

SUMMARY

1. CALL TO ORDER
 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
 3. ROLL CALL
 4. RESOLUTION 2009-45: REMOVE TABLED RESOLUTION TO PROCEED
 5. RESOLUTION 2009-46: RESOLUTION TO PROCEED
 6. WORK SESSION
 7. ADJOURN
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1. **CALL TO ORDER.** President Heidi Dolezal called the Special Meeting of the North Royalton Board of Education to order at 6:08 p.m., February 11, 2009, at the North Royalton Board Office.
 2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** President Dolezal requested all present to join in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.
 3. **ROLL CALL.** Present: President Heidi Dolezal, Vice-President Cheryl Hannan, Leonard Reinhard, Anne Reinkober, and Barbara Zindroski. Also in attendance were Superintendent Randy Boroff, Assistant Superintendent James Presot, Treasurer Richard McIntosh, Director of Curriculum & Instruction Richard Evans, and Director of Personnel Gregory Gurka.
 4. **WORK SESSION**

- o Ms. Hannan delivered the following statement:
"NEW INFORMATION"

The North Royalton School District faces serious financial circumstances. These conditions are compounded by the troubling economic conditions that are adversely affecting citizens in this District and all over the nation. Having the honor of being elected to the Board of Education for the City of North Royalton, we must ensure that the District is managed responsibly so that we continue the tradition of academic excellence that has drawn so many to this community. We must do what is best for our students, our residents, and our staff. But before we ask our residents to choose between bearing the financial burden that would result from a new levy and the practical burden that would result from school cuts if new money is not secured, I want to be certain that the District has done all it could to minimize the hardship in either case. In that regard, I continue to have questions as to how it was determined that we should ask our residents to approve a 6.2 mill levy in May 2009.

In particular, the Finance Advisory Committee met in December and January to propose a new levy following the defeat of the 5.9 mill levy in November 2008. The recommendation of the Finance Advisory Committee was not provided to the members of the Board of Education until February 5, 2009, the day that the Board of Education was scheduled to meet in work session. The Finance Advisory Committee's written recommendation was all of one page and provided no justification whatsoever as to the basis for the recommended millage.

In the meantime, however, attempts by members of the Board of Education to obtain public information concerning the District's financial condition was met with utter resistance. Requests for administration and teacher salaries for the District were made in November 2008. Requests for employee contracts still have not been answered. This information is public record as a matter of Ohio law. Yet District officials dragged their feet, going so far as to require formal Board action to obtain information that should otherwise be made available to any member of the public immediately upon request.

The Board of Education met in work session on February 5, 2009 and reviewed the Finance Advisory Committee's recommendation. When asked during the work session to explain the basis for the recommendation, Finance Advisory Committee representative Richard McIntosh could offer little more than to say that the Committee worked very hard. The message conveyed was, "Trust us." When it was learned that requests for teacher salary information still had not been answered, I urged Board Member Barbara Zindroski to make a formal written public records request of the District on February 6, 2009. And contrary to any suggestion that the Board's 5-0 work session vote was an endorsement of the Finance Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Board only voted to place this item on the agenda for the February 9, 2009 Board meeting where the Committee's recommendation could be discussed in an open public meeting.

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Presumably in response to the threat of a formal public records request, Board members finally received the current teacher salary information on February 6, 2009. Recognizing the very generous salaries, supplemental contracts, annual pay step increases, retirement benefits, and other employment benefits that already consume approximately 85% of the District's operating budget, the question arose as to whether the 6.2 mill levy that the Board was being urged to place on the May 2009 ballot was the "bare bones" minimum as had been represented by District officials or whether it would include administration and teacher salary increases as well. In response to requests made on February 8, 2009 for answers to these specific questions, we learned from Mr. McIntosh on February 9, 2009 that the proposed levy contemplated administration and teacher salary increases in the amount of 2% in 2010, 2% in 2011, and 3% in 2012. Contrary to any suggestion that the District was contractually bound to provide such raises, the truth is that teacher and administration contracts will expire in 2010, so the District is not under any contractual obligation to provide such raises. It is not presently clear whether any of this material information was provided to the Finance Advisory Committee.

Rather than have the Board of Education be steamrolled at the February 9, 2009 Board meeting into voting to place the proposed levy on the ballot, I urged the Board members to table the proposed resolution so that my questions and those of any other Board member could be adequately addressed. The Board agreed 5-0 to table the resolution until our answers could be addressed.

From my perspective, the problem here really is not "new information." The problem is no information. Despite resistance from District officials, I intend to pursue these questions until they are answered adequately.

- o Levy Discussion, the board discussed some of the assumptions included in the projections that resulted in the recommendation of the operating levy.
- o Members of the Financial Advisory Committee joined the meeting at 7:09 p.m. The Financial Advisory Committee was formed following the November 2002 operating levy. The committee is composed of residents with business and financial backgrounds that volunteered to serve. The committee has met 6 to 8 times each year since February 2003.

Following discussion with members of the committee, everyone was in agreement with the recommendation to submit the 6.2 mill emergency operating levy.

5. RESOLUTION 2009-45: REMOVE RESOLUTION TO PROCEED FROM TABLE. Resolve the Board of Education remove Resolution to Proceed from table to prepare for action.

Moved by Hannan

Seconded by Reinkober

Voting Aye: Hannan, Reinkober, Reinhard, Zindroski, Dolezal

Motion Carried

The Treasurer advised the Board that the notice requirements of Section 121.22 of the Revised Code and the implementing rules adopted by the Board pursuant thereto were complied with for the meeting.

6. RESOLUTION 2009-46: RESOLUTION TO PROCEED

A RESOLUTION DETERMINING TO PROCEED WITH THE SUBMISSION TO THE ELECTORS OF THE NORTH ROYALTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE QUESTION OF AN ADDITIONAL TAX LEVY, PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 5705.194 THROUGH 5705.197 OF THE REVISED CODE.

WHEREAS, on February 5, 2009, this Board adopted a resolution declaring it necessary to submit to the electors of the District the question of an additional tax levy in excess of the ten-mill limitation, as described below, a copy of which resolution was certified to the Cuyahoga County Auditor; and

WHEREAS, promptly thereafter, that County Auditor certified to this Board that the total tax (assessed) valuation of the District is \$1,082,606,540, and that the estimated annual tax levy required throughout the life of the proposed levy to produce the annual amount of \$6,700,000 as set forth in that resolution, calculated in the manner provided by Section 5705.195 of the Revised Code, is 6.2 mills for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to 62 cents for each one hundred dollars of valuation;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education of the North Royalton City School District, County of Cuyahoga, State of Ohio, that:

Section 1. This Board hereby determines to proceed with the submission to the electors at an election to be held on May 5, 2009, of the question of an additional tax levy in excess of the ten-mill limitation (commencing with a levy on the tax list and duplicate for the year 2009 to be first distributed to the School District in calendar year 2010) in order to raise the amount of \$6,700,000 each year for ten years for the purpose of providing for the emergency requirements of this District, at the annual tax rate as is necessary to raise that amount, which rate is currently estimated by the Cuyahoga County Auditor to be 6.2 mills for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to 62 cents for each one hundred dollars of valuation.

Section 2. The Treasurer is authorized and directed to certify to the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections copies of this resolution and the resolution of this Board and certificate of the County Auditor referred to in the preambles hereto, before the close of business on February 19, 2009. This Board hereby requests that the Board of Elections give notice, prepare the ballots, and make other necessary arrangements for the submission of this question to the electors of this District, all in accordance with law.

Section 3. This Board finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board and of any of its committees concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken, and all deliberations of this Board and of any of its committees that resulted in those formal actions were held, in meetings open to the public, in compliance with the law.

Section 4. This resolution shall be in full force and effect from and immediately upon its adoption.

Moved by Hannan
Voting Aye: Hannan, Reinhard, Reinkober, Zindroski, Dolezal
Motion Carried
Seconded by Reinhard

The board made the following special meeting changes:
March 3rd (changed from March 5th)
September 29th (changed from September 28th)

7. **ADJOURN.** The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Moved by Reinkober
Voting Aye: Reinhard, Hannan, Zindroski, Reinkober, Dolezal
Motion Carried
Seconded by Zindroski

ATTEST:

TREASURER

BOARD PRESIDENT

DATE

DATE