

**Elgin Area League of Women Voters
Observer Report**

MEETING: School Board – Elgin U-46

DATE: August 17, 2009

League Member Observer : Laurel Bault

Elected Officials Absent: Dale Spencer, Joyce Fountain, Adam Boston (Student)

Was press in attendance? Yes No

Press leaves early to meet deadlines.

Did the press cover the significant issues? Yes No ***

Covered Budget Presentation.

*** The media often covers the school board meetings over the course of several days.

Day 2 Herald – covered bus replacement issue (budget)

SUMMARY OF MEETING and CRITICAL ISSUES

➤ 2009/2010 Budget

\$43M deficit – “When you see this number, it might seem a bit disturbing.” Quote by Mike Pehan, interim CFO. The reasons:

- 11 Million lag in state funding
- A significant decline in the interest earned on investments
- Bankruptcies rising by 46% since 2007 in Chicago collar counties
- Steady growth of foreclosures in Kane County from 2002 in 07 to 2944 in 08 that affect property taxes – (main source of funding)
- Steady growth of foreclosures in DuPage – 3141 in 07 to 4704 in 08.
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Since closing the books on June 30th – the district has received some of the lagging funds – but the statement was made by Phelan that “ the other funding will come – SOMEDAY.”

The 2009/10, \$434M (\$325M – education fund/\$26M is maintenance/\$23M transportation) Budget will be voted on by the board at the Sept. 28th meeting. You can see the proposed document on the district website, www.U-46.org.

➤ Bus Replacement

Dr. Torres asked the board to discuss the proposed replacement of 43 buses (according to obsolescence plan) but hold off purchase because of the budget problems.

District Improvement Plan Update:

Secondary English Curriculum – now aligned with state standards, Measure of Academic Progress test (M AP) and ACT testing requirements. Large group of teachers and staff were very excited about having this completed and anxious to see it directly improve student achievement in this critical area.

Board meetings going green! At the next meeting on September 14, the board packet will be totally electronic, with the exception of one paper packet for Joyce Fountain, who missed the board doc training. This is a huge step forward, as board packets can be hundreds of pages long. The public has access to the site as well – but as of right now – I cannot seem to access all the data I once was (copy of district improvement plan update for example) I am confident this will come in time – and thrilled to see this “leading by example” of the school board.

COMMENTS/NOTES:

No public comment.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Continue awareness of budget shortfalls due to lack of state funding.

NEXT MEETING: September 14, 2009

Observer: Please fill out and e-mail to Laurel Bault at laurelbault@yahoo.com after each meeting observed.

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