

The Warren Local Board of Education will meet for the purpose of a Special Meeting on April 11, 2024, at 6:00p.m. Warren High School, rooms 1710/1711, 130 Warrior Drive, Vincent, Ohio, with the following members answering Roll Call:

Mr. Allen, yes; Mr. Crum, yes; Mrs. Greenup, yes; Mrs. Proctor, yes; Mr. Roush, yes

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Don Eifler, SR 550 - Feels that the renewal levy defeat is a wakeup call to the board to be fiscally responsible and asked the board to look at where there might be waste that can be cut. Encouraged the Board to put the issue back on the ballot.

Ashlee Gates, Cutler, OH – Has four children in the District and all play sports. Does not want the Board to build a new administration building or misuse funds. Wants the board to use \$2million in leftover funds to finish plans to renovate building 6 including the locker rooms and questioned the \$1.3million grant to build the clinic. Stated that she felt the original levy had plans to build 4 new ball fields (2 softball and 2 baseball) but the junior high softball team has to still play offsite at the former WE school location where there are no restrooms and no transportation. Also questioned about adequate space for archery and eSports and new mats for the wrestling program. Stated that she feels that parking is a nightmare and that there was supposed to be a new parking area. Stated that the parking needs fixed and need to build the 4 new fields. The temporary parking lot needs updated and a multi-use facility instead of an administration building needs built.

Gretchen Lee, Warrior Drive – Property taxes went up and her kids are no longer in District. Raised concerns during COVID and feels that her thoughts were not heard and her kids are now coming back to the District. Asked about the ESSER relief funds and she is now a substitute in the District. Is concerned with bussing cuts once again being made.

President Proctor commented that the Board is not considering eliminating high school bussing.

Joshua Schwendeman, Schoolhouse Road – Cuts need to include salaries of administration. Upset about handling of past events by Mr. Newton. Feels that something different needs to be done and we should not have built new buildings, but should have reconverted buildings instead.

Jill Jonas – Spoke about the levy renewal and is in support of the levy but feels that it needed to be communicated better including emailing voters, robo calls, and direct mailing. Stated that people do not read the newspaper, they instead look at social media. Stated that she is very against cutting transportation because it does not save money and hurts enrollment.

Kristen Hill – Stated that she has kids in school and the new buildings. Asked why there are no physical books and feels that when curriculum is online then parents cannot help students.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and Board communication regarding the emergency levy renewal

Mrs. Wells handed out a timeline breakdown that shows available election dates in 2024 and 2025 and the deadlines to get issues on those ballots.

Mrs. Wells passed out to the Board the Auditor of State guidance on levy campaigning for public school employees and talked about what is included in the FAQ.

Mrs. Greenup stated that she would like to see some guidance on what funds the District has available, and where they are required to be spent. For example, governmental funds for operations versus funds that must be used for capital.

Mr. Crum talked about getting the information out to the general public and he would like to see information that talks about the definition of a levy, a fact sheet that explains the ballot language, when it was originally passed, and what are the funds used for. Mrs. Wells handed out a spreadsheet that summarized the emergency levy funds in FY23 to the Board. Mr. Crum asked what the dollar amount would be in today's dollars of the \$1,755,600 that is being renewed from the 1995 original ask and Mr. Roush stated that the indexing would be \$3.4 million dollars today. Mr. Crum asked that the Finance Committee come up with a strategy to move forward to present to the full Board.

Mr. Roush stated that communication needs to improve and the Board and administration have learned a great deal on better ways to make that happen. He stated that he has heard from the community that the District needs to live within their means and made the observation that making due with the original \$1,755,600 ask even though that equates to over \$3.4 in today's dollars is the definition of living within means.

Mr. Allen stated that lessons can be learned from the defeat of the renewal levy. Feels that the plans for a possible administration building were made with good intentions but the board needs to look at wants versus needs. There were no plans for the new building to include a board meeting room and asked if there is a better use of the \$2 million left from the project than an administration building. Stated that he takes calls from the community and will get back with a person if he doesn't answer immediately.

Questions from the audience about use of funds and an outside audit of the District's books. Mr. Allen stated that the District does go through annual audits and they are clean audits and the Treasurer's office does an excellent job for the District. Mr. Roush agreed and challenged the audience to ask any questions about the audit and he would be happy to have the discussion with them.

Mr. Allen also stated that internal communication need to be more effective and efficient and that all board members need to be able to speak up and give their opinions. He feels that the Board needs to never forfeit its right to communicate.

Mrs. Proctor asked that all be respectful and listen to each other and when community members have questions to call and the Board will get back to them.

REAFFIRM TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

- The next Regular Meeting will be held April 23, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at Warren High School, Rooms 1710/1711, 130 Warrior Drive, Vincent, OH.

ADJOURNMENT

RES. NO. 37-24

Motion by Mr. Allen, second by Mr. Roush

To adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Mr. Allen, yes; Mr. Crum, yes; Mrs. Greenup, yes; Mrs. Proctor, yes; Mr. Roush, yes

Treasurer

President