APPROVED

CITY OF YPSILANTI
CITY COUNCIL/YPSILANTI COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MEETING
YPSILANTI INTERNATIONAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
503 OAK ST, YPSILANTI, MI 48198
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2016
7:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER – Meeting called to order at 7:11 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL –

(Ypsilanti City Council)

Council Member Bashert	Present	Council Member Robb	Present
Mayor Pro-Tem Brown	Present	Council Member Vogt	Present
Council Member Murdock	Present	Mayor Edmonds	Present
Council Member Richardson	Present		

(Ypsilanti Community Schools Board of Education)

President Sharon Irvine	Present	Vice-President Celeste Hawkins	Present
Secretary Sharon Lee	Present	Treasurer Meredith Schindler	Present
Trustee Brenda Meadows	Present	Trustee Maria Sheler-Edwards	Present
Trustee Ellen	Present		

III. INVOCATION – Mayor Edmonds asked everyone to stand that are able and face the flag for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE –

"I pledge allegiance to the flag, of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

V. INTRODUCTIONS – Mayor Edmonds introduced Interim Manager McMullan, Police Chief Tony DeGiusti, Economic and Community Development Director Beth Ernat, Fire Chief Max Anthouard, Interim Clerk Hellenga, Finance Director Marilou Uy, City Attorney Dan DuChene, State Representative Adam Zemke, Jelani McGadney represents Representative Jeff Irwin, Former Mayor Cheryl Farmer

Superintendent Edmondson introduced Karla Graessley Director of Elementary Education, Paula Gutzman Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, E. Ruth Jordan Director of Student Support Services, Djeneba Cherif Assistant Principal of Ypsilanti Community Middle School, Communication Coordinator Yen Azzaro, Principal of Ypsilanti International Elementary School Cassandra Sheriff, and Kelly Mickel from Erickson Elementary School, and a number of teachers

VI. AGENDA APPROVAL –

Moved by Mayor Pro-Tem Brown to approve the agenda, seconded by Council Member Vogt

Mayor Edmonds made a note that the City Council and School Board are one body and anyone can speak. She then asked if there were any edits to be made to the agenda.

Mayor Pro-Tem Brown asked if they could change the order of numbers 1 and 2

After a vote the agenda was amended and approved

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION –

Mayor Edmonds opened audience participation

Emanuel Jones: Made announcements for Faith Developmental Youth. He said they are working with students from formal unmerged school distract in tutoring, college prep and job training. He said that through data collected, they have been given support from EMU, UM and other organizations. He said they are trying to get more of a buy-in from YCS.

Lee Tooson: Stated he hopes that the School Board and City Council will keep in mind who they are serving. He said he is still not satisfied with the school board as it pertains to an educator being removed by the police, because they stole money. He said someone was responsible for the teacher being here and it is setting a negative example for children. He continued that Council needs to work together for the whole of the City.

Gail Walkoff 1728 Whittier: Stated she is elated to see both Boards sitting together, making a statement that they really want to make a change.

Mayor Edmonds closed Audience Participation

VIII. REMARKS BY THE MAYOR –

Mayor Edmonds turned it over to President Irvine to make a statement.

President Irvine said it is a honor that the Board of Education has the opportunity to sit with the City Council. She stated they do have a statement that she feels is very important, and continued that we live in troubled times and children are looking toward adults for guidance. She said the Board of Education needs to affirm and reaffirm the commitment to tolerance and social justice. She said they are committed to the social, emotional and physical safety of their students and they will not tolerate bullying, harassment, intimidation or discrimination of any form in our school system.

Mayor Edmonds stated how the next part of the evening will move along; she said they will recognize a few champions in the district to make the community and schools strong and after that there will be a presentation about idling and potential future ordinances for that. She stated there will be an exercise on how we can make the schools and youth stronger, then a discussion on the goals the school board has set on community engagement as well as discussion on youth representation on the boards and commissions. She finished by saying the goals of the joint meeting is not to make a specific ordinance or take action but it is to explore and listen to one another.

IX. RESOLUTIONS/MOTIONS/DISCUSSIONS –

1. Recognition of community & school champions.

   Mayor Edmonds read proclamations for the following individuals:

   Charles Green-Austin

   Radiant Church Staff

   Lin Settles

2. Anti-idling ordinance.

Anti-idling presentation

Nancy Stone: Thanked everyone for allowing her to be part of the meeting and explained that the presentation will discuss what idling is, what it does, how it affects people and how and what people can do to cut down on it. **(Presentation available on City Website)**

Secretary Lee thanked Ms. Stone for the presentation saying she learned she did not need to warm her car anymore.

Treasurer Shindler asked Superintendent Edmondson if he would share this information with the school principals. Mr. Edmondson said that he used to have PTOs chasing him asking him not to idle his car during the winters. He said Ms. Stone can talk to the PTSO and the information can be given to them and set up at the grass root level of the schools.

Ms. Stone replied that starting this no-idle zone in the winter might not make it successful. She said though if you are in the car but wear winter coats it addresses not having to run your engine all the time.

Mayor Edmonds asked Ms. Stone to talk about the ordinance that Ann Arbor just passed. Ms. Stone replied that she was not at the Ann Arbor City Council Meeting where it was decided but she did do research about it. She explained that Ann Arbor was working on this ordinance for over 4 years and wanted to do a soft educational program to roll it out by first training police, having informational sheets and putting out newsletters to encourage and support the schools that set up their own idle free zones.

Ms. Stone stated after many years of discussions, it was decided that they would set up idle free zones wherever there are marked, which schools typically mark at pick up areas and a few loading zones. She said the idea was that the police have the right to ticket people if they are in one of these no idle zones and they've kept their engines on for more than 5 minutes. She stated the idea was making it enforceable and get word of mouth out there stronger than flyers and newsletters. She added that they wrote an entire ordinance section behind the rationale of doing anti-idling this way.

Mayor Pro-Tem Brown asked if council would be voting on this, to which, Mayor Edmonds replied that they would not; this was just an informational presentation.

Ms. Stone said she is sure that people who worked on this would be more than willing to work more closely with Council and School Board. Mayor Edmonds said there are several people in this county who put together the website, videos, signage and the packet is ready for anyone is ready to carry this out either through ordinance or volunteering.

Council Member Bashert said she has a thought and a question; she said her daughter went to YCS and she walked to school every day. She asked about homeless people who live cars, hoping that this ordinance isn't talking about criminalizing survival tactics for homeless people who live in cars.

Ms. Stone said she would like to emphasize motorsmart.org and the videos that talk about different communities and what they have done about idling and what health care community members have said about it.

Mayor Edmonds thanked Ms. Stone for the presentation and for being at the meeting.

3. Shared goals for a strong YCS and strong Ypsilanti.

Mayor Edmonds stated that Council is going to do an exercise. Clerk Hellenga passed out envelopes in which everyone would read what they said to themselves. She said after reading one out loud they would have a discussion on it.

Mayor Edmonds said is what people are reading is not real it is an exercise, Ms. Graessley will read it.

Ms. Grasessley read the exercise. The exercise explained that a grant of five million dollars is being provided to the YCS to do whatever is needed to support them. The grant must be spent before January 2020 giving the City three years to figure out how to spend it.

Mayor Edmonds asked what people would do if there was a five million dollar grant to help improve the YCS.

Mayor Edmonds said she would like to open up discussion starting with a council member as they are not part of the day to day with YCS and would like to hear their thoughts on how they would spend the money.

Council Member Vogt said that he thinks one of the biggest problems we've had across society is that we don't have parents who know how to be good role models. He said he would take a good part of this money and put together a team of social workers, psychologists, and adult teachers to respectively approach these parents whose children are not doing well and help them become better parents.

Mayor Pro-Tem Brown said she thinks she would a couple of things with this money. She said she would create an enhanced endowment fund to help further future education. She said she would also want to create a space for entrepreneurships and put it in the pieces to help it sustain itself once this money made money.

Trustee Sheler-Edwards said she wouldn't spend it all but rather invest it so that we could have a continuous stream of money to put back into the classroom. She would love to have a pot of money to offer the teachers for their classrooms each year pointing out the infrastructure needs of YCS and that they need new playgrounds, instruments, landscaping. She would tear down some buildings to attract builders to the area and get some new housing built.

Trustee Ellen said that the program that Council Member Vogt was speaking about is very dangerous, telling someone how to be a parent. She spoke about an incident today of a young lady dressed inappropriately adding that she wanted to talk to the young lady telling her that her dress is inappropriate but nowadays, it is not allowed and added that today, we have to develop some type of program for prevention.

Trustee Meadows said they should use as much of the money as they could to eliminate the school debt; to compensate the teachers with a greater wage because it is overdue.

Vice-President Hawkins said first she would want to use the money to form a committee with teachers and students to get their input about how to best use this money. She would want a district that is inclusive, that celebrate differences and have high expectations for academic achievements and support. She would use the money for a campaign that really show how strong school systems in Cities make a strong tax base. Finally, she stated she would want to make the schools culturally proficient.

Mayor Edmonds asked if the board member could define what she meant by that.

Vice President Hawkins responded that being cultural proficient would be having every young person that attends the schools look like them at every stage of their education. There needs to be a match between the students that they serve and the staff and the administration.

Council Member Murdock said he's obviously not as familiar with the school's budget as he is with the City's, but he thinks some principal would be the same and he would want to invest this money in things that will create future income. He said you can put more money into the pensions and health care benefits to reduce some costs in the future then use the savings for the schools in the futures. He said the school could create an energy efficiency fund.

Mayor Edmonds said to be efficient, the City switched the lights in all the buildings to LED. Council Member Murdock stated that the City started off with $250,000 in the fund and over four years, it grew to $350,000 even though there was $400,000 spent. He said it created a lot of savings, and he knows that some of the schools have done that in the past.

Council Member Bashert said she has two ideas; one is setting up a mentoring program for younger at-risk youth. The second idea she has for the money would be sanctuary schools where immigrant families and LGTB families would feel safe.

Trustee Shindler said she appreciates Council Member Murdock's comments on the issues of facilities and how they tend to suck away money that should be going to kids. There are several improvements that could be made down the road. They are operating at a 60% of a market rate for teachers, adding that if they can keep teachers in front of kids from the first day of school to the last day of school, it would make a difference. She would take the money and put it towards the pay scale at market rate and recruit for all the goals they have and retain their current teachers. She was struck with the idea of offering mortgage relief to teachers in the community.

Council Member Richardson said she would not spend all of the principle but would invest half of it so that it could be invested wisely and have an income from that money that could produce more money and keep some of the programs. She stated she would try to make teachers whole in the salaries. She would offer some support for parents. She stated that you can't spend all of the money on infrastructure.

Secretary Lee said she didn't think about the investment part, which was wise. There is a law coming down that will impact the YCS kids and that is the third grade reading retention law. She

would like to see the YCS create a skills based curriculum so that students can progress on their strengths and what they are learning.

Council Member Robb said it is free money and he would use it to raise 800 Railroad Street and do environmental remediation; it's a project that needs to be done, and we don't have money to do it.

Manager McMullan said one other idea would be to demolish one of the school buildings and sell the land to create a new residential area. This will help bring in more tax money. She added that a second idea would be teacher retention, because good teachers in the schools would attract more families to live on that new land and bring more money into the City. She said she would want to use it to pay off the debt and find a project where there would be a return on investment.

Mr. Edmondson said paying off the debt is important to him, but also vocation. There has to be something to get kids attention as many of them do not want to go to college. Schools put people in a "box" that says you are either going to college or you are not. Putting role models in front of kids is important and there is a lack of black males in front of elementary school kids. It is important that there aren't enough people of color wanting to be part of the education system. He said 5 million dollars isn't a lot but it is a start.

Police Chief DeGiusti said he would try to create a program for vocation get young people interested in law enforcement, firefighting, and paramedics so that they have a way to move into those professions. He said the salaries are important as well.

Ms. Graessley said she would want to see the teachers have smaller class sizes and experience outside the classroom and support for families that are in trouble or have traumas.

Mayor Edmonds said she believes teachers supporting teachers is really important. She believes teacher retention is really important, helping teachers' pay off student loans, as well as helping teachers in grad school. After talking to teachers, administration and students that mentorship is really important, she would like to see 300 mentors who are willing to commit for many years, instead of just one or two years. She stated she would use part of it to invest and figure out how to make big money for scholarship. She also thinks about the relative wealth in this county and the growing awareness among county leaders in the importance of investing and also figure out how to use this money to leverage more support.

Mayor Edmonds said that the discussion should move on to goals of the school board.

President Irvine said that over the last few years, they came up with some school goals that they felt were important for the district. She thought that one of those was of special relevance or interest to the community, because it has to do with pro-active organizational structures for community partnerships and is sure that the City has seen this as well. They have recognized that as many flows are stopped by the State they find themselves responsible for the same or greater emission but with less money. They know their resources are low and are not going to provide the rich experience they need and that they can't hire the number of relationships the kids needs for their learning experience. They recognize that only through partnerships can they get to these common goals.

President Irvine stated that when they talked about parent relationships or mentoring programs, she asked how to pull in the University to provide that in a way that allows the sharing of the university as a resource? She said that they have a county wide program at Wide High and they understand they couldn't have them operating the way they are without a strong support base of the county programming that can be attached to it, with less financial cost than if they were trying to run that program alone. She added they are seeing those types of pockets when they are able to attach to a strong existing entity. She stated they are able to grow that and find ways for those systems and experience for their kids to be more meaningful. She continued by stating if they look at the entire community as a learning base, they will not have to restrict themselves to what comes only from the state.

She stated that what they are looking at is creating a system for initiating tracking and managing community partnerships, engaging with key community leaders to identify future work and potential structure for that work. There aren't a lot of schools systems looking at that community that way; there are school systems that operate in isolation, but YCS simply cannot operate in that way if they want to provide the kind of experience they want for the kids. She wants to share that it is a priority for the board to look at what resources they have available to them.

Mayor Edmonds asked the board members if they thought of one thing that an individual or body could do to help support their work.

Trustee Meadows responded that they think it would be good if they had a stronger partnership, not just covering the City, but a real genuine partnership that can get more citizens into their schools.

Trustee Sheler-Edwards said the economic development of the City benefits the schools, so she would support any joint effort in terms of tracking employers.

Vice-President Hawkins stated that having these types of joint meetings are incredibly helpful, not just for the board, but for the community. People can participate in these discussions if there are thoughts; it helps us engage people and figure out ways to help support the school district. She stated she would like to figure out ways to institutionalize these ideas so that they will be sustainable moving forward.

Trustee Meadows said she would like to see more of the City and the State coming together and aligning the district with a more strategic plan. Right now, as far as the stake holders are concerned and State and Washington, it does not align. She wants to see more of an alignment through government.

Mayor Edmonds asked if she means with the City role being more of a lobby or advocate for those pieces. The board member replied with City being more of a go between.

Mayor Edmonds asked if there was anything schools could do to support the City.

Council Member Vogt said he doesn't know what the schools do but he believes in basic civics. He said teaching basic civics using ongoing issues in the City is a technique to get children aware of what is going on in their community. This could be used to encourage them to

become active in their community. He said teaching them about their government making it relevant in their everyday lives.

Manager McMullan said that both parties should take responsibility for the community. This can be done in a grassroots way; she said that the City should be out there supporting the YCS. She said particularly with Water Street; a lot of people weren't engaged because they felt it was just the City but it also involved the schools. People need to know about what's going on in both the schools and City.

Trustee Meadows said she was at a school board conference over the weekend and one of the sessions about media relations consisted of doing an exercise listing facts about the district. She said she would like to know more facts about the City, which would enable her to promote the City; this can be done on both ends to help mutually promote both the City and School district.

Council Member Murdock said one of the things mentioned was the Railroad building which could be an economic opportunity if it could be done sooner rather than later. Something else that could be worked on is a safe route for schools initiative, putting some of radar street signs near the schools to slow down traffic for the kids.

Superintendent Edmondson stated the relationship with the police chief has been excellent and it is proactive with one person seeking out the other. He said the more that you come out of your comfort zone it makes a difference. The Mayor has been helpful in committees as well. It is important to tear down the walls and have people talking and building relations. He has never been to the Railroad building, which he was ashamed of, and thought that it needs to go. He said the RFP is completed but hasn't gone out yet. They have insurance money and the facility director has been remarkable. The plan is to knock that building down.

Mayor Edmonds said that she has a couple of thoughts; one is that Ypsi has a grassroots effort to have over 1000 solar roofs and we have solar on some of the school buildings. They have been working with some folks around the state who have tools with financing where they can find some win-wins around the community goals, making it feasible and have some off set savings for the district. Thinking about teaching and benefits she wondered if they could negotiate more for benefits. She asked if their two small bodies could combine and find benefits for both sides.

President Irvine asked if it has been decided where the thousand solar roofs will be located. Mayor Edmonds said it has not been decided but turned the question over to Council Member Murdock. Council Member Murdock replied that it is a goal of solar Ypsi to get a thousand roofs in the community; he said there isn't a schedule yet but they have done enough projects that they are rated third or fourth in kilowatt per population in the state. Mayor Edmonds asked Chief Anthouard how many solar panels were on the roof of the Fire Station to which, Chief Anthouard replied, there are 178 panels.

President Irvine asked if these were just for commercial usage or are they investing in homes as well. Council Member Murdock replied that they put some things together; he said individuals have done their own homes using the tax incentives and credits that already exist. President Irvine asked if the people know about these tax credits. Mayor Edmonds responded that there are federal credits but it has been really grassroots. Mayor Edmonds stated that on the commercial and public scales they are looking at other financing opportunities that could work.

At the residential level, it is a farm raising pay it forward style; people can help cut the cost of the solar installers by having them at their homes. She said the City is looking at systems to have more people in the community buy into the solar panels and that it is trickling from different levels.

Council Member Murdock recommended Solar Ypsi for a wealth of information. He said that neither the City nor the Schools can benefit from the tax credits.

4. Youth representation on school board, city boards and commissions.

Mayor Edmonds said the last brief discussion was youth representation. She said this is something that they have talked about but has not been particularly successful within council and commissions having open spots. She asked for insights or opinions on this.

Vice-President Hawkins said as stated earlier, it would be better to get students involved in government and representation would be a great place to start.

Superintendent Edmondson said that the students come to the meetings for classes but he would not put a student on the board because meetings last too long. He thinks it is important for a student to learn the process of the meetings and of the school board.

Vice-President Hawkins said she was on a previous board and they had a time limit; therefore, the students did not have to stay for the entire meeting.

Trustee Meadows said she would like to see the students come and give them some feedback.

President Irvine said they used to have student reps on the Ypsi board but their lives are really busy and it seemed to work better if they had an assignment. It was better if they knew they had something they would have to talk about during the meetings since it would make it easier for them; just sitting through meetings could become boring for some of the students and because of this, she thinks giving them an assignment is better. She asked if there were any internships at the City, because if they had something to do that could engage them it would be better than just sitting at a meeting.

Council Member Richardson asked if she heard that students used to sit in on the meeting. She continued by asking if that still happens or if they do not come to the meeting anymore. President Irvine responded that they do not have a regular student attendance of a particular student, but what they do have are students that will often come because they have an assignment in class. She is personally very supportive of the idea of having students involved in some kind of regularity so they engage enough in the process to see how things evolve over time. Council Member Richardson said she just remembered students that were there, they didn't have voting rights but they had speaking rights and it was a good learning experience for them.

Mayor Edmonds stated that when she stated "on the school board", it was a position elected by the student council; either president or vice president; you were a liaison to the board.

Trustee Eller said she would love for the board to make moves for that to actually happen. It is important to have a student representative because everything they do is for the students.

XIV. COMMUNICATIONS –

- December 1, 2016 – Closed Session to review City Manager Resumes.
- December 17, 2016 – City Manager Interviews.

XV. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION –

Mayor Edmonds opened audience participation

Jasmine Tooles, 418 Gatewood Circle: Stated the solidarity between the City, YCS, Students and Police was part of Ypsi GLOW and it was a great experience. If we have more events like that, it would show how important the City is to the Schools and how important the schools are to the City.

Mary Goodwrich, 1103 Grant St.: said her husband and herself are educators at the college level. She has a two year old and is part of a cohort of parents with kids the same age. They are really excited about being involved in YCS. She said they are looking to get invested.

Mayor Edmonds closed audience participation.

President Irvine concluded by saying she would like to thank Mayor Edmonds and all the council for coming tonight to the joint meeting and would like to see the City do a tree lighting ceremony or something else that can bring the community together.

Mayor Edmonds stated there is a tree lighting December 2nd in Depot Town.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT -

Resolution No. 2016-270, adjourning the City Council meeting.

Moved by Mayor Pro-Tem Brown seconded by Council Member Vogt Adjournment at 9:14 PM