

MINUTES OF THE MARGARETTA BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING OF JUNE 20, 2009.

The Margarettta Board of Education met in special session at 8:00 A.M. on Saturday June 20, 2009 at the Administrative Offices.

Mr. Lippert called the meeting to order with roll call; all present.

Mr. Lippert explained to those in attendance that this is a work session wherein the board will discuss the financial position of the district and concepts on what it will take to have a successful levy campaign. He stated that there will be open discussion on items and the public's input would be welcomed. Furthermore, Mr. Lippert will conduct the meeting so as to keep the discussion on point. Finally, Mr. Lippert said that no decisions would be made today other than to set future meetings if necessary.

Mr. Kurt presented to the board the decisions that have been made over the past four years to manage the operating costs of the district. We have eliminated 25 positions throughout the district. Twelve teaching, twelve classified and one administrative position have been eliminated either by attrition or layoff. Two years ago we changed the transportation delivery system and have reduced fuel consumption by over 4,000 gallons of diesel fuel each of the past two years. Last year we consolidated elementary buildings from two to one for grades Preschool through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. We anticipate that the district will save our \$300,000 annually from this decision.

Mr. Kurt went on to say that any further reductions in cost would have a direct impact on student achievement. We could reduce the number of elective courses offered at the High School. We could increase the number of students in the classroom. These two moves would save money by reducing the number of teachers in the district. The district could reduce or eliminate extra curricular programs including sports, FFA, Yearbook for examples. By reducing or eliminating extra curricular programs, the district would save on supplemental employment contracts, transportation, utility costs, and facilities maintenance costs. The State Department of Education does not require extra-curricular nor do they assist with funding extra-curricular activities. These programs are solely supported by our local resources.

The Board commented that they clearly don't want to make these cuts. However, they may be forced into making difficult decisions without the support from local taxpayers or the state. It doesn't appear that the state is going to provide a revenue solution for our district. The best we can hope for is to be kept at the current level of funding from Columbus.

Mr. Hammond led a discussion with the board and shared information with those in attendance starting with a historical analysis of the district financial position from 1998 to date.

The significance of the year 1998 being the year the voters approved additional property tax revenue for the district. In addition to the additional local tax revenue, the state was increasing funding in education across the state in order to demonstrate to the Supreme Court that the state is providing adequate funding for education. Mr. Hammond then pointed out are funding from state and local sources reached a plateau beginning in 2004. The district has been operating the past five fiscal years with approximately the same amount of revenue.

The meeting went into an open dialog between the board and those in attendance on what the district could do now as we approach the August 4<sup>th</sup> election date. Tim Niemeyer and Jean Smith, co-chairs of the May levy committee spoke about the importance of getting information to the voters on what may be eliminated if the district cannot fix our financial situation. There was discussion on areas that may be affected such as limiting transportation by not transporting within a two-mile radius of the school buildings or 9-12 grade students. Not allowing field trips and travel outside the district for clubs, elimination of the Mohican Outdoor school program, the Washington D.C. trip, FFA state competitions and conferences, band trips. There was discussion on the eventual elimination of sports programs, beginning with next spring sports. There was a discussion on going from all-day kindergarten to every other day kindergarten. There was a discussion on whether to provide hot lunches or cold lunches, or the elimination of dishwashers in the buildings and having meals served on Styrofoam plates with plastic utensils.

The pros and cons were discussed openly and the meeting the participants were respectfully expressing opinions on what should or should not be cut. Mr. Lippert brought the discussion to a conclusion with a summary of what the board would consider cutting and providing a list of those cuts to the levy committee to share with voters and taxpayers in preparation of the August 4<sup>th</sup> levy. It was decided that two board members would meet with the representatives of the levy committee, Mr. Kurt and Mr. Hammond to prepare a summary document. This information would then be shared with the board members and with those in attendance in order to reach a consensus on the material to be shared during the campaign.

Mr. Lippert thanked those in attendance for taking time to meet on a Saturday morning and most importantly for showing their support for the district.

Motion by Mr. Myers, second by Mr. Bodey to adjourn the meeting having no further business to come before the board. Roll call: all ayes.

Meeting adjourned at 10:39 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted

Jude T. Hammond  
Treasurer