

**Cuyahoga Falls City Council
Minutes of the Public Affairs Committee**

February 20, 2024

Members: Rachel Loza, Chair
Brian Ashton, Vice Chair
Jerry James, Frank Stams, Gary DeRemer

Ms. Loza called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes of the November 6, 2023 Public Affairs Committee Meeting were approved as written.

Legislation Discussed:

Temp. Res A-26

Discussion:

Temp. Res. A-26

A resolution expressing support for and urging the passage of the Woodridge Local School District Levy, at the election held on March 19, 2024, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Joel Morgan, Assistant Superintendent, Woodridge Local School District presented Temporary Resolution A-26 to Council. The Woodridge Local School District includes three public schools in the City of Cuyahoga Falls, serving almost 2,000 students. A properly-funded public school system is foundational to civic and economic success. The Woodridge Local School District has caused a proposed levy to be placed on the March 19, 2024 ballot. This levy is a renewal and decrease, commencing in 2024, and continuing for 10 years.

Mr. Morgan stated that this renewal levy was last passed back in 2014 and is set to expire at the end of 2024. This is not a new money levy. This operating levy will generate \$5,271,000 for the district, which is roughly 17% of the district budget. It will cost the owner of a \$100,000 home \$217 per year. Operating levies provide school districts money to be used for day-to-day expenses such as staff salaries, supplies, utilities, transportation, activities, and programming. These are the funds necessary to run and operate schools. One of the things done to reduce costs are switching to health insurance consortiums, which has enabled them to save a lot of money since 2019. They also are cooperating with purchasing groups such as the Ohio Schools Council. They also maintain partnerships with the City of Cuyahoga Falls to maintain the playgrounds and fields. The district continues to receive clean audits. This Operating levy will cover the cost of Honors and AP Courses, All-Day, Every-Day Kindergarten, Athletics/Activities/Clubs, Transportations, Field Trips and Foreign Languages.

Ms. Loza stated that they all appreciate the efforts to save money and that there is no new money coming from the taxpayer. The language in the levy, itself, about the decrease was discussed briefly last week. She asked if Mr. Morgan would elaborate on that.

Public Affairs Committee
February 20, 2024 – Page 2

Mr. Morgan stated that, in a fairly new law back in 2022, the Board of Elections had asked school districts to round the amount of money that they are going to receive from passage of a levy. Rather than round it up, they rounded it down. They were able to generate \$5.271 million dollars. That is going to be saving taxpayers \$500 annually due to the fact that they rounded it down rather than up.

Ms. Loza stated that there were questions about not promoting the levy as a decrease even though it says it on the legislation, so full transparency there. They did not want to trick anybody. She stated that she supports the ordinance.

Mr. Ashton moved to bring out Temp. Res. A-26 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. James. Motion passed (5-0).

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.