

# Parkland Community Advisory Council

**November 19, 2009**

**CO-PRESIDENTS**

Nicole Mandry  
David Hein

**VICE PRESIDENT/MEMBERSHIP**

Deb Martin

**SECRETARY**

Melissa Maggioncalda

**ATTENDEES :** Nicole Mandry, Melissa Maggioncalda, Melody Terrano, Melissa Grube, Linda Perlman-McKenna, Ann Segan, Bob Fager, Deb Martin, Lisa Adams

**GUESTS :** Lisa Haydurek, Carol Facchiano, Tara Imdorf, Tonya Bruder

**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** Ben Gullede, David Hein, T.J. Ortman, Mark Hanichak, Cheryl Smith, Stephanie Hodges, Shital Rane

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:** Tyler Coulton and Eugenia Kim (excused)

**SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE:** Roberta Marcus

**ADMINISTRATION:** Richard Sniscak-Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Donohue, Superintendent

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Nicole Mandry at 7:04 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion to approve the minutes from October 14, 2009 was made by Lisa Adams, and seconded by Deb Martin.

**PRESENTATION:** Impact of Funding for Special Education Programs/Budget Mandates

Dr. Louise Donohue

Mr. Rob Thornburg

Mr. Richard Sniscak

Dr. Louise Donohue, Superintendent of Parkland School District, began the presentation with a discussion about "funding" as a major topic of education and noted that, within the school district, budgeting is a year-round process. The budget is made up of dollars from two bases; commercial/industrial (about 40%) and residential (about 60%). Dr. Donohue emphasized that Parkland has the lowest millage rate in the county and noted that the largest portion of the district budget is tied to instruction (teachers/staff) which is heavily controlled by mandates. Funding for special education has changed since 1991. Dr. Donohue indicated that prior to '91 funding was essentially based on need whereas since that time a formula, which changes year to year, determines the funding that is provided to the district and does not necessarily reflect the district's special education numbers. All in all, however, the district meets the needs of special education students as determined by the federal and state mandates.

Mr. Thornburg, Director of Student Services, began his presentation by utilizing a chart to demonstrate the streams of funding for special education within the district. He explained that local revenue makes up 82% of the budget and is supplemented by both the state (16%) and federal (2%) governments. The funding is also impacted by ARRA dollars (stimulus/access

funding) which the district does its best to utilize. Mr. Sniscak, Assistant Superintendent of Parkland School District, explained that the district has hired a person to help with this process in order to maximize the dollars obtained through this stream of revenue. Roberta Marcus, Parkland School Board member, stated that while this money helps it does not cover the districts expenses. The state budget can also impact the district's ability to access the funds at certain times. Mr. Sniscak showed how the ARRA/stimulus dollars were able to offset the need for a larger increase in local revenue (by about \$1.4 million).

The history of special education mandates was provided by Mr. Thornburg. He explained that these laws do not always agree with one another and have many requirements that must be met by the district. Parkland must help to identify children with special needs and make its services known to the public. Ultimately the district strives to "include" and "educate" special needs students. Students with IEPs are given "appropriate services" for reasonable educational gain. Dr. Donohue commented that the district does an excellent job developing partnerships with the parents of special education students so that process runs as smoothly as possible.

### **SCHOOL BOARD REPORT: Roberta Marcus**

With regard to the recent elections, Mrs. Marcus congratulated incumbent board members Rob Cohen and Jayne Bartlett on their re-election. She also stated that she was looking forward to working with newly elected Board Member, Barry Long.

She provided an overview on district and legislative initiatives.

**OLD BUSINESS:** none

**NEW BUSINESS:** Lisa Adams, who attended a parent forum meeting, was asked to raise the question of whether or not the Parkland School District had an existing email policy/procedure for faculty. There was concern over the response time of faculty to emails from parents. Dr. Donohue responded by stating that "communication" is a priority within the district and that a normal expected time frame would be 24-48 hours even if just to acknowledge a problem/concern. In addition, a hierarchy exists so if a parent has difficulty reaching a teacher they can also try a guidance counselor, etc.

**ROUNDTABLE:** Many attendees thanked Mr. Thornburg, Mr. Sniscak, and Dr. Donohue for giving such an informative presentation. In addition, several attendees expressed their interest in helping the district's needs be heard by making political calls to local representatives as needed.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN:** At 8:32 p.m. Nicole Mandry called for a motion to adjourn. Bob Fager moved, with Linda Perlman-McKenna seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Melissa Maggioncalda, Secretary