



bh communitywatch <bhcommunitywatch1@gmail.com>

Comments on Budget Meeting

2 messages

Laura Kapuscinski <lkap@me.com>

Tue, Mar 14, 2023 at 10:56 AM

To: BOE Foregger <tforegger@bhpsnj.org>, Dipti Khanna <dkhanna@bhpsnj.org>, Gale Bradford <gbradford@bhpsnj.org>, Angela Penna <apenna@bhpsnj.org>, Joy Young <jyoung@bhpsnj.org>, Robert Cianciulli <rcianciulli@bhpsnj.org>, "Stanley, Pamela" <pstanley@bhpsnj.org>, Jordan Hyman <jhyman@bhpsnj.org>
Cc: "Dr. Melissa Varley" <mvarley@bhpsnj.org>, "Kot, Julie" <jkot@bhpsnj.org>

Board Members:

As a parent and taxpayer - with a vested interest in our schools, our children and our educators - I felt it necessary to offer my **sincere gratitude to Mrs. Bradford, Mrs. Khanna and Dr. Foregger for their inquisitive, detailed and important questions and comments regarding the tentative budget.**

It was offensive and, quite frankly - rude, that some of the aforementioned Board members were told to hurry up with comments and questions to allow for others to comment; amid infantile smirks, eye rolling and what felt like endless trips to the hallway or bathroom. In light of this, may I serve to remind you that the purpose of the public meeting is so the stakeholders can be involved in and a party to the deliberations and the process of the governance of those charge. Additionally, Julie's condescending tone was utterly unfavorable. If you can all treat your fellow Board members with kindness and respect it would serve you all well, it's also a big component of effective leadership, and one that is lacking .

A few comments;

1. Non-tenured teacher layoffs should NOT happen because it's what the budget will or will not allow. Layoffs should happen as a result of ineffective teaching. Layoffs should start with the non-

contact staff members, if layoffs are indeed what is needed.

2. Class sizes are a huge factor in the K-5 classroom. I implore you to visit some of our current elementary classes, many of which (at MKM and MP) are inclusion rooms, to see for yourself they are not the most effective way to educate children. 21 students with 5 adults in a room is a recipe for chaos, and, in my opinion asking far too much of our educators, support staff and students. Although the state has recommended limits on class sizes (21 in K-3, 23 in 4 & 5, and 24 in grades 6-12) that doesn't mean that we set our bar low. This doesn't take into account co-seated classes due to low staff; 28 children in an 8th grade language class is unfair and unacceptable. These are the discussions you should be having, how can we do better, not where do we make teacher cuts.

3. Bussing needs to be discussed, from both a place of being equitable and fair and also how it will contribute to alleviating our growing traffic issues. In addition to that, if Westminster sells its property to the developer we are looking at losing an essential parking area for families of MKM. As you all know, because it's been brought to your attention, the traffic at drop off and pick up at MKM and Hughes doesn't just affect the school but this entire community, especially raising concerns for our First Responders being able to get to where the need to get when they need to be there.

4. Per Julie, the budget was sent, in full, to the Board on 3/9 at 10am. Assuming Board members don't have jobs, appointments or obligations (which I don't, I know you are all busy) that would be less than 72 business hours (also hoping no one counts Saturday and Sunday as "working" days) to review those 190-ish pages of budget, seek information and form questions. I found it hilarious that one Board member insinuated that fellow Board members who truly had issue, concern or questions should

have, in the 72 hour time frame, set up a meeting with Julie to “walk through it.” Again, I **applaud Gale, Dipti and Tom for doing such a great job with their review of such a serious matter in a short time.**

5. Athletics budget is being cut, what resources are being provided to Ann Clifton to help make those cuts? Or was she tasked with making \$150,000 worth of cuts on her own?

6. I have always been pro-police presence in schools and, after attending an informative presentation from the BHPD last night, my feelings are just as strong. If you want to talk about equity and fairness, while addressing what should be a top priority for our schools - SAFETY and SECURITY, then we need to figure out how to budget for a Class 3 officer in all of our schools, not just some. Additionally, was there a recommendation from the BHPD regarding Class 3 officers? If so, what was recommended - 2 rotating officers for 4 elementary schools? Or one per school?

The way I see it, as an informed outsider - without any actual budget to review - is simple, we took no issue hiring frivolous and unnecessary positions over the last year including Administrative secretarial staff, Administrative assistants, an OPRA records custodian - what do these “extra” salaries amount to? Figure out how to cut those jobs before you start cutting non-tenured teachers and packing our kids into rooms that aren’t equipped to handle them.

I look forward to the public budget meeting and hope these comments and questions are addressed.

And, don’t promise to “do better” with the budget process for next year - just do it.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Laura Kapuscinski

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To: bh communitywatch <bhcommunitywatch1@gmail.com>

Fri, Mar 17, 2023 at 3:54 PM

Begin forwarded message:

From: Laura Kapuscinski <llkap@me.com>
Date: March 14, 2023 at 10:56:43 AM EDT
To: BOE Foregger <foregger@bhpsnj.org>, Dipti Khanna <dkhanna@bhpsnj.org>, Gale Bradford <gbradford@bhpsnj.org>, Angela Penna <apenna@bhpsnj.org>, Joy Young <jyoung@bhpsnj.org>, Robert Cianciulli <rcianciulli@bhpsnj.org>, "Stanley, Pamela" <pstanley@bhpsnj.org>, Jordan Hyman <jhyman@bhpsnj.org>
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Subject: Comments on Budget Meeting

Board Members:

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