

NUMBER: 19-1990
STATUS: APPROVED
PLACE: ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
DATE: MARCH 20, 1990
TEXT:

believe this was a healthy situation because developers had too much influence with politicians and contributed to their campaign funds.

Mr. Simon indicated that they had asked teachers and others to write to the County Council to support the budget. They were also distributing leaflets at Metro stops and pointing out to people that funding for education had gone down in the county. They planned to have people turn out for the Council hearings on the budget. In addition, they hoped to have a broad array of people to testify on the Leggett-Adams-Potter bill on April 19,

Dr. Cronin asked if the Mason-Dixon organization would be willing to come in and talk to the Council about the poll, and Mr. Simon assured him that they would. Mrs. Praisner requested Mr. Simon to supply Board members with actual copies of the survey instrument. Mr. Simon remarked that he felt so comfortable with the results of the survey that he had given everything to the press including the raw data.

Mrs. Praisner asked if it would be possible to correlate survey responses to areas of the county that had had property reassessments. Mr. Simon replied that this would be possible because they had asked people about where they were on the assessment cycle. They could not get at the ages of the respondents, but they had asked people how long they had lived in the county.

Dr. Shoenberg asked what would be their response to people who felt that any taxing of developers would be passed on to the public. Mr. Simon responded that they could quote housing industry sources that said this was not true. A portion might be passed on, but the full cost depended upon market conditions. Dr. Shoenberg asked about data showing that development did not pay for itself. Mr. Simon reported that a Council staff member had done a study last year showing just that. When they looked at people moving into a development, their taxes never covered the cost of the infrastructure. At present there was no direct tax on development other than an impact fee in two jurisdictions.

Mr. Goldensohn asked whether there was any class of property that paid for itself or paid its fair share. He said the City of Gaithersburg did have a plan whereby developers had to pay for a road or park site off their property. The city had done a study and found that it did cost the city to have development; however, something such as a retail establishment or small office park did not impact libraries and schools directly.

Mr. Simon encouraged the Board to obtain the Council staff study because it was clear and revealing. He explained that they were not saying that the developers were the "bad guys" but were saying that additional revenue was needed for the county. Their survey demonstrated that there was support for education and that the public was aware of the issues. Mr. Goldensohn noted the

chart showing that education was the only service that took a significant cut as a percentage of the total county budget. Mr. Simon felt that the powerful chart was the one showing the decrease in per pupil expenditures.

Dr. Pitt commented that every time there was a tax revolt, education was hit. He pointed out that a lot of people moved into the county from places where they paid much higher taxes. He suggested that it might be well to get some information from new residents.

Dr. Cronin reported that Board and budget staff had been looking at revenue projections from last year which had dropped dramatically. He suggested that MCEA obtain copies of information prepared by staff.

Board members and Mr. Simon discussed strategies for the public hearings before the Council. Mrs. Praisner pointed out that this was an election year and the MCEA poll would be a valuable tool here. Dr. Shoenberg stated that the Board would be working to fund the total budget. They would prepare themselves carefully and work hard in their sessions with the County Council education committee and the full Council. Mrs. Praisner encouraged MCEA to be alert to any TRIM or budget referendum issues that might be on the ballot.

Mr. Simon said their second issue was educational reform issues in the county. MCEA was pleased about some of the things that had been going on in the flexibility and staff development pilots, but they were also concerned about some other things. At some point they would want to sit down with the Board and discuss these issues. It was their perception that there had not been a policy articulation of a commitment to what was being done under the aegis of these pilots. Dr. Shoenberg agreed that they needed a little more insight into what was coming out of the flexibility pilots. Speaking for himself, he pointed out that the other piece was the evaluation issue. He believed they had to revisit this issue because the teacher/staff committee had reached a stalemate.

Dr. Cronin pointed out that he had raised the issue of where they were going with training. He thought there might be ways of linking professional development into the evaluation process so that it did not become a threat. As chair of the research and evaluation committee, Mrs. Praisner reported that the committee would be looking into ways of evaluating the pilots. Mr. Simon said that MCEA had been putting a lot of effort into monitoring, and this information might be of use of DEA. Mrs. Praisner thought they also had to have some reporting to the community so that they understood what the school system was doing and why.

Mr. Simon said that the final issue was the school calendar. He

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had received a lot of calls about ending the school year for teachers on a Monday, and he recalled that Dr. Shoenberg had agreed to look into this issue when the calendar had been adopted. Dr. Cronin suggested that the Board discuss this issue after final action on the operating budget. Mrs. DiFonzo pointed out that everyone should be sensitive to the potential impact on MCCSSE members of any calendar changes.

Dr. Shoenberg thanked Mr. Simon and the members of his executive Board for a very interesting meeting.

Re: ADJOURNMENT

The president adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

HP:mlw