay attention unless it involves a massive tax increase. He added that he believes teachers need to see the budget process so they can understand a little more about what is going on.

Ms. Phillips said she agrees with Chair Campbell's comments, but she was thinking of the parents who are at home and watch on television. Ms. Phillips asked Ms. Baker what the Board has done in the past. Ms. Baker and Ms. Smith said the budget was definitely approved during the budget sessions last year.

Ms. Rainier reminded everyone they can purchase a brick for Overall Creek.

Chair Campbell asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Dr. Brown moved to adjourn. Mr. King seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Director of Schools