

## MINUTES

Murfreesboro City School Board  
5:30 p.m., Monday, April 6, 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: Dr. Linda Gilbert, Gary Anderson, Beth Prater, Robin Newell, Tammy Garrett, Caresa Brooks, Sheri Arnette, Karen Hawkins, Crystal Farris, Kim Frank, Christa Campbell, Greg Lyles, Kim Fowler, Lea Barch, Shavon Davis-Louis, Pam Holden, Ralph Ringstaff, Joe Marlin, Sandy Scheele, Scott Campbell, Ava Jordan, Jenny Ortiz, Gene Loyd

Others: Mealand Hudgins, Daily News Journal

5:30 A meal was served by Carolyn's Creations.

6:00 Chair Campbell called the meeting to order.

Dr. Gilbert gave a 25-minute PowerPoint presentation highlighting information for Murfreesboro City Schools such as demographics, student numbers, trends, employee numbers, and support numbers with comparisons from 2010 to the present budget year (2015-2016).

Mr. Anderson referred to the budget notebooks that had been given to each Board member prior to the meeting, beginning with budget highlights.

Ms. Phillips commented on cleaning services, noting that it was painful to go to GCA to start with, and now you are asking to go back to in-house service. Mr. Anderson said now is the time to either get bids or take over cleaning.

Ms. Rainier asked about raises.

Mr. Anderson suggested skipping the revenues tab in the budget notebook, because it is going to change so much since all of the revenues are not in. He directed the Board to go to the expenditures tab.

Ms. Rainier asked if the fund balance will be negative until we get the revenue figures.

Mr. Anderson explained that we are hopeful there will be more monies; if not, budget cuts will have to be made. He added that this is the maximum we see as needed for the district.

Dr. Gilbert said they are very aware that if we do not get additional funding, we will have to come back and make cuts.

Ms. Smith asked Dr. Gilbert how she arrived at \$500,000 and, why didn't we ask for more?

Dr. Gilbert said she felt very confident that we would be able to get \$500,000 from City Council.

Ms. Phillips asked about adjustments for salaries. She said she knows the City has gone through a salary study and are still finalizing that. She asked Dr. Brown what was happening with our salary study. Ms. Phillips said she wondered if adjustments would be better after the salary study results.

Dr. Gilbert said the support areas are where we were really out of pocket, and this was evidenced this year because we have lost some folks.

### Expenditures Tab

Mr. Anderson directed the Board to move to the expenditures tab of the budget notebook.

### 71100 Regular Instruction

Ms. Smith asked what an academic coach is.

Dr. Gilbert said we are requesting six positions. She said that Sheri (Arnette) is the one that does this, and what we are seeing is that some of our schools have already spent Title money on coaches. In talking with some of the principals, we found that some were really looking at that.

Dr. Gilbert said the county has one in every school, and we are asking for one in every two schools. She said we are really intentional in looking at reading in schools.

Ms. Phillips asked how much those six positions increase the budget.

Mr. Anderson said that is in the teacher line.

Ms. Smith asked if these would be certified teachers.

Dr. Gilbert responded, yes.

Mr. Anderson said it comes to about \$300,000 grand total.

Ms. Rainier asked about maintenance and repair, noting that it did not increase that at all. She asked if that was for the entire system, commenting that it seems awfully low.

Mr. Anderson explained that's a safety net; most of the schools handle those themselves.

Ms. Rainier asked about line item 499, and what other supplies. She said \$20 per student plus summer school supplies; what does this mean?

Mr. Anderson said that every year, we send money to the schools -- \$20 per student for instructional materials.

Mr. King asked how many teachers this line encompasses. Line 116 (teachers) and line 163 (education assistants)

Dr. Gilbert said teachers, ESL, coaches, all teachers fall in that line plus the new positions.

Mr. King asked how many EA's, there are.

Dr. Brown said the break-down is under step.

Ms. Smith said (line 195) there wasn't an increase on substitute teachers but are we going to pay them more.

Dr. Gilbert said they may have read that it's very difficult getting substitutes because the economy is up. She added that we are projecting that with having coaches in schools, we won't have to have as many substitutes.

Ms. Smith said her concern last year was that too many teachers were pulled out of the classroom.

Dr. Gilbert told Ms. Smith she was correct. We feel like we've reached a tipping point so we are not as worried about staff development. She said it goes back to those foundations and doing power standards and training and having a better picture.

Mr. Barrett said there was a lengthy discussion about this last year, but asked what they are paid now.

Mr. Ringstaff said \$70 per day.

Chair Campbell asked about line 449 and textbooks.

Ms. Hawkins responded that we are asking for both math and social studies textbooks, and opted to purchase next year for sixth grade.

Mr. Barrett asked how long textbooks last.

Ms. Hawkins replied that the cycle is for six years.

Mr. Barrett asked if there were any public comments from parents or the community.

Ms. Hawkins said there were none.

Ms. Phillips asked if we are adding 16 regular education classroom teachers.

Dr. Gilbert replied yes in keeping with staffing standards.

#### 71200 Special Education Instruction

Ms. Phillips asked about the additional gifted coordinator.

Dr. Gilbert stated that we have 180 projected gifted for 2015, and 70 percent of those are in grades 4, 5, and 6. She said we are finding we really need help with that, including attending IEP meetings; meet with parents, etc. She said that Ms. Bartch is with students a lot, and if we are going to meet the needs of the gifted population, we are going to need additional person.

Ms. Phillips said this may be beating a dead horse, but the state came down on us for over identifying, and we weren't, but what are we doing to justify so our children get what they need and deserve?

Dr. Gilbert stated that before, when we got slapped, we were running about 10 percent. She said identifiers are changing, and are not so environmentally based. She said there are a lot of tests now coming out that are based on puzzles or other ways to identify. She said, given the demographics and amount of growth and number we have increased in population over the last five years, she believes we can justify it.

Ms. Smith said there is only one gifted coordinator right now, but our system is growing. She said people were not getting tested that should be tested, and one coordinator does not make a dent in it, adding that two probably will not make a dent in it.

Ms. Phillips asked if the coaches would be working with teachers or students.

Dr. Gilbert responded with teachers. She said research shows what an impact coaches have. She added that we do not want to go into a coaching situation where you have a coach assigned to one classroom teacher. She said we are looking at more intensively what Sheri and Caresa are doing. She said they are working with teachers who are struggling

Ms. Phillips said to Ms. Smith's point, it is not the coordinator but school psychologist that does the testing.

Dr. Gilbert confirmed adding that the gifted coordinator is sort of a mediator, someone to get in there and find out what the child needs. She said this year, you will be seeing us do some work with principals over next several months over what clustering looks like.

Ms. Phillips asked if this is at Discovery school.

Dr. Gilbert replied it is across the district.

Ms. Phillips asked if it is merit based.

Dr. Gilbert replied no, that gifted children need to be in clusters, and the goal is to get at every grade level in every school to get someone who can teach gifted.

Ms. Phillips asked if those children are being offered positions at Discovery School.

Dr. Gilbert said if the students apply.

Dr. Gilbert said she met with the dean at MTSU, and they are offering a gifted academy this summer. She said that Paul Vaughn is very interested in that. She said she will be working to identify teachers with principals over the next month. She said they will go through a week of instruction and follow up with four Saturdays plus online community to get endorsement. She added she has been having strong conversations with MTSU about reading.

Ms. Rainier asked what other contracted services are (line 399).

Mr. Marlin responded that it is for part-time staff.

Dr. Gilbert said that IDEA will only fund so much.

#### 72110 Student Services - Attendance

Mr. Anderson added that there is no back up for Ms. Zavisa.

Ms. Rainier asked if \$45,000 is a person's salary.

Mr. Anderson replied that the salary put in is \$42,000.

Ms. Rainier asked if this is a new position.

Mr. Anderson replied that it is.

Ms. Rainier asked if this salary is for the person in this position.

Mr. Anderson said yes, plus \$3,000 from race to the top money.

Ms. Smith said that seems like a high salary, and asked Mr. Anderson to explain.

Mr. Anderson said this person will be responsible for downloading data, backing up the technology department, and helping at the schools. He said this person will have to be well-versed and highly technical noting that this is not a data entry person.

Mr. Campbell asked if this was an attendance person.

Mr. Anderson said it is not.

Mr. Barrett said it sounds like there is enough work for two people.

Dr. Gilbert said that Ms. Zavisa does all the cafeteria, nursing, nutrition, and attendance. She said the state is moving to a data dashboard, and all the money we get is based on her being there. Dr. Gilbert said she also inputs classrooms, and brings data in from testing.

Ms. Rainier said it seems more secretarial.

Dr. Gilbert stated that it is very different from secretarial.

Ms. Smith asked if there is a way for one person to be a senior and other to be a junior.

Mr. Anderson said this has to be someone highly skilled in technology, and it is not secretarial, and not data entry.

Ms. Phillips said that if one person has handled the position heretofore, a part-time position would be a good start.

#### 72120 Student Support Services – Health

Mr. Anderson said line 399 was reduced; instead of using outside agency, we are using a pool of sub nurses. He noted that nurses are required to go on field trips. He said the district is getting some money back from schools, but we cannot upcharge the field trip. He said it has to come out of school funds, and that state law will not allow an upcharge to other students for field trips.

#### 72130 Other Student Support Services

Ms. Rainier – who is administrator?

Dr. Gilbert – Kim Frank; that would be your 4% plus new person

Ms. Phillips – so this is where social worker salary adjustment is? Walk me through that

Mr. Anderson said line 130 is social workers.

Ms. Phillips asked what the percentage of increase is for social workers.

Mr. Anderson –replied that it is about 11 percent.

Dr. Gilbert said that when you look at other social worker salaries (handouts) in surrounding counties, we are low.

Ms. Phillips asked if we are having a hard time filling those positions at the current salary. She said, if not, are we pricing ourselves out.

Dr. Gilbert said she has a hard time thinking about it like that. She said that we ask for people to work extremely hard, and they deserve to be competitive with other districts.

Ms. Phillips said if we are not having a hard time getting positions filled.

Dr. Brown said the fallacy with that argument is if a position is open and a person can come here at a certain salary or go to Williamson County for higher salary, they would rather go where the higher salary is.

Ms. Phillips said we would not do that.

Mr. Campbell said that we are losing people every day because of that.

Dr. Gilbert said education has become extremely competitive.

Mr. Campbell said that is why there are so many systems doing signing bonuses, adding that we lose good technology people every day.

#### 72210 – Student Support Services Regular Instruction

Mr. Anderson noted that librarians are in line 129.

Ms. Rainier asked if this is where MDAs are now.

Dr. Gilbert replied yes, in the library.

Ms. Rainier asked for an explanation of line 138.

Dr. Gilbert said that includes Ms. Bartch's position, Ms. Farris' position, and Shavon, Caresa, and Sheri are the other ones in this line.

Ms. Rainier asked where the majority of their salary comes from.

Mr. Anderson said Ms. Farris' comes out of Title funds and Ms. Bartch's comes out of the Jennings and Rebecca Jones Foundation and special education support.

Mr. King asked about line 399 for translator. He asked what the difference between that and interpreter in line 189 is.

Dr. Gilbert said that line 189 is Marisella Tapia.

Ms. Hawkins said this is for translations that we do not have access to here. For example, last week she had to have Chinese, and two other languages. She said Language Line is also used for on-demand services.

Ms. Phillips said looking at back on adjusted salaries, she said she is not saying they don't need to be made, she would have appreciated hearing about it before seeing it in the budget. She said it would have been helpful if we could have approached it as a board.

Dr. Gilbert thanked Ms. Phillips for understanding.

Mr. Campbell said he agreed, and they would come back to that.

#### 72220 Student Support Services – Special Education Instruction

Mr. Anderson said that additional psychological personnel is the major item in this area, along with associated benefits.

Ms. Rainier asked about line 124, and if we pay interns.

Dr. Dodson responded that we pay them \$1000 per month.

Ms. Rainier asked how many we have.

Dr. Dodson replied two.

Mr. Campbell asked if this is based on 10 months.

Dr. Dodson replied that it is.

Mr. Campbell said we are looking at \$20,000.

Ms. Phillips asked if we see them doing testing or what for the additional positions.

Dr. Gilbert said that with RTI, we have to do what is called fidelity checks, and that a lot of things that are happening right now, we are stretching to get it done.

Dr. Dodson said RTI2 is law this year. She said that before a student can be certified as having a learning disability, we have to show that we have done X-number of steps first. She said we have to keep those records for every student in RTI, and at this point, about 15 percent of students are in RTI.

Dr. Gilbert stated that with what the state is asking principals to do, it is impossible to do, and it is not getting done. She added, they do not have time.

Ms. Smith asked if these are people trained to work with gifted.

Dr. Gilbert said they are trained to do testing and to certify students as gifted.

Mr. Campbell asked what would average salary of psychologist be.

Dr. Dodson said they would be on a teacher's salary, but would have to have at least a master's degree. She said all of ours are Ed.S., so they would be on the higher end.

#### 72310 – Administrative Support - Board of Education

Mr. Anderson explained that we reduced audit expenses, increased trustee expenses, and reduced overall budget by \$1700.

Mr. Campbell asked if this is the time to talk about travel, BO 43 and 44.

Mr. Anderson explained what was passed as far as changes to BO 43 and 44.

Ms. Baker asked how much of required training each would need.

Ms. Phillips said outside of core requirements, they have to go to other events to meet requirements.

Mr. Anderson said there is no cost for core requirements, but there is a cost for the others.

Ms. Smith asked how much was spent last year.

Mr. Anderson said this year, they are estimated to spend about \$10,000.

Ms. Smith asked if there is some reason that we would need to increase the amount.

Mr. Anderson said that, based on your conversations about national conferences, next year the conference will not be in Nashville.

Ms. Smith asked what the gifts are.

Ms. Rainier said teacher retirement gifts, Christmas gifts, teacher of the year, etc.

#### 72320 – Administrative Support – Office of Director

Mr. Anderson said there is an increase on the phone bill because people are moving here but keeping their cell phone numbers creating long distance area calls to other area codes.

Ms. Rainier said she noticed that in line 101 there is no 4 percent increase. She said the director needs an increase also.

Mr. Anderson said she is not an automatic [increase] because she is on contract with the Board.

Ms. Rainier asked what the contract runs through.

Dr. Gilbert said June, 2016.

Mr. Campbell asked if the Board can give her a bonus.

Mr. Anderson said yes.

Ms. Baker said they can also extend the contract.

Mr. Campbell asked if they could not give any kind of salary increase.

Ms. Baker said yes, it is up to the Board.

Ms. Phillips asked when the next evaluation is.

Dr. Gilbert said in October.

Ms. Rainier said the Board needs to put it in the budget.

#### 72410 – Administrative Support – Office of Principal

Mr. Anderson noted the 4 percent step increases.

Mr. Campbell asked if any assistant principals are on 12-month contracts?

Dr. Gilbert said that principals are on 11 months and assistant principals are on 10 and one-half months.

Ms. Rainier asked if they could get a breakdown of salaries.

Dr. Gilbert said she did principals (handout) but not assistant principals.

Ms. Rainier asked what it means if stipend is included.

Dr. Gilbert said it is excluding salary.

Ms. Rainier asked if this includes the stipend.

Dr. Gilbert said that it does.

Ms. Rainier asked if Jo Lasater is part-time.

Dr. Gilbert said that she was, but she is full time now.

#### 72510 Administrative Support - Fiscal Services

Mr. Campbell asked why there was a decrease in medical insurance.

Mr. Anderson said that some people may have gone onto spouse's insurance.

#### 72520 Support Service - Personnel

Mr. Anderson said this includes part-time to full-time and raises.

Ms. Rainier said this isn't Ralph's full salary, and doesn't he get something from ESP?

Ms. Phillips asked when Mr. Ringstaff took over ESP.

Mr. Ringstaff said it was about two years ago.

#### 72610 Support Services - Operation of Plant

Mr. Anderson said the custodial personnel listed previously, line 328 paying custodial service company (was paying), adding that if we take it back this will no longer be needed. He said that unless the Board decides to keep it out we'll take bids; increased \$15,000 natural gas and \$40,000 water

Mr. Campbell asked what our cost is from GCA this year.

Mr. Anderson said \$1,300,000.

Ms. Phillips asked what the cost difference is.

Mr. Anderson said there are several variables. Complete layout school by school (handout); one other variable is price from custodial service company is same as we have had for five years; if we bid it out as it is now I think it will come in higher than \$1.3 now; probably at least a 5 percent increase

Mr. Anderson said it is going to be more for us to run our own.

Mr. Campbell said that either way it has to be rebid.

Mr. Anderson said either rebid or do it yourself.

Mr. Campbell asked if Mr. Anderson had any idea from GCA what the bid would be.

Mr. Anderson replied no, but the contract ends in two months, we would have greater concern about service.

Ms. Smith asked Mr. Anderson if he could explain a little more about the service.

Mr. Anderson said it depends on the school. He said there is a high turnover of employees with GCA, and the consistency not what we expect.

Ms. Rainier said she speaks from experience, that in her building before she left teaching they were awful. She said they did not follow through on anything, the supervisor would come out then it would change back in a couple of days. She said if our people get first dibs on these jobs, she is all for our people getting these jobs.

Ms. Phillips said that we had our own people during the day before, would a hybrid situation work. Would more of the principals' needs be met this way. She said from her perspective, it is a no-win situation because we are going to get half a million more dollars from the City, but do we want to spend it on custodians.

Dr. Brown asked if capital outlay is not reflected in the operating.

Mr. Anderson said that is correct. He said we have not had to have equipment for the last year, but would have to buy equipment for custodians. He said it would be a one-time cost. Mr. Anderson provided a handout whereby he created a chart to allowing the schools to give GCA a grade. He explained that anything green is good, yellow is cautionary, and red is not good. He noted that three schools are in the red, adding that this year, he did a half-year check to see about the service level.

Ms. Rainier asked about service being declined at Mitchell-Neilson.

Ms. Newell replied that she thinks it is because of turnover, and they are on their third supervisor this year. She said the first one did not respond at all, the second one would address problems right away but they still had to call constantly. She said it is hard to run a school if kids do not have toilet paper and paper towels.

Ms. Rainier noted that even Central Office gave them a low score.

Mr. Anderson said they respond, but there is no follow up.

Ms. Newell said the night crews change so much she does not even know who they are. She added that with our own crew, there is pride in ownership.

Mr. Barrett said that the cost is going to go up, but we do not know how much yet.

Mr. Campbell asked how long it might take Mr. Anderson to get a bid.

Mr. Anderson said he can get the document together within a few days, but it would take two to three weeks for companies to get back to us.

Mr. King said he appreciates this report card, but whatever the principals and teachers say he is going to go with them whatever the cost. He added that when parents go into school and see dirty schools, it does not matter what the test scores are. He said the perception is that it is dirty and that perception is their reality.

Mr. Campbell said he agrees. He said it used to be that the principal hired the custodian and you knew who to go to.

Ms. Phillips said she has always agreed with that, and the only reason the Board voted differently was because of the cost savings. She said she never walked into a school and thought it was dirty. She said she feels like she is playing devils advocate for something she does not even want. She said she agrees with what is being said, but struggles with taking \$100,000 and putting it to custodians rather than classrooms.

Chair Campbell recessed the meeting at 8:35 p.m., and reminded the Board of the next meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday.