

MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
MUNCIE COMMON COUNCIL
300 NORTH HIGH STREET
MUNCIE, INDIANA 47305

JUNE 7, 2018

SPECIAL MEETING: THURSDAY, 4:00 P.M., 1ST FLOOR CITY HALL AUDITORIUM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by President Doug Marshall.

ROLL CALL:	PRESENT	ABSENT
Alison Quirk		X
Nora Powell	X	
Brad Polk	X	
Julius Anderson	X	
Jerry Dishman	X	
Doug Marshall	X	
Lynn Peters		X
Dan Ridenour	X	
Linda Gregory	X	

TOPIC OF DISCUSSION:

NOMINATIONS, TO THE PRESIDENT OF BALL STATE UNIVERSITY, OF THREE (3) INDIVIDUALS TO SERVE OF THE MUNCIE COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION.

President Marshall explains the reason for coming out tonight is that the City Council has three nominations to be placed for consideration for the Ball State Trustee (or designees) to chose from for a position on the Muncie School Board, representing the Muncie City Council. Tonight, what Marshall intends on doing is to call each nominee up to the podium and allow each one three minutes to speak, then, the Council will ask questions as they see fit. There will be no time limit to the Council. The order of nominees speaking will be alphabetical order and there will be no public input. At the end of the question-answer portion, each Council member has a paper ballot in front of them to which they will select their three choices from the names listed (again, in alphabetical order). At the end of that process, City Council Attorney Joseph Hunter will verify through the Council member if that was their selection to be their nomination. Mr. Hunter will then tally up the votes and the three top positions will be the ones they will submit to Ball State University as the City Council's choices for consideration.

City Council Attorney, Joseph Hunter, states he would recommend someone make a motion to conduct the meeting the way President Marshall suggested. That way, everyone has a chance to listen to the nominees and basically vote on ground rules. Ball State gave no procedural way to do this but he feels it would be appropriate for someone to make a motion to do so.

A motion was made by Polk and seconded by Ridenour to conduct the Special Meeting the way President Marshall had stated in his opening remarks.

A roll call vote showed 7 yeas, 0 nays and 2 absent (Peters and Quirk).

Vice-President Powell has a question regarding the nominees that are not present tonight. Will the Council person that nominated them will be reading their letter into record? President Marshall states he knows WaTasha Barnes Griffin away dealing with business considering her employment. Anitra Davis is also out of state with a family member that is in the military. Marshall has no problem with that and if Powell would like to make a motion declaring that, she may do so.

A motion was made by Powell and seconded by Ridenour that the potential candidates that are not present have their letters of consideration read aloud into record.

A roll call vote showed 7 yeas, 0 nays and 2 absent (Peters and Quirk).

President Marshall asks the Council if they have any remaining questions. No comments made. He then asks Vice-President Powell to keep time and allow each candidate three minutes to speak.

Hal Caldwell

Welcome to this meeting. It would be a genuine pleasure to serve on the School Board and as Seth Slabaugh in the recent issue of The Star Press pointed out, this is a tremendous boost for Muncie Community Schools. To have the kind of support that almost 100 candidates have placed. He commends the City Council for their part of it. Each member of the Council has his formal application and he hopes they would find it complete in every way, if not, he welcomes the opportunity to address any concerns anyone may have. Rather than going through each item that he would like to call their attention to, he I simply going to mention some things that he has put down as strengths. He is more concerned about strengths of character and professional standards than he is about the spot of laser toner on the papers. For a strength, he would call their attention a lifetime of service to the profession of education. He has life licenses in three states, including Indiana, Vest Virginia and New York. He would also point out that during his tenure at Ball State University, he had extensive contact with the administration and the faculty of Muncie Community Schools. He did that as a Professor of Clinical Education in leading pre-student teachers into their professional role. This involved extensive service in the Muncie Community Schools at various locations. He has worked with these same teachers that will be talking about throughout the formulation of the new school

board. he has been a curriculum consultant, a published author in the field of educational (*inaudible). He would call their attention to his integrity.

Ridenour wants Mr. Caldwell to express his feelings on his personal integrity. Mr. Caldwell states he is proud of it. He has lived long enough to have a fair number of good things in his basket that people have said about him in which he appreciates before he dies. He believes in fair treatment of everyone. He has a long-standing reputation in dealing with minority issues. As a matter of fact, back in the 1970's, the black population of Muncie traveled with him in spirit to Italy where he was giving a series of addresses sponsored by the American Embassy there. He has a clean driving record. His mother taught him to comb his hair, that is, when he had hair. He has been active in civic affairs ever since he began in the profession.

Gregory has two questions and explains that he is at a disadvantage because he is going to hear them first. She asks how many School Board meetings he has been to in the last 2-3 years. Mr. Caldwell has attended probably four meetings. And secondly, Gregory asks what is the one that if he could make happen, as far as the School Board concern, what is that thing that is most urgent for him and how will he go about it. Mr. Caldwell thinks a lot of problems that Muncie Community Schools and the School Board have had has simply been a lack of communication. He is a great believer in open and honest communication. He would like to see the new School Board be a very visible presence in the school system. He does not mean just attending the School Board meetings but becoming an activist and a member of the professional leadership team. He would strongly recommend that as the first step. One of the things they will have to deal with is a lot of injuries needing to be healed. Issues need to be faced and trust needs to be built.

Dishman wants Mr. Caldwell to pledge to the City Council that he would try to make every one of the board appointments. There are so many people that are put on boards and do not show up. He plans to ask every candidate here tonight that same question. Mr. Caldwell would find it totally irresponsible not to.

Powell thanks Mr. Caldwell for being willing to be considered in this nomination. According to some input she has received from the community, there is a feared disconnect between Ball State and Muncie. She asks how he would work to elevate those fears and refers to him stating there are injuries that need to be healed and what his role, on the board, in that process being. Mr. Caldwell answers his role would be multi-faceted but one of them would be a compassionate listener. He thinks this is highly important and has not been absolutely certain that the role of the listener has been particularly strong in the past. He thinks that is a critical issue.

Polk also has two questions. The first one with the severe loss of the student population in the last decade, what are his ideas of bringing back student population that have gone outside of Muncie Community Schools. Mr. Caldwell answers that people will not return to Muncie until there is a means of livelihood. He finds these things so highly woven together that they to have to be considered together. We do have a severe employment problem. He thinks the students that have graduated from Muncie Community Schools had generally spoken well of their experiences. One of the things the things that we need to do, that is relatively

important, is an exit survey (if you will) for students who are graduating or even more importantly, for students who did not graduate. Polk refers to his second question, what his ideas are on how to get the financials back in order without cutting programs to the students. Mr. Caldwell replies that the start of something with some major grants is already coming about. This is almost a first, in his experience and it speaks highly of the organizations and the boards that have contributed to this. He does not doubt that there are ways to streamline the offerings of Muncie Community Schools but one of the things he thinks is needed, desperately, is a broad-based study of the curriculum. He is convinced that there are appropriate course strands going through the curriculum, pre-school through graduation. He thinks that finding out student responses to these things, then we are able to make an intelligent decision on what needs to be re-fined, what needs to be kept and what needs to be trashed.

Powell asks that in the event Mr. Caldwell is a nominee, and chosen, and one of the constituents from the City asks her because he is employed by Ball State, would there ever be a Conflict of Interest? Mr. Caldwell responds he is an emeritus faculty.

Marshall asks what his opinion is and how he would deal with the Teachers Union and what his stance is on the teachers and the agreement they have currently with Muncie Community Schools. One opinion that Mr. Caldwell has had for several years is the fact that the Teachers Organizations (Union) has always been under the gun for significance to the present situation, where there are contracts that go void. That just simply needs to be addressed. Again, he thinks the issues there is essentially one of trust, the ability to listen as well to oppose questions.

Anderson refers to the beginning of Mr. Caldwell's speech regarding integrity and always asks, in interviews, when faced with an individual such as Mr. Caldwell with a lot of wisdom and experience, what is one thing that he does good and is really good at. He then questions the reciprocal of that and meaning what is something that Mr. Caldwell really doesn't do well. Mr. Caldwell answers by stating that one of the things he does well is in the area of communication. His position at Ball State, in which he had several during his tenure there, was to be the Director of Academic Advising for the Arts and Communications areas of the university. He is passionate about communication. What he needs further exposure to is to hire finance. Finance is not part of his major threads throughout his career. He welcomes the opportunity to learn more about that.

Marshall asks if Mr. Caldwell believes that Unions have any part in education. Mr. Caldwell responds if he was to affect in his question, it would be with the term of Union. He thinks we need to differentiate between a Professional Organization and a Trade Union. He thinks there are needs for both in our society and in recent history it has been found that the Union was very responsive to the needs of American civilization. There is a need for any organization that will promote togetherness and understanding. He would find most people in the Union or professional organization movement would find no problem with that high degree of emphasis placed, once again, on communication.

Marshall Thanks Mr. Caldwell for his input and time.

Anitra Davis

*Powell reads her letter of recommendation.

Over the last eighteen years has built her career on one simple principle, fundamental professionalism. She is the person who looks for the inefficient procedures, finds ways to streamline them and consistently strives to boost the productivity of everyone around her. It is what has earned her the position as Deputy Assistant Trustee and is what she knows she can do as a School Board member. She would welcome the opportunity to be a part of the Muncie Community Schools Board. She is accustomed to a fast-paced environment where deadlines are a priority and handling multiple jobs simultaneously are the norm. As what can be seen on her resume, her current job requires her to be a well-organized, accurate and professional leader. Her educational courses coupled with her years of experience have taught her to think beyond the normal and instead look for innovative ways to problem solve. She enjoys a challenge and wants to contribute to the success of our community. The School Board has had the reputation of providing excellent service to the citizens of Muncie and beyond and nothing would please her more than to be a member of this team. She would like very much to discuss how she can add additional value to the new board. Thank you for your time.

WaTasha Barnes Griffin

*Powell reads her letter of recommendation.

She is an interested and qualified candidate for the Ball State appointed School Board that will manage Muncie Community Schools. As a product of Muncie Community Schools, a parent of a Muncie Community School student and an advocate for parents who have students in the public schools, she has a community leader committed to the stability, education and future of our youth. Our city and our schools will face big decisions in the upcoming four years balancing the budget, reimaging our facilities, strengthening our relationship with parents/community, all while maintaining and extending our reputation for educational excellence. She is interested in serving to bring three important qualities to the newly appointed School Board, measurable impact, sound governance, and a servant leadership.

Measurable impact, whereas, she wants to make sure a dollar spent results in a dollars' worth of educational improvement. As a life-long social service professional, she is highly skilled at creating and balancing budgets, fund development and has worked to implement new and innovative approaches to tackle complex problems using data and evidence to drive better decisions. As an example, she recently listened to a group of parents speak about the need to close the achievement gap. We do a good job of serving students at the top and bottom but not in the middle. We need cost effective ways of closing that gap, like the high demand skills and vocations that will prepare our students for the future. She possesses the skills and ability needed to move in that direction.

Sound governance, whereas, she has dedicated her career to improving transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision making in non-profit companies and organizations in which she serves. From her experience serving on multiple governing boards, she knows that a boards job is not to run the organization but to make sure that the organization is well run. As a

non-profit executive and the President of the local chapter of Indiana Black Expo, she understands the fast changing and highly competitive job market the children face. She will bring innovative ideas on how to cost effectively prepare them to compete and win. She has also had to set and achieve a clear strategic vision while balancing a budget and making a payroll everyday for the last twenty-one years.

Servant leadership, whereas, she is interested in part to show the children that a life spent in service is a life well spent. Our schools should be a center of community life and as we consider redeveloping our facilities, we should look at integrating multiple community needs, such as centers, programs and services for students, parents and neighborhoods. Our schools should mimic our whole community, not just those with children in the schools. During her time as President and CEO of both YWCA of Muncie and Indiana Black Expo Muncie Chapter, and other youth service organizations, she worked tirelessly to promote collaboration, eliminate racism and empower women, children and families in many communities and beyond. She has encouraged and mentored hundreds of women and children and worked to inspire all to turn an experience of injustice and inequality into educational opportunities, leadership and power. She is uniquely skilled in bringing diverse groups of people together across race, gender, class and sector in timely calls of action. She has the support of her family, the African American community, and a community of friends that she has made through her work advancing families, education and racial equality.

Selecting WaTasha will see her ensuring sound governance, evidence-based decision making, focus return on investment in schools that will support the whole community. In a quote from Ball State University President, Geoffrey Mearns, he says, "I encourage and energize our university now has the opportunity to lead a community wide partnership to improve the educational experiences for all of the children in Muncie. The future of our university and the future of our city are dependent upon our success of Muncie Community Schools. Today, we are now united to secure a brighter future for us all." She is willing to be a part of this unique opportunity to improve the educational experiences for all of the children, families, educators within Muncie Community School system. She will be a strong advocate for our children, a strong voice for our community and an effective steward for our dollars and will proudly uphold the values and morals of this great city of Muncie, Indiana. In addition to her letter of interest and resume, she has also included a brief biography of services and activities in the Muncie Community. In closing, she thanks for the time and consideration.

Anderson thanks Powell for reading her letter and says that she did a much better job than he would have. He wants to highlight her specifically because he has known her since she was a youth. Anderson has served on the School Board before and recalls it was always a challenge to get the parents involved. Parental involvement is a really big deal. He remembers WaTasha coming day in and day out, working with the teachers, being at the meetings trying to make a difference. In 2014, she asked him what it was like to run for the School Board, in which, she was in the process of running. She has two children that are in school but still wanted to make a difference. Another topic he wanted to bring up was closing the achievement gap. That was something they were trying to do in 2014. It is important to think about the middle gap and

their achievements. They need people with vision and with a stake in the school systems. They need to be willing to work with the children, parents, and teachers that could bring a difference. Anderson thanks the President for the time to speak.

Ana Quirk-Hunter

Ana Quirk-Hunter thanks the Council for consideration of one of the nominees. She thinks everyone has seen her background and has read her letter of recommendation so she will be gloss over the basics. She is an attorney that has practiced here in Muncie since 1991. She has two daughters, one a junior at IU and the other is going to be a junior at Muncie Central. They both attended Muncie Community Schools. Her youngest daughter is involved in the early college program and takes Advanced Placement (AP) classes so she is really concerned with keeping those programs. By the time she graduates, she will have sixty hours of college credit available to her. A lot of times, we do not hear the wonderful programs that Muncie Community Schools has and she believes that is one of them that has really made college affordable for a lot of kids because that has all been free to us and the kids that are enrolled in that. In addition, she is also a Public Defender in the Juvenile Court working out of the Youth Opportunity Center. They have numerous kids out there who are at the other end of the spectrum where they have been expelled or are suspended from school and have trouble getting their diploma. She thinks one of the things they really need to make sure to do is to keep the priority school running out there because once a child is expelled from school, they can either go home and get in trouble and add to the crime rate in our community or they can go to the priority school where they are still earning credits and still learning and trying to get a diploma. In addition, she thinks there is a group of middle students that are in there that need to be looked out for as well. There are several programs, one with Purdue Polytechnic with robotics and also companies that are coming to MADJAX and going to teach and promote job training is one of the areas that needs to be sure to be covered because not every student is going to want to go to college. That is why it is important to have some training in trades. There is also the Muncie Area Career Center which has some wonderful programs that she thinks needs to be kept in line. They have welding, auto mechanics and cosmetology just to name a few. There is a lot of things that Muncie Community Schools do that maybe everyone does not hear about that are really important and successful. She believes we need to continue those efforts. There are also a lot of teachers and administrators there that really put a lot into their children.

Polk thanks Mrs. Quirk-Hunter for coming tonight and putting her name in for consideration. He plans to ask the same question, with the loss of student population in the last decade, what is her ideas on bringing back the student population. Mrs. Quirk-Hunter responds one of the main things is to promote stability within the school system. A lot of students have left because they are not sure about what is going on, if programs are going to continue, if they are still going to get their AP classes or things like that. That is one of the main things and she thinks by forming this partnership with Ball State, that will promote that. Polk then asks about the financials and how she plans to get them back in order when the loss of student population

is several thousand dollars per student lost, without cutting programs. College is not for everybody and Muncie is doing a good job of doing the trades. Mrs. Quirk-Hunter responds that we are all going to have to come together as a community and work on that. We will probably need to get grants, loans and hopefully some help from the state to continue to promote our programs. She thinks she is willing to look at pretty much any idea out there. She does not have a frame where she is not going to go beyond that, she thinks all of our options need to remain open. Ultimately, what we really need to do is find another way to fund our school systems rather than just using property taxes. That is an important idea to explore and she is more than willing to listen to any other ideas anybody would have.

Anderson wants for Mrs. Quirk-Hunter to express one thing she is really good at and another thing that she could work on. She responds being very good at looking at both sides of an issue, and also to consider other options and listening to both sides of any issue. That could also be a detriment too because you could get stuck. Her bad characteristic is feeling that she is always in a hurry and being rushed about certain things. She needs to watch that and be more patient at times.

Ridenour was going to give Mrs. Quirk-Hunter the opportunity to finish her thoughts because it could be a challenge wrapping that all up into three minutes. This is essentially a very critical job interview for the city and our students. He appreciates her being here. There are roughly 1,200 students living inside the city limits that are attending other schools. He is hoping that they can find School Board members that will take the goal of bringing some of those, as many as possible, back. That helps solve financial problems. What would be an idea or two on what she thinks is an addition to stability can bring some of those 1,200 students back (in which, they live in town). Mrs. Quirk-Hunter responds that one of the things, other than the stability issue, is that people don't hear about the positive things that go into the school. For example, the programs. She knows that there are some county schools that do not offer AP classes. The teachers are very supportive of the students and go out of their way to do extra practices for instance in sports, that give tutoring sessions. One other thing is probably a publicity issue with not publicly showing how strong the schools are and what programs they have to offer. Unfortunately, she thinks a lot of times we only hear the negatives. There is a lot more to the school system than just issues of fighting or discipline problems.

Powell appreciates that question because that is something she is concerned about. She goes on to ask the same questions also, how would Mrs. Quirk-Hunter make sure that Muncie is represented on the board and how would she heal that rift. Mrs. Quirk-Hunter responds first of all, what needs to be considered is this should all be what is in the best interest of the children. She thinks starting at that because why we are all here. If we take that and implement it by getting everybody in the community involved, she thinks that will help that issue. She also has no ties to Ball State. She did take a summer class one time but has no ties and also no ties to Muncie Community Schools other than attending there. That might also have some play in that, if we get other School Board members who are not just employed by Ball State. She would also be more than happy to talk with anyone if they have any ideas.

Gregory goes on to ask two questions, how many School Board meetings has she attended in the last few years and secondly, what is the one thing she would like to see happen and what can she do to make it happen. Mrs. Quirk-Hunter states she has not attended any School Board meetings. She would like to have input from other people other than just School Board members at to what we should do and what ideas they have and then try to implement some of those ideas if they are practical. She would be willing to listen to both sides and has a really strong concern for the programs for the children who are expelled from school and not able to attend school. Also, maybe also look for some grants that will help pay for some of those programs at the YOC. She has written several grants throughout her time on other boards so she would be more than willing to help with that.

Dishman asks if she is willing to pledge to make the board appointments. She responds yes, absolutely. She completely agrees that being extremely important. Dishman goes on to discuss trade school and if she would fight for those kids. She responds definitely. Dishman states he has had so many people out in the workforce industry that cannot get the training they need to get into the jobs at factories. If they had the training and knowledge on how to run the machines, work on an automotive vehicle, build a house, whatever it may be, these companies will take these kids with the knowledge and train them their selves for what they want. But, they have to have that knowledge of running a machine, a builder would need to know how to measure accurately. Will she fight for those kids? No one has been fighting for them. Our workforce in Muncie is crying for help and it can be hard to get the proper training. The companies need a school that teaches these skills. Mrs. Quirk-Hunter completely agrees with him. She thinks there are several programs at the MACC such as the welding and automotive programs that she thinks would be extremely important to try to continue. She also thinks the programs at MADJAX where people from different manufacturers and businesses come in and train students is very important too. Thankfully we have the Ball Corporation Grant to pay for that. She would like to see that continue as well. Dishman hopes she would fight for the future of the kids of Muncie.

Marshall questions if she believes organized labor or otherwise known as unions, have a place in Muncie Community Schools. Mrs. Quirk-Hunter responds yes, she does. She thinks it is very important to have a relationship between the teachers and the school corporation. One of the ways to do that is to have a union representative in the union to negotiate a contract or other types of things that they need to come up with. It will also help stabilize the community system as well if we have a strong union participation and strong contracts.

The council thanks Mrs. Quirk-Hunter for her time and interest in this position.

Daniel Stallings

Mr. Stallings thanks the council and interested citizens for the opportunity to be here. He appreciates the nomination from Gregory as well. Before he begins, when he saw the list of nominees and noticed WaTasha Barns Griffin he immediately thought of her as she used the term servant leader. She certainly is that and he certainly hopes that the fact she is not here does not reflect poorly on the consideration of her candidacy.

He is uniquely qualified to serve in this role. He currently serves as a Financial Advisor and Independent Advisor here in town. He is also the father of Muncie Community Schools students, with a sophomore in the honors program and a recent graduate who was co-valedictorian of the 150th class of Muncie Central. She was also a Lily scholarship recipient and will be heading off to DePauw University in the fall. Mr. Stallings' wife is also a faculty member of Ball State University. He, however, does not see a concern in that and looks at it as an asset in terms as the opportunities for a board member to have a perspective in both the community and university.

Mr. Stallings has a Master's degree in Education with an emphasis on Counseling and Administration. He believes that is very valuable for the role of somebody in this position. He worked in higher education as a previous career for over fifteen years. Six of those years were at Ball State University, over thirteen years ago. He has been very active in the community trying to be an involved citizen and model that for his children to do the same thing. He believes that is what the School Board would be looking for and what the Council would certainly hope to have as well. He served on the board for Motivate Our Minds, for example, and was President of that board for two years. Currently, he serves as the Board President for the Muncie Public Library. This is his second year. They are a key partner with Muncie Community Schools and just completed a process of doing what is called a unified catalog where all of the school library books are cataloged into the Muncie Public Library database.

Polk thanks Mr. Stallings for applying to be considered to be nominated and goes on to ask with the loss of student population in the last decade here in Muncie, what are his ideas of bringing back that student population. In the materials that Mr. Stallings provided, he addressed that. He believes Muncie Community Schools is well positioned right now to revision ourselves. Part of that is that he believes, very firmly, that we can become what he would call a destination school district. There are some investments that can be made in programs that will attract people. He hopes this will address some of the other questions that are coming. He believes that if we, in fact, invest in programs rather than cut programs, we will actually attract population which will attract tuition dollars, which will help address the financial concerns out there. A few examples of that is recently introducing the dual language emersion program. Families are excited about that. Particularly they are finding it involves families that have the choice of where they live and might send their children. That is attracting students into the district. He thinks if we work to expand that then it will be one way in which we can do that. He believes continuing to invest in our outstanding art and music programs. It will differentiate programs in the schools and attract individuals who value that for their students. A third suggestion that he has offered and shared with at least the last three superintendents and School Boards which they have not been able to move forward on for various reasons. He believes in addition to the honors programs and AP programs, he believes through some outside funding for initial investment, create an international program of distinction that is academic honors. He is not trying to just focus on honor students but believes a program like that will attract families and bring students of all abilities. That would have to be differentiated in a different way. International program is a program that takes some time and some money

to invest in, which he believes is reachable through grant dollars. Once that is done, it becomes a mote. It protects from other school districts that can't support international programs in a geographical area like here. A program like that would differentiate us and also attract students from outside the district and back into our district. The closest area he believes that has such a program is in the Indianapolis area. Polk goes on to ask what Mr. Stallings ideas are to get the financials back in order without cutting those programs. By losing 1,200 students means about \$8 million dollar in loss for Muncie Community Schools. Mr. Stallings states there are many answers to that question but one answer he has is creating innovative programs that cause people to say it makes sense to send our children here. That is what will bring in the tuition dollars. One of the cautions is if we keep seeking our solutions with outside foundations. That and other grant opportunities should be an investment to start and can not be sustainable. We have to find a way to attract enrollment and that is what need to live in. That would be one and certainly soft money or grants would be a second place to go for those key investments. We have to be really thoughtful on what those are. The other part is we have to live within our means. He points to an example of the fact that we have often heard we are a victim of our recent property tax caps. He would not disagree that being is the reality but what we have discovered, through a number of conversations through this community looking at the Muncie Community Schools budget, was that this forecast was many, many years ago, between property tax caps and what are projective enrollments could be. There was a blue-ribbon panel over ten years ago that made some recommendations to close some schools and it was very apparent at that point. He is not trying to throw anybody under the bus, this is just facts that are public record. It was unpopular to close schools. However, he thinks it would have been less painful than the position we are in right now. Part of it is to right size our school districts, not saying anybody would enjoy that, but we have to live within our means. He believes we have all the evidence and the budget detail to support the fact that there is a certain size and certain number of schools that we have to be maintaining. If proceeding that, this board needs to make some of those decisions. It has to be in conversation.

Anderson states that whether Mr. Stallings gets the recommendation from the Council, he can attest being an individual in the community and has been doing an outstanding job. Mr. Stallings thanks Anderson, who goes on to ask what a strength and weakness of Mr. Stallings would be. Mr. Stallings has his feet in many circles. He believes his professional training and background, both in finance as well as counseling and administration, uniquely set him aside from that. One of his strengths is to really listen to situations and to understand that there are no simple answers. There are complex answers and we have to deeply listen to that. While he understands finance, school finances are its own beast. While he tried to be a student of that through his attendance at School Board meetings over the last few years, it is complicated. Brining in the right resources and making sure that as a School Board member he does his homework and fully understands. He is not going to hold himself yet as an expert in that area. He probably never will be, but he wants to be able to be a good steward of resources. Unfortunately, it sounds to him like there were past board members who were not able to understand that fully and were led to believe they did understand it enough to make some

decisions that clearly weren't understood enough. His goal is to make sure he is a good student in that area.

Ridenour details Mr. Stallings a person of great preparation and knows that well from some things they have done together. He would like for him to tell two things that he wanted to discuss in his introduction that he didn't get to address. Mr. Stallings goes on to say he had an opportunity to move to Indiana almost twenty years ago from California. He was the trailing spouse and had a delightful new wife who had an opportunity in Indianapolis in where they originally moved to. He, however, was employed at Ball State and they ended up here. He was involved through that job in the community and one of the things he kept saying was, "I really love this community." He came to really enjoy it. Through a number of opportunities, they chose to move here. They had realtors who were very much encouraging them to look at locations outside the city. They said no, this is where they wanted to be. They were in City Center and are tax payers, property tax payors and supporters. They wanted to be part of Muncie Community Schools. Their children had opportunities to attend other schools, including Burriss, multiple times in which they declined that lottery multiple times too. Their daughter was accepted and invited to attend the Indiana Academy and she made the choice to remain. That has been to their credit and favor, he believes. They value, as a family, diversity. He believes they have grown and learned so much from the out of class experiences they have had. The other is through that process he learned of an organization that focuses on framework for youth development called the forty developmental assets. One of the ways to move forward in terms of building trust, communication and having philosophy going forward to build again a destination school district is by pulling out these forty developmental assets. That would be an outstanding resource for us to look at as a community, whether he is on the board or not.

Powell remembers Mr. Stalling from previous meetings and recalls him seeing all those emotions that bubbled to the surface. What would his role be on the board to mend those feelings and be that bridge and the voice of the Council and city. What does he see his role? Mr. Stallings references an article in the newspaper last year in which talked about building trust. It talked about principles out of the concept highly effective organizations about trust building. There are numerous strategies out there and one of those is doing more community engagement. One of those tools that happened when Muncie Community Schools was doing the strategic planning process was creating quite a few listening learning committees facilitated by the United Way organization. He believes the School Board needs to continue to reach out into the community. One of the frustrations in individuals who attend the School Board meetings are that there is a public comment period but no reciprocation. The listening sessions would be one tool to do that. Board members being available to constituents in the community would be a second part of that. It is important to listen to build trust. Powell states he actually answered her second questions of how he would engage the public. She thanks him for his answers.

Gregory asked how many meetings he has attended and she knows it has been a lot and secondly, what is the one thing he wants to concentrate on and thinks really needs to be done and how is he going to get there. Mr. Stallings has attended every single School Board meeting

in the last three years and has been actively attending for at least the last six years. When he is not there it is usually because he is at one of his children's events. He is happy to have made that choice but usually stays very involved and informed about what is happening either prior to or here after. It is a good percentage. Clearly, more than anything, we have an outstanding school system. We know that, programmatically and academically and serve almost all of our kids well. Every school district struggles with a certain population, in terms of doing better. We have to address the financial piece. If we solve the financial piece then everything else becomes something we can solve but right now, that is so overwhelming for this district that he thinks we are not living up to our potential in other areas. We started with finance in which he thinks is the most important solution and from there, we can become an outstanding destination school district.

Dishman asks if he will be able to pledge that he will attend the board meetings. Mr. Stallings thinks that is the highest responsibility of the individual in this role, not just to attend, but be well-prepared and actively involved. Dishman then refers to the trade schools and wants his opinion in terms of them. Mr. Stallings thinks they are an outstanding opportunity. He points out his sister who was just visiting for graduation. She was one of those youth that was a little lost and unfocused. She was not their academic power hitter. She found a trade that has served her well and her family is very proud of her. She turned her life around after some difficult and challenging situations and is now the director and supervisor of a biomedical tech program at a hospital. There are people for whom that is the path that makes sense to them. As a society, we have needs and not going to outsource some things. We need people prepared to take on technical and job skills. He is currently doing some renovating on his home and has found it difficult to find confident, qualified individuals. He applauds those individuals who are serving those roles in our community and hopes our schools continue to do that. Dishman asks if Mr. Stallings would be willing to fight for them. Mr. Stallings answers absolutely. Dishman recalls almost losing the trade school due to discussion of shutting it down, which would have been a big disappointment to this community. Mr. Stallings talks about creating a destination school district, in which he thinks that would have to be a part of the formula. He does not think any one could be excluded because if a portion is lost then those families leave taking their kids. We have to have a comprehensive model.

Marshall asks Mr. Stallings believes if organized labor, or unions, have a place within the Muncie Community School system. Mr. Stallings responds yes, he does and believes the unions add a great service to the employees. They create some efficiencies on negotiating together. He thinks that we need to make sure that the right leadership is in those positions as well. They certainly understand the larger picture on what is important for all the constituents in this community is that we have the same goal and the same focus. If we don't have a shared vision then we become adversarial. That may be some of the concern here, having some adversarial relationships between administration and union. He thinks if we all focus on the same goal then we can all be working toward that same goal. We could be negotiating toward the same outcomes.

Mary Stilts

Mrs. Stilts is going to be going from the opposite pole of everyone else that has spoken tonight. Why does she want to be a part of the School Board? Because she cares, she is a mom and a Muncie resident from day one. She graduated from Muncie Central but was born and raised on the south end of town. There is nothing wrong with the south side of Muncie other than it being left out. It is time to build it back up and bring some of those people back into the community. There are all kinds of housing area on the south end of town. If Muncie Community Schools, Ball State and the city of Muncie all work together, we can bring those kids and families back. One of these days, maybe we can bring some jobs back to Muncie. Her mother and father divorced in 1964 when divorce wasn't that common. She was raised in poverty while her mother worked. They went and got commodities. They appreciated what they had and appreciated what their teachers and city offered them. She grew up and had children of her own. Her oldest son is forty years old and graduated from Muncie Southside. He was an average student. He served our country for four years in the Marine Corp. thanks to Southside. He is a disabled Marine Corp. veteran now. Her daughter comes along several years later, now twenty-six. She also went to Southside. She was in the honors program and tested way off the charts on everything. Her third daughter is now eighteen. She is learning disabled and special needs. This upcoming school year, she will be a senior.

Our kids on the low end, the poverty level, the special needs kids, all need as much representation at the middle and higher-level kids. Our kids should be the first priority, whether they are special needs or accelerated and doing college courses. It would be nice to have some parents who are in that poverty level. Mrs. Stilts worked, but still received food stamps. She still graduated.

Polk states with the loss of student population in the last decade, what is some of her ideas in bringing back that student population. Mrs. Stilts answers with communication between the school system and Ball State and the City of Muncie. She believes working together as a complete city and community and trust, honesty and ironing out a lot of the situations that caused a lot of the kids to leave the school district. First hand, she can say the bussing situation is part of the problem. She worked for the bus company this past year and it is the biggest mess she has ever seen. Without transportation for the kids to get to school, they are not going to be in Muncie. These county schools are sending a bus over to Muncie to pick up kids at the park, taking them to a county school and bringing them back to the park after school. We have to work together to make this right. There has to be a good transportation system for our kids. We have to have good communication between all aspects. We have to work together. Polk asks what her ideas are on how to get the financials back in order without cutting programs. Mrs. Stilts responds by controlling the spending, get more parent and community involvement, work of trying to get some grants. Loans are okay but they have to be paid back. We need to try and work with the people that can do the grants. Work with people that will help the school system thrive. That is the only way we are going to bring Muncie Community Schools back to what it should be. Finally, she answers church involvement. Her church adopted Sutton Elementary and then moved to Grissom. They provide school supplies,

shoes, eye exams, dental exams, haircuts, everything, for every student in the school whether they are low income or not. Every student at Grissom Elementary receives all their school supplies for the year. It can be done; Glad Tidings is proof of it. These kids thrive and that will help the financial end too.

Anderson thanks Mrs. Stilts for her powerful testimony and states there is nothing like an individual truly sharing from their heart. How is her parental involvement in the school? She answers as much as she can when she is not at work. All of her kids had been involved in choir and she has always been active in the community Christmas sing along with their spring concerts. She has always tried to help out when she can. She is a working mom that does what she can. She is always in touch with them and stays open in communicating. She has been actively involved with communicating with the current School Board, Superintendent and special education department. Darlene Wiggins, the secretary at Sutton Elementary, can vouch that. Mrs. Stilts blew up their phone. She is always asking what they need her to do. She works her schedule around with no problem. She currently works in New Castle because she can not find a job in Muncie, while being a college graduate. She is there when she needs to be and she is more willing to be there because she has grandchildren coming into Muncie Community Schools. She also has grandchildren in Muncie Community Schools but has since moved because of all this. We will get them back if we can straighten all this out. Her grandchildren will come back.

Ridenour recalls an earlier brief discussion with Mrs. Stilts and noticed in her background that she spent nine years as a case worker. He wants her to tell how that experience in that field could benefit her on the board. she answers with diversity and being able to work with all aspects and races. The kids are struggling because their parents are also or gone. She was clerical and then went to case worker and decided to go back to clerical. She felt that her needs better fit the clerical end of the food stamp office. It is a very high stress job. Every case worker is overworked. She left there because they were going to the call center and she could not afford to drive back and forth to Marion every day. She has been in all aspects of life including factory, fast food and pizza. She has lived lives that most people couldn't even fathom. No drugs involved, her children are law abiding and very outstanding citizens. So is she. She is a single mom with no child support that makes \$10.00 an hour. She is an administrator with useful skills but wants to work in Muncie. Why would she pay taxes in New castle when she lives here? She wants to come back and be a part of Muncie community. she wants to be a part of Muncie Community Schools. She states her grandson is starting first grade and that she is going to be around for a long time so the school system is stuck with her. Ridenour is glad she is here.

Powell thanks her for putting her name into consideration and that her emotions and her heart is out there. She had the chance to talk to her when the whole process was going about and she saw all the emotions that came with it. She asks that since the citizens of Muncie coming to grips and being part of that bridge through this transition, how will she make sure that the citizens of Muncie know the City Council nomination will have the best interest. Mrs. Stilts answers that by working between the families, school and city. We have got to

communicate. We can't have secret meetings behind closed doors and not let the public know what is going on. She has been accused of being too honest for her own good. Honesty breeds worthiness. It also brings people together. If you are honest with somebody, when you are open and straight forward and don't beat around the bush just tell them the way it is and if they don't like it then they don't like it. They will learn to deal with it. It is just like the school closings. She hated to see Sutton close and literally cried. They knew it had to happen. She didn't rant, rave and cuss at the School Board meetings, though. The City Council has to let the citizens know what is going on otherwise, they are not trusted. Communication is the first step in bringing the whole unit together.

Gregory asked how many School Board meeting Mrs. Stilts has attended in the last few years and secondly, what is the one thing she would like to see get done and how would she go about doing that. Mrs. Stilts answers she has tried to get to as many as she can and knows she has attended at least 6-8 in the last year. She tries her best to go when it doesn't interfere with her evening work schedule. In answering the second question, she states the School Board needs to bring the citizens of Muncie and Ball State together as a unit. Some wasn't sure if this was going to be a good situation or not but after watching what Muncie Community Schools has been through for the past few years and this last year especially, she truly thinks Ball State is going to be a blessing to the students and families. They have already designated around \$50,000 to the teachers to buy supplies. Muncie Community Schools hasn't been able to do that because they are broke. Teachers are taking out of their pocket and Ball State is already fixing that. Gregory states it is actually the Community Foundation. Mrs. Stilts agrees but states Ball State still stepped up to build it up and bring it back to what it should be. It may not work but nothing else was, so why not give it a chance. It may be the perfect solution. Building the bridge to bring the people of Muncie and Ball State together for the best interest of our kids is what it needs to be.

Dishman asks if she is willing to pledge to attend every School Board meeting and Mrs. Stilts confirms she would be there, guaranteed. She has went to work with a 102-degree fever and strep throat so she will for sure be at the School Board meetings, no questions asked. Dishman goes on to ask how she feels about trade schools. Mrs. Stilts thinks trade schools are probably one of the best things the school system has ever had. Her middle daughter, in middle school, was in a program with the Muncie Area Career Center. They taught them building trades, welding, hairstyling and fingerprinting, just to name a few. It was free. Lynn Waters, a local musician, who just passed away a few years ago from cancer, did the building trades. Her daughter built a toolbox and thought it was the neatest thing. She learned how to change the oil and tires on her car. She also learned how to weld and was looking at that as a possible trade. Bring the building and skilled trades back because a lot of kids do not want to go to college. They want to get out and work with their hands. They are still able to support their families without going to college.

Marshall asks if Mrs. Stilts believes organized labor, or unions, have a place in Muncie Community Schools. She answers by stating she has been a union steward for the state when she worked at the welfare office. She has been a union member. Unions are good. There is

nothing wrong with unions. Sometimes, however, they overreach. She hates to say it like that. If you have a good union, you have good leaders, good communication between teachers, the union and Ball State, then it could work. There is nothing wrong with unions as long as they are not overstepping and making demands that are just not possible. That especially addresses our school system right now. We cannot afford to pay the teachers \$10,000 a month as such but it can be worked out. As long as everybody is willing to work together and cooperate, yes there is a place. She can also see it working without it. She can see it both ways. We have just got to have communication. Marshall thanks her for her answer.

Marshall instructs that everyone on the Council has a ballot containing the names of all six nominees. Every Council member needs to write their own name on their ballot. They should then check mark the three names of the candidates they wish to nominate. There is a section to write-in a candidate as well. Once finished, sign the bottom of the ballot. Attorney Hunter will then verify that every ballot is properly completed and the reading of the ballots will take place.

Gregory says that there has not been too many things she has had to decide as a Council member, that matter all that much, but this decision does. Not only because the citizens of Muncie can no longer vote for their School Board members, but because this decision is going to impact our community for years. We don't know how. She is so encouraged that we have had absolutely wonderful candidates to choose from. As she looked at the list in this mornings paper of the other eighty-eight, we do not have to worry too much. It is important thought that we stay on top of that board giving them our support and our counsel. We ought to think about, as individuals, going to more School Board meetings, including herself.

Ridenour states as he saw the list of candidates, he was very excited about the possibilities. He thinks next week is going to be interesting on how they get through all eighty-eight people. It is very encouraging. The members on the Council know what its like to get nasty e-mails and phone calls and for people to be willing to step forward is encouraging for the Muncie community and exciting for Muncie Community Schools.

Powell also thanks everyone that put their name into consideration because it came with scrutiny and a lot of research and commitment. She appreciates everyone on this difficult decision. She thinks that this is probably one of the most difficult things they have had to do because it has such a long reaching impact. This has been an overwhelming, encouraging new adventure for our community.

Marshall states as a City Council member, he feels like being put in this position is very awkward. He is very disappointed and frustrated that the state legislation has taken the citizens right to vote. The citizens elected a School Board member and now they are basically putting it back on the Council. He does not think that is fair. The citizens vote means more to the citizens

than it means to the people at the state house. He wants the best for our schools and children but thinks it is very unfair that the state house has put each of these council members in the position that they were not elected to choose any members the School Board. That was the citizens duty and it was taken away from them. He thanks all the nominees devoting their time to come and be interested in this position.

Attorney Hunter reads the ballots.

Marshall – 1. Davis 2. Barnes-Griffin 3. Quirk-Hunter
 Gregory – 1. Caldwell 2. Barnes-Griffin 3. Stallings
 Dishman – 1. Caldwell 2. Quirk-Hunter 3. Stilts
 Powell – 1. Barnes-Griffin 2. Quirk-Hunter 3. Stallings
 Anderson – 1. Barnes-Griffin 2. Quirk-Hunter 3. Stallings
 Ridenour – 1. Caldwell 2. Barnes-Griffin 3. Stallings
 Polk – 1. Barnes-Griffin 2. Quirk-Hunter 3. Stallings

Hal Caldwell	
Anitra Davis	
WaTasha Barnes-Griffin	
Ana Quirk-Hunter	
Daniel Stallings	
Mary Stilts	

Quirk and Peters are absent.

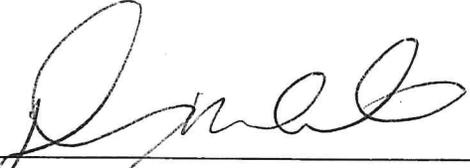
Attorney Hunter states there was only seven members present, there are three candidates that have five or more votes. The statute says that it has to be a majority of all the Council.

A motion was made by Powell and seconded by Polk to accept WaTasha Barnes Griffin, Ana Quirk-Hunter and Daniel Stallings as the Muncie Community School Board candidates from the Muncie Common Council.

A roll call vote showed 7 yeas, 0 nays and 2 absent (Quirk and Peters).

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Powell and seconded by Polk to Adjourn. A vote by acclamation showed 9 yeas and 0 nays. ADJOURNED.



 Doug Marshall, President of
 The Muncie Common Council



 Melissa Peckinpaugh, Muncie City Clerk
 of the Muncie Common Council