

**WEBER SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**5320 Adams Avenue Parkway**  
**Ogden, UT**

**Truth in Taxation Hearing**  
**August 3, 2022**

The Board of Education of Weber School District held a Board Meeting in the Board Rooms at 5320 Adams Avenue Parkway, Washington Terrace, Utah. The meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

The following Board Members and Superintendency were present:

Jon Ritchie	Board President
Dean Oborn	Board Vice President
Paul Widdison	Board Member
Doug Hurst	Board Member
Bruce Jardine	Board Member
Janis Christensen	Board Member
Gina Butters	Superintendent
Clyde Moore	Assistant Superintendent
Dave Hales	Assistant Superintendent
Robert Petersen	Business Administrator

Board Member Jan Burrell attended virtually.

**AGENDUM ITEM #1 – Presentation on Proposed 2022 Tax Rate**

Business Administrator Robert Petersen distributed copies of his presentation to those in attendance. It was noted Weber School District has urgent needs. We are behind with teacher and staff salaries compared to other districts. In order to remain competitive with other districts, Weber School Board has prioritized increased salaries/compensation. A 7.5% salary increase for teachers and staff with the proposed tax rate adjustment will allow the District to be more competitive and retain quality teachers.

The next need discussed was Capital and School Safety Enhancements. Safety upgrades are needed to school buildings such as entryways, door locks, and alert systems. Each school should have a secure entrance. Maintenance schedules for roofs, parking lots, and HVAC systems are also needed. It was noted the maintenance budget has remained the same at \$4.5 million over ten years. Adjusting the tax rate will enable the district to fund the urgent needs totaling \$9,614,928 for salaries and maintenance.

Dr. Petersen discussed tax rate notices and how public education has three lines, State Wide Basic Levy, Charter School Levy, and Weber School District. The state levy and charter school levy are set by the state legislature and the Board has no control over these. All money from these levies go to the state. It is proposed to raise the voted leeway from 0.000601 to 0.001061 to raise the \$9,614,928. It was noted the average home value in Weber School District is \$526,000 and the annual increase will be \$133.08 to taxpayers.

The Board has been sensitive to tax payers and the needs of children. The state legislature expects us to keep rates up so we qualify for matching funds. Compared to other districts we rank thirteen out of fifteen. A recent state legislative audit concluded Weber School District's tax rate is too low. Local tax effort equals more state funding and the district could be in jeopardy of losing up to \$16.7 million.

M & O Fund Expenses were discussed noting Weber School District has over 72% going toward instruction. This is higher than the state average of 68%. Our lowest fund is district administration and staff at 2.01%. Weber School District maintains modest unallocated fund balances.

Dr. Petersen concluded his presentation and turned the time over to President Jon Ritchie.

### **AGENDUM ITEM #2 – Public Hearing**

President Ritchie explained the process for the public hearing. It was noted those wishing to address the Board will have a three-minute time limit.

- Stewart Campbell - Pleasant View, Utah. Mr. Campbell expressed his desire that teachers be paid better. He also referred to his comments at the June 8<sup>th</sup> Board meeting regarding HB374 & HB243 sensitive materials and asked to not delay on updating our policy.
- Cal McCrary - Washington Terrace, Utah. Mr. McCrary noted his concerns regarding salary schedules for administrators. He is also concerned about property tax increase.
- Shawn McCrary - Washington Terrace, Utah. Mr. McCrary noted his concerns about library books in schools. He is also concerned about an audit summary from the State of Utah and school supplies requested by parents.
- Kent Gardner - South Ogden, Utah. Mr. Gardner objected to any and all tax increases. He is concerned about his budget on a fixed income and support for charter schools.
- Carolyn Lietunhinlaus. – Huntsville, Utah. Ms. Lietunhinlaus expressed concerns with the tax increase and inflation and referred to a state proficiency report.
- Brent Strate - South Ogden, Utah. Mr. Strate noted he is a member of the South Ogden City Council and a member of the State School Board but does not represent any of these organization tonight. He is in support of the tax increase and noted we have not been over taxed by Weber School District.
- Angie Richards - South Ogden, Utah. Ms. Richards noted she is a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher at H. Guy Elementary. She expressed her support for education and the need for great teachers and the tax increase.
- Jenny Gravier - South Ogden, Utah. Ms. Gravier noted she is a teacher at Sand Ridge Jr. High and support of the tax rate increase. She shared Weber School District's high retention rate of teachers and the need to remain competitive.

- Derrick Nightingale – North Ogden, Utah. Mr. Nightingale asked the Board to consider waiting on the tax increase to see if inflation will come down.
- Daniel Badal - Washington Terrace, Utah. Mr. Badal expressed his concern for young families and inflation with the proposed tax increase.
- Dennis Brown – Roy, Utah. Mr. Brown expressed concern if the proposed budget is approved, he will have to pass on higher rent to his low-income tenants.
- Wanda Knight - Farr West, Utah. Ms. Knight shared her concern of the proposed tax increase noting there was to be no increase when the bond passed.
- Val Knight - Farr West, Utah. Mr. Knight asked why the presentation did not show how much money the district will receive because of real estate increases.
- Dave Hansen – Liberty, Utah. Mr. Hansen noted the levy rate should not be included and would like to see more of where money is spent. It is his opinion we can meet teacher salary goals without a tax increase just from home value increases.
- Justin Shaw – Riverdale, Utah. Mr. Shaw is a teacher at Roy High School and shared statistics show 50% of teachers leave the profession within their first five years because of teacher salaries. He encouraged the Board to approve the increase because it will benefit kids.
- Diane Countryman – Ogden, Utah. Ms. Countryman declined to address the Board because her thoughts have already been shared.
- Chris Hadley – Roy, Utah. Mr. Hadley noted he is a teacher in another district and agreed with comments regarding pornography in schools. He agrees with the need to be competitive with teacher salaries.
- Jeannie Wendell – Liberty, Utah. Ms. Wendell noted in the valley they are being taxed a lot. She asked the Board to wait on the proposed tax increase.
- Emily Hall - Pleasant View, Utah. Ms. Hall noted she is a parent of three young children. She is concerned about the safety in schools especially in older schools and is in favor of the tax increase to help with safety, and maintain and retain excellent teachers.
- Jesse Whinham - West Haven, Utah. Mr. Whinham agreed he wants better pay for teachers and safety in schools. His wife is a former teacher and asked the Board to use the budget the District already has.
- Alan Franke - West Weber, Utah. Mr. Franke suggested the Board lobby Weber County delegation to propose budget changes.
- Craig Pitts - West Haven, Utah. Mr. Pitts is in favor of the tax increase and noted all students will gain from having the best teachers.

- Bob Hill - South Ogden, Utah. Mr. Hill commented on controlling budgets and safety in the schools and is against the tax increase.
- Cris Garside – Ogden, Utah. Ms. Garside expressed concern about how to communicate with the Board and the cost of building new schools.
- Bryce Lythgoe – Taylor, Utah. Mr. Lythgoe former teacher in Weber School District shared his concerns about the amount of salaries for administration.
- Jeff Burton- Huntsville, Utah. Mr. Burton expressed his concern about inflation and shared debt service figures asking the Board to vote no on the proposed tax increase.
- Richard Walton – Eden, Utah. Mr. Walton had to leave the meeting and left a letter with the Board.
- John Hendrickson – Pleasant View, Utah. Mr. Hendrickson declined to address the Board.
- Otto Krauss - West Weber, Utah. Mr. Krauss expressed concern about the District financial report.
- Christina Dodge – Riverdale, Utah. Ms. Dodge is concerned about Riverdale Elementary and no updates to the building in over 40 years.
- Jennifer (last name unknown) - South Ogden, Utah. She commented those in the audience are against the tax increase 4 to 1.

President Ritchie asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

Motion: Dean Oborn

Seconded: Janis Christensen

That the public hearing be closed. Voting was unanimous in favor of the motion.

### **AGENDUM ITEM #3 – Discussion/Action Items**

A. Approval of 2022 Tax Rate for Weber School District

President Ritchie asked for discussion from Board Members.

Board Member Janis Christensen noted she would like to wait on the tax increase and will be voting no.

Board Vice President Dean Oborn commented the Board has tried very hard to keep taxes low as indicated in the presentation tonight and want to do what is best for kids. He also noted how difficult it is to be competitive with the quality teachers needed. He will vote for the tax increase.

Board Member Jan Burrell attending virtually wrote, she recognizes the need for quality education and we need to prioritize our student's needs.

Board Member Doug Hurst commented what a great country we live in and how we are free to express our feelings. He thanked all those who commented and noted he would be voting yes.

Board Member Bruce Jardine noted there are things we can do better, and things we need. Our maintenance budget has not increased in eleven years and how hard it is to keep up with needs and also security in our schools. It was also noted there have been many revisions to the new schools and how we have continued to try and stay within budget. He is voting yes for the tax increase.

Board President Jon Ritchie concluded stating the most important thing is to take care of kids.

President Ritchie called for a motion to approve the 2022 Tax Rate for Weber School District.

Motion: Paul Widdison

Seconded: Paul Widdison

That the 2022 Tax Rate for Weber School District be approved. Voting was 6 to 1 in favor of the motion.

After determining no further business need be conducted, President Ritchie called for a motion to adjourn the Truth in Taxation Hearing.

Motion: Janis Christensen

Seconded: Paul Widdison

That the Truth in Taxation Hearing be adjourned. Voting was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Truth in Taxation Hearing adjourned at 8:58 p.m.