

PARCEL TAX OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
Gault Elementary School Library
1320 Seabright Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA
October 13, 2014

Call to Order

PTOC Chair Amy Spiers called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the library at Gault Elementary School.

Attendance at Meeting:

Amy Spiers – Appointed by Claudia Vestal
Angela Meeker, Asst. Supt., Educational Services
Bill Maxfield, Delaveaga, appointed by Principal Quevedo
Glen Schaller – Appointed by Cynthia Hawthorne
Helayne Ballaban – GSCFT
Isabelle Tuncer – Gault
Jane Forbes – Appointed originally by Rachel Dewey Thorsett
Janet Gellman – Appointed by Deb Tracy-Proulx
Janet Swann – Appointed by Ken Wagman
Jerene Lacey – Director, Finance, SCCS
Joyce Smith – Librarians/Harbor High
Martha Dyer – Librarians/Mission Hill Middle School
Russell Miller – Interim Asst. Supt., Business Services
Sue Faix – Counselors
Tony Augimeri – Librarians/Delaveaga

Public Visitors:

Akiko Minami, Monarch School parent
Allison Endert
Natasha Flechsig, Branciforte Middle School parent
Sara Cordell
Steve Strasnick

Welcome

Chair Spiers welcomed those in attendance and expressed her appreciation that they had come. Ms. Tuncer said that the purpose of the meeting was to select a new chair for the 2014-15 year, to receive a budget report on the Parcel Tax revenue and expenses to date and to discuss a proposal by Harbor High librarian Joyce Smith.

Distribution of Information

Copies of the voter's pamphlet for Measures A, B, P J and I were distributed. Financial reports concerning parcel tax revenues and expenses were distributed for fiscal year 2013-14 (dated 6/30/14) and projected revenues and expenses for fiscal year 2014-15 (updated 10/4/14).

Committee Chair

It was proposed that the Committee approve the appointment of Sue Faix as Chair of PTOC, to be effective after the vote. MSP (Dyer/Ballaban) 11-0.

Summary of Services paid for by Parcel Taxes in 2013-14 & Budget for 2014-15

Ms. Lacey presented the 2013-14 and 2014-15 financial reports which listed services such as LMTs, Library Assistants, Counselors, Counseling Secretary, Art Teacher, Music Teacher, Art and Music

supplies, instrument repairs, travel and substitutes, Life-Lab Coordinators, and Outdoor Science stipends, – and the costs associated with these services that are provided by Measures I, J, and P. Prior Year Carryover, Revenue, K-3 CSR Contributions, grades 4&5 CSR Contributions, and the General Fund Contributions were also listed on these summary sheet.

Discussion

It was questioned why the OPALS (library circulation system) annual expense was paid for by Measures I and P. Should this expense be paid by Curriculum? It was pointed out that the OPALS contract was for 5 years. Members asked if payment of AVID registration and S4C membership expenses from Measure I and J revenue was appropriate. Jerene responded that inclusion of AVID and S4C had been addressed at a previous PTOC meeting by Alvaro Meza. A question was raised as to why there were no expenses listed for Registrar (under Counseling). It was suggested that probably the parcel taxes did not end up paying for registrars in 2013-14. Members asked District staff to research these questions and report back to PTOC. Members were advised to review the ballot language to determine what should be paid for by the parcel taxes.

A question was raised about the carryover shown at the end of 2013-14. It would be better to spend down the revenues. Jerene stated that programs actually overspent revenues in 2012-13. Some members took issue with the term “overspent”. Discussion followed. The language in the Parcel Tax ballot measures does not state that revenue was intended to supplement, not supplant, General Fund contributions for the programs that benefit. Sometimes expenses grow over the life of a program – for example, the cost of the smaller class size.

A member questioned the reduction of library assistants FTE from 6.438 in 2013-14 to 5.125 in 2014-15. Why is P not covering any of the library assistant cost in 2014-15? Staff were asked to check the librarian FTE and cost. It was pointed out that library assistants have always been supported by the parcel taxes only.

More information was requested regarding Music supplies – what was purchased? Many instruments were purchased for elementary schools in 2013-14.

It was suggested that in 2016 a second parcel tax should be proposed for art and music at the secondary schools. It was pointed out that music and art are A-G courses, which are funded differently. Discussion continued. Does K-6, K-8 fit our current configuration? Measure P expires 7/1/17. A parcel tax could be taken to the voters in June 2016. If there is an early primary, it could go to the voters then. Measure I and J expire on 7/1/21.

A member requested staff to research how parcel tax funds were spent, by school and for what purpose. It was suggested that this information would be useful when talking to voters. Jerene responded that some funds go to a central department, like Curriculum, which distributes funds to the sites. It was pointed out that FTE can influence the amount spent.

Proposal for Funding Library Assistants

Joyce Smith presented a proposal to fund high school library clerks. She said that Libraries were hit hard during the budget crunch. Library clerks were cut altogether, then restored at 17.5 hrs/week. Students from Special Ed and AP classes were allowed to help. Joyce said that this did not really fill the gap because the students were not always available, nor were they credentialed or capable of supervising students in the library. Library clerks are paid on supplemental payroll, and do not receive benefits. The cost of a 30 hr/week library clerk was estimated at \$14-15/hr + benefits. Joyce stated that at Harbor, the Librarians also handle all the textbooks. It was pointed out that the three high schools are very different. Inequities need to be addressed. At Santa Cruz High, parents contribute the cost of a textbook clerk. At

Soquel High, teachers handle textbooks. It was suggested that having positions increases the usage of the library. Some students are dropped off early at school and come to the library to study or to use computers, which they may not have at home.

Helayne Ballaban, speaking for the GSCFT, said that the union is not advocating spending at this time, but wants to prioritize from the whole picture perspective. A member asked if there were other staff who could teach the skills currently taught by the librarians. Members requested staff to research how and when the library assistants were cut, and to confirm the cost of an assistant.

A motion was made by Joyce Smith for PTOC to support increasing library assistants' hours to more than 17.5/week. The motion was tabled until the next meeting, at which more information will be known. The next PTOC meeting will be held on Monday, 11/17, at 6:00 pm in the Gault School Library.

Public Comment:

Natasha Flechsig, a Branciforte Middle School parent, requested that PTOC support grandfathering in lifelab coordinators one day/week for 6th graders at B40MS. The garden is maintained by volunteers. She said that the garden was created as part of the plan when the playing field was redone. The garden has been going for 2 years and is used by many students in different classes. Cost for one day/week was estimated at \$33/hr (\$6,000). It was clarified that the parcel tax funds are used to support classified staff, not teachers, as lifelab coordinators. It was suggested that Natasha work with staff to determine the cost of her proposal.

Akiko Miname, a Monarch Community School parent, had a similar request for lifelab funding. Monarch shares their garden with Costanoa Continuation School, also at the Branciforte Small School Site. Some funds come from ROP, but most of the garden maintenance is done by parent, an unsustainable method. They need at least a part-time Lifelab Coordinator. She asked how Monarch could access some of the funds earmarked for Lifelab, enough for a few hours/wk. Other members recalled that a similar request was considered previously by PTOC, but that it was not supported because Monarch is a "strand" school, not a "comprehensive" school. Parcel tax ballot language does not address strand funding. Akiko pointed out that Monarch now only serves students from within the District. Akiko was asked how much is raised by Monarch parents annually. She said that about \$50,000 was raised last year. These funds pay for Monarch's school supplies. The District pays for salaries. It was requested that staff confirm the costs and revenues for Monarch, and determine why the previous request was denied. Akiko was asked to work with District staff to confirm the costs of her proposal.

Adjournment

There being no other official business to come before this Board, Chair Faix adjourned this meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Russell Miller, Assistant Superintendent, Business
Santa Cruz City Schools

Sue Faix, Chair
PTOC