

School Watch

A look at what is happening in Cleveland and Bradley County Schools

The Bradley County School Board met February 19th. During Director of Schools, Johnny McDaniel's good news report, he made the following statement in regards to Chattanooga and Hamilton County schools being in the news about a budget shortfall and people losing their jobs. "The Bradley County Board of Education is to be commended for their diligence in maintaining a balanced budget. The board has had the foresight to maintain a healthy fund balance for meeting contingency needs while providing for as many program needs within the system as possible. This board and others before it have been very good stewards of all monies provided to it whether for the general purpose school fund or capital funds for facilities. Unlike other systems in the area, Bradley County Schools is not facing any cuts to per-

sonnel at this time. Money will be in short supply for some of the extras such as after-school programs; however, the administration and board will look for ways to provide some extra help for such worthwhile programs."

McDaniel went on to say, "We don't have a lot, but what we do have, I think we use very effectively."

Johnny Mull of the Land Search Committee updated the board on sites for a new school in Southern Bradley County. Two of the previous sites the committee looked at have been removed from the list because the owners decided not to sell their property. Mull mentioned the site committee has located one great piece of property and are waiting to hear back from the owner who lives out of town. The Land Search Committee is con-

tinuing to look for possible sites and welcomes input from the community.

Chairman David Kelley proposed a resolution in support of surplus lottery funds for capital projects. This resolution encourages

With a motion from board member Troy Weathers and second from board member Christy Chritchfield the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Kelley commented on a resolution that

adopting a resolution to also support this.

Board member Troy Weathers made a motion to approve the plans for the new school in the the 4th district. With a second from board member Dr. Richard Baker, the plans were passed.

American Constructors presented cost estimates for the renovations at Valley View Elementary School totaling \$1,980,148 which fell just under the \$2M budgeted for the project. Add alternates include connecting the corridor between existing buildings, re-brick the oldest portion of the west elevation, apply stucco in lieu of re-bricking, and replacing existing windows on the west building. Board member Christy Chritchfield made the motion to approve the proposal and move forward with the renovations which passed unanimously.

The final item on the board's agenda was a bid presentation for low voltage wiring at Valley View Elementary School which covers installing a new intercom system, telephone system, network wiring / switches and television cabling for the entire school using federal e-rate dollars to leverage investment in the new building.

The total cost of the project is \$186,833 with \$26,918.30 coming from local dollars. SWC was the only company to respond with a bid for the job. With a motion from board member Christy Chritchfield and a second from board member Charlie Rose, the bid was accepted.

The Bradley County School Board meets on the second Thursday of the month at 5:30pm at the administrative office on South Lee Hwy. on the Bradley Central High School campus.



(left to right) Christy Chritchfield, Charlie Rose, and Director of Schools, Johnny McDaniel

the 2009 General Assembly to reconsider the passage of House Bill 0009 and Senate Bill 0277 or similar legislation which would establish a grant program for capital outlay projects for Pre-K-12 educational facilities, with such funds supplementing other resources for capital projects in schools.

the board recently passed concerning appointed vs. elected superintendents, stating that appointing a superintendent is something that works. Kelley also expressed his appreciation to the "very bold moves" on the part of the Cleveland City School Board and the Cleveland City Council in

School Watch - Cleveland City Schools

The Cleveland City School Board's February meeting was scheduled for the 2nd. However, due to inclement weather, the meeting was postponed to the 9th. The following are highlights from that meeting.

- Director of Schools, Dr. Rick Denning gave the board an update on the proposed state budget cuts.

At the state level, \$220M is in this year's budget. Originally, 3% cuts were proposed and it quickly went to the point of cutting \$70M of the \$220M. Items among the \$40M minimum tier one cuts include extended contracts, a reduction in the coordinated school health program, early intervention, textbook depository, and the State Board of Education to have a 10% reduction. This is the best case scenario.

Items among the worst case scenario tier two cuts at an additional \$30M include school health coordinators, a reduction in the safe schools grant by 50%,

family resource center, and at the state level, 120 day contracts in the Dept. of Education would be cut.

After hearing about these proposed cuts, board member Bill Brown suggested that the board discuss how important the sales tax is. Brown said cut backs would be needed on maintenance and upkeep and without the additional sales tax money, the board would not be able to maintain the schools facilities to meet the high standards that the community has expected they provide for the children many years from now.

Chairwoman Peggy Pesterfield said that the science wing for Cleveland High is very important, however the sales tax is very important for all city schools because each one has specific needs. The board has a facility list of things that need to be done and the board doesn't want it to be just a wish list but a

list they can actually do.

Pesterfield said the community needs to get out and vote because this would probably be the best opportunity that the city schools would have to be able to borrow money needed to

you are against it then don't go to the polls because all we need is a majority of the people who show up to vote yes, so if you're a no voter stay home that day."

- Jennifer Norton from the Community Garden Initia-

and check for insurance liability and approval from the Fillauer's for access across their land.

- E.L. Ross Representative, Michelle McRee emphasized the need for new report cards and a more diverse tiered grading system, or a more descriptive tiered system applied to the standard based report cards. The board will set up a proposal, look it over, and come back with a recommendation next month.

- Board member Evelyn Rockholt gave a report on the members of the Intergovernmental Committee. This committee is comprised of county commissioners Connie Wilson, and Jeff Yarber, City councilmen, George Poe and Avery Johnson, county school board members David Kelley and Terry McGuire, and city school board members Peggy Pesterfield and Evelyn Rockholt.

The plan for the Intergov-

ernmental Committee is to provide understanding and support of the work of the County commission, City Council, and the county and city school boards. Their first meeting is scheduled for this month.

- Chairwoman Peggy Pesterfield announced appointments to the Cleveland City Board of Education committees.

Dawn Robinson was appointed to the TN Legislative Network (TLN) Committee, Tom Cloud and Steve Morgan were appointed to the Sick Leave Bank Committee, Bill Brown was appointed to the Insurance Committee, Steve Morgan, Murl Dirksen, and Tom Cloud were appointed to the Site Committee, and Evelyn Rockholt, and alternate, Dawn Robinson were appointed to the Policies Committee.

The Cleveland City School Board meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 5:30pm in the school's central office on Mouse Creek Road.



(left to right) Dawn Robinson, Tom Cloud, Bill Brown

make these improvements. Board member Murl Dirksen mentioned he was encouraged by the response from the community in understanding why the sales tax is necessary.

Board member Dawn Robinson said, "I think this community has a wonderful history of support for our schools. I tell people that if

ive Committee sought permission from the board for usage of land, deeded to the board in 2005, for use as a community garden.

A motion was passed that the board allow the usage of the property west of the Fillauer Branch (creek) to the property line and north to the Fillauer property line for a community garden