

PTA COUNCIL HOWARD COUNTY GENERAL MEETING MINUTES MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2024

Board Members present:

Terri Marcus, President

Karina Fischer, Executive Vice President

Glenda Title Hernandez, Vice President Issues

Angela Shiplet, Secretary

Laurie Ramey, Treasurer

Brent Loveless, Legislative Committee Chair

Lisa Loveless, Policy Chair

Meg Ricks, ORBC Chair

I. Call to order - Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. quorum was established.

II. President's Report

A. Monthly Free State Council President's Meeting - Terri Marcus reported that she attended the Free State Council President's Meeting. She reported that the annual state PTA convention will be July 19th to 21st. It will be in person. Local units will be receiving invitations in the mail. Free State reported that local units have been asking for a lot of technology advice. Free State will be coming with a technology policy soon. This will include guidance on things such as how to manage a Facebook page.

B. Joint BOE/County Council meeting - Terri Marcus reported that she attended the Joint BOE/County Council meeting earlier that morning. This meeting was focused on the 2025 HCPSS Operating Budget. The next budget work session (#3) is 1 pm on Thursday the 15th of February. There will be another public hearing on the Operating Budget on February 15th at 7 p.m.

C. Advocacy at the State Level - Terri Marcus reported that she testified before the state delegation in support of Chao Wu's bill to create a task force to re-examine how to transfer tax revenue could be used to pay for deferred maintenance in our schools. This bill is being amended to bring in two other bills. The bills are: i) Bill 13-24, this is a bill that PTACHC supported that would devote commercial excise taxes to pay for deferred maintenance; and ii) Bill 14-24 which establishes a work group to study the use of public private partnerships to pay for school construction and renovations. The new house bill 14-50 would establish a task force to study revenue options for school capital needs and what options exist for closing any identified funding gaps. With this combined bill one of the task force members would still come from PTACHC along with 19 other groups and government bodies represented.

D. Free State Advocacy Night - Terri Marcus and Karina Fischer, Executive VP will be attending Free State's Legislative Advocacy Night in Annapolis to meet with the State Delegates and Senators. This advocacy night is open to all PTA members, to attend, register via the email that was sent out by Free State.

E. Update on PTACHC's request to have a seat on Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) Committee - There is still no word on the formation of the APFO committee and whether a PTACHC member can have a seat on the committee.

F. 2024 Board of Education Elections.

1. Candidates - The last day to file for office was February 9th. There are three candidates running in District 1: Andre Gao, Pravin Ponnuri, and Meg Ricks; Two candidates in District 2: incumbent Antonia Watts and Larry Boyle; District 3 only has one candidate, incumbent Jolene Mosley; there are three candidates in District 4: incumbent Jen Mallo, Julie Kaplan, and Hiruy Hadgu; and there are three candidates in District 5: Catherine Carter, Andrea Chamblee, and Trent Kittleman.

2. Adjustments to the PTACHC Board of Directors - Hiruy Hadgu has filed to run for the Board of Education of Election in District 4, as such he has resigned from his position of VP of Operations for PTACHC.

3. PTACHC Candidate Forum - PTACHC will be hosting a candidate forum on March 16th at Howard High School. The time is to be determined, but it will likely be around noon. If you are interested in submitting questions for the forum, please mail them to Board@ptachc.org. Please encourage your members to attend and submit their questions.

G. Formation of a new standing committee - At the last PTACHC board meeting, the board voted to create a new standing committee that will be focused on improving diversity and inclusion in PTA. Glenda Title Hernandez will be chairing the committee. Those interested in serving on the committee should contact Glenda at Vpissues@ptachc.org.

II. Secretary's report

A. Approval of minutes of the last meeting - Angela Shiplet presented the minutes from the January 8th General Meeting. *A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the January 8th meeting. The motion passed.*

B. How to Advocate for the budget document – [Angela Shiplet presented a document](#) that includes information about the budget process and how to advocate for increasing revenue and what programs and positions you would like to be preserved. This document is available through google docs and be shared with others.

III. Treasurer's report – [Laurie Ramey presented the Treasurer's Report.](#)

IV. Formation of a nominating committee - As per the PTACHC bylaws, a nominating committee of three members must be formed in advance of the annual elections. Volunteers were solicited. Angela Shiplet motioned that Melissa Green-Parker, Marcus Jackson, and Benjamin Bach be elected to the nominating committee. The motion was seconded and passed.

V. Update from school safety committee - [Lisa Krausz-provided an update from the School Safety Committee.](#) The recommendations the committee made were communicated with HCPSS. Many of their recommendations were made. The committee was asking for an addition to Policy 3010 on Emergency Preparedness and has learned the policy will not be changed.

VI. Operating Budget Review Committee update - Meg Ricks provided an update on the Operating Budget Review Committee (OBRC) and took several straw polls to see what proposed cuts delegates view as important to restore. The delegation indicated that class sizes, custodial services, and support from temporary employees in special education were important. In addition, the delegation was in favor of the Board of Education asking for the money needed instead of what the board believed was possible.

VII. **Legislative report** - [Brent Loveless presented the Legislative Report.](#)

VIII. **Board of Education Report** - Dr. Chen presented the Board of Education report.

A. There will be several more hearings on the Fiscal Year 25 budget: public hearing number two on February 15th, public hearing number three on February 20th, and public hearing number four on February 26th. There are upcoming work sessions on February 15th from 1 to 5 p.m., February 22nd from 4 to 10 p.m. and February 29th from 1 to 5 p.m. which includes a regular board meeting. At the end of the meeting the board will adopt the operating budget and CIP budget.

B. Personal changes- Bill Barnes has been installed as the acting superintendent. Caroline Walker is now acting as the Chief Academic Officer. Darin Conforti is the Acting Director of the Budget. Dan Lubeley is the acting Chief Operating Officer. Jahantab Siddiqui is the chief Administrative Officer.

IX. **Superintendent's report** - James LeMon presented the superintendent's report. He thanked the board for their advocacy and stressed the importance of an engaged community. He reported that Bill Barnes, Darin Conforti, and Karalee Turner-Little visited the Howard County Association of Student Councils (HCAS) to talk with them on how to advocate. He conveyed that although every year the budget is a challenge this year is different and more challenging.

X. **Howard County Educators Association (HCEA) Report** - Ben Schmidt reported that the county can only fund what the Board of Education asks for. They are asking everyone to advocate to the board to ask for more. They are asking for at least 15 to 17 million more. Additionally, they are asking for a more dedicated funding stream as the shortfall is not just a problem stemming from Blueprint.

IX. **Executive Vice President's report** - Karina Fisher offered to visit local PTA units to help provide guidance on advocacy. She encouraged delegates to encourage their local members to write to the Board of Education requesting they ask for more money and against increases in class size. She also encouraged the delegation to write to county official to ask for PTACHC to have a seat on the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance committee.

X. **Adjournment** - the meeting was adjourned at 9:23 pm.