

# SHAKER HEIGHTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

SHTA NEWSLETTER No. 5

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Editor, Burton Randall

SUMMARY OF JEAN BRATTIN'S MINUTES OF THE

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING: Monday, February 8, 1971 at Byron

An estimated 350 members managed to skid their way through a blizzard to Byron by the time President Fabrizio called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. The Negotiating Team, he said, had spent some 2000 man-hours so far in their efforts to win an acceptable master contract and salary increase. This meeting is the first of several critical times, when the team reports its progress to date and seeks the support of the membership for the position that team members feel should be taken.

The members voted to have the proceedings recorded on tape. The President then turned the chair over to Vice-President Dick Oberdorfer so that Sal could Participate with other members of the negotiating team.

Mr. Oberdorfer introduced Ed. Wachtel, chairman of the team, who in turn introduced the other members: Sal Fabrizio, Bob Brown, Emil Knorr, Mark Freemam, and Jerry Hall.

Mr. Wachtel first presented an outline of the master contract. Agreement has been reached on a few of the items, but some of the critically important provisions, notably the grievance procedure, are proving very difficult to negotiate. He next turned to the money items, giving first the original proposals of both sides, then an outline of where things now stand.

## ORIGINAL PROPOSALS:

### SHTA

\$9184 base pay; 1 : 2.2 ratio;  
14 steps (12 with double jumps)  
Columns for every 10 hours past B.A.  
182 day school year  
Fringes: Hospitalization, - UCR Plan,  
prescription drugs, dental  
insurance, term life, disability  
1-year contract

### ADMINISTRATION

\$6900 base pay in Sept. '71 Ratio  
\$7100 base pay in Sept. '72 1 : 2  
16 steps (14 with double jumps)  
or  
\$7000 in Sept. '71 Ratio 1 : 1.95  
\$7300 in Sept. '73  
16 steps, no double jumps  
Fringe: \$30 per month for family  
hospitalization, \$12 per month for  
single.  
2-year contract  
186 day school year

## PRESENT STATUS:

\$8684 Ratio 1 : 2  
Fringe: Present hospitalization  
plus \$100,000 worth in others  
Unchanged: steps, columns, 182  
day school year, 1-year contract

Same salary options as above, with  
\$100,000 extra in fringe benefits,  
which would have to include any  
increase in hospitalization costs.  
or  
\$7000 in '71, \$7200 in '72, Ratio  
1 : 2  
No additional fringe benefits  
Unchanged: 2 year contract, 186  
days



To the stunned, almost incredulous audience, Mr. Wachtel said that almost no progress had been made and the chances of a better offer being made are slim. He then called on Emil Knorr to discuss cost figures.

Mr. Knorr said that the Administration's figures for the 4 to 4.5 mill lag do not seem realistic, because the cost of teachers' salary package over the last two years was only at most 4 mills, and the SHTA Team has been unable so far to get any kind of breakdown from them. The Administration figures an additional 2.62 mills for their salary offer. He said that if the salary base were at \$8000 the estimated millage for the cost of the teachers' salary would be about 6.9 mills over 2 years. \$100 increase in base pay costs approximately 1/2 mill at the present time.

Mr. Oberdorfer then asked each individual member of the team to express his personal opinions about what stand should be taken.

Ed Wachtel first presented a profile of the Shaker teacher, compiled from the 66% response to the questionnaire sent out by Larry Maniglia of Woodbury. Of those responding, 41 have won awards for outstanding work; 220 altogether have won fellowships to institutes or other honors. 30% have college teaching experience. They belong to more than 100 professional organizations besides the usual NEA, OEA, etc. The average age is 38.4 years. More than half are on tenure, 57% have the M.A. or more; 36% are at maximum salary. 37% have to supplement their incomes with other work, while 49% actually do so.

Mr. Wachtel read a quotation from Dr. Lawson's opening day remarks: "...We must not hesitate to let our public know what is good about our schools and students as well as to communicate such facts as per pupil cost and teacher salaries which do correlate significantly with pupil achievement measures."

"....And you can depend upon my continued commitment to the goal of higher salaries for teachers in Shaker Heights."

Mr. Wachtel then stated (or understated) his opinion: "...it is regrettable that the Board apparently will not support its high quality, hard-working staff."

Emil Knorr pointed to the figures on the Lighthouse Districts, which were published in the Newsletter. We have been falling farther and farther behind every year, and by next fall, with the Board's offer, would be lagging by \$2500 to \$4500 in the Master Column to many of these districts. Even Brooklyn, Ohio, in Cuyahoga County, which used to be as much as \$1200 behind Shaker in the master column, is now well ahead. If we accept the Board's offer we will have given up \$2244 in the most column over a 6-year period. He said it was obvious what his opinion was.

A Team member said he thought the Administration are trying to guess what size levy will pass and tailoring their offers to fit their "timidities." But the levy figure should not and cannot be based on what they guess the traffic will bear; it should be based only on how much money is needed to provide quality education for the children of this community. Even if salaries were not raised substantially, a timid levy figure means that the cutbacks now being made will be sustained; the staff will be smaller, classes larger, books and supplies hard to come by, and quality slowly draining away. The Administration must tell the community the facts or else we must do it for them.



Jerry Hall indicated that his opinions agreed with those of other team members, and added that a matter of concern to elementary teachers -- pay for preparation time before school opens -- was being negotiated.

Mr. Oberdorfer then opened the floor for questions.

A Byron teacher asked what total millage would be needed to cover all needs, including raises for non-teaching staff. Mr. Knorr said he could not be exact, as he was not given a model to estimate the administrative and non-teaching personnel millage figures, but he gave an estimate by adding the lag figure and the estimated millage for teachers' salaries.

Another question asked how many of the Lighthouse districts paying higher salary scales were industrial communities. Mark Freeman answered that most are quite similar to ours, and that salary scales in industrial cities like Chicago are even higher than in the Lighthouse districts.

A high school teacher asked whether any change is being contemplated in the ratio index, and Ed Wachtel said no further concession would be made, since the team has already dropped from its 1 : 2.2 original proposal. It will hold the line at 1 : 2. Mr. Rankin also inquired about our position on any forthcoming state aid increases. Sal said that the master contract provides that salary negotiations can be re-opened whenever additional funds are received.

A Woodbury teacher said that a \$7000 offer is a mockery of our professional abilities, and was applauded warmly.

Dick Tappenden, after thanking the team for its long and dedicated work, said that telling the truth to the community is our best weapon, and we ought to find out the truth about how the money is being spent. For instance, how much is going for administrative salaries, cars and travel, etc? Sal replied that although all salaries are supposed to be a matter of public record, it has taken three months to compile a list of salaries paid to the top administrators and their % increase over the past 5 years, but the superintendent's is still not known exactly, or the total cost of the new car furnished him by the Board.

In summary, Mr. Wachtel said that within a week another survey will be taken (NOT a final vote) on what salary figure the membership is willing to accept as a minimal settlement. Mr. Freeman added that the team was willing to continue negotiations if the membership will stand behind them. Sal said he isn't anti-administration, but he is pro-teacher and pro-student, and he is upset at the direction we seem to be going. He refuses to sacrifice good education on the altar of so-called "political realities." The administration appears to be playing on the fears of teachers -- some of the questions asked reflected this. But it is their job and ours to make the real needs of the schools known, and trust the community to respond as they always have. Assuming that the Board of Education has not been kept quite fully informed, telegrams have been sent to Mr. Hansell and other Board members. At this time Sal read the telegram sent to Mr. Hansell which stresses our concern for the quality of education offered in Shaker.

Herbert J. Hansell,  
President, Shaker Hgts. Bd. of Ed.

During the 2/5/71 negotiations meeting, Mr. David expressed your view that the members of the Board did not wish to exceed the \*\$400 mill range on the ballot. We believe that this would not provide adequate funding for our schools. The S.H.T.A. could not support a levy that would create cutbacks in our school system. We hope that you are aware of the gravity of this situation and our obligation to inform the electorate concerning any matter that would result in a substandard educational program for the boys and girls of Shaker Heights

Sal Fabrizio - President, S.H.T.A.

Richard Oberdorfer - Vice-President,

S.H.T.A.

Ed Wachtel - Chairman, Negotiating  
Team, S.H.T.A.

EDITOR'S CONCLUDING COMMENT:

The high attendance at the meeting in such stormy weather, the vigor and incisiveness of members' questions, and the massive support demonstrated for the position of the Negotiating Team all point to the necessary conclusion: The teachers of Shaker Heights call upon the Board and Dr. Lawson, and ultimately the community, to demonstrate the truth of Dr. Lawson's words "continued commitment to the goal of higher salaries for teachers in Shaker Heights."