

**SCHOHARIE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

DATE: DECEMBER 17, 2008
TIME & PLACE: 7:00 P.M. – JR. / SR. HIGH LIBRARY CLASSROOM
KIND OF MEETING: REGULAR
ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT: ISLES, NEWELL (arr. 7:34 pm), QUANDT, SCHLIEDER, SCHULTZ, SPIES, WILBER
ELECTED MEMBER(S) EXCUSED: N/A
APPOINTED MEMBERS PRESENT: BRIAN SHERMAN, SUPERINTENDENT
ROBERT BONAKER, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR
ROSEMARY WILBER, DISTRICT CLERK
ALSO PRESENT: MARYELLEN GILLIS, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
DAVID BARNES, JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
JAMIE ROCKHILL, DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS
CLIFF HASLUN, SUPERVISOR OF TRANSPORTATION
1 MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE; 2 DISTRICT RESIDENTS

President Spies called the Regular Board of Education Meeting of December 17, 2008 to order at 7:08 p.m. CALL TO ORDER

Motion was made by Mrs. Isles, seconded by Mr. Quandt to approve a correction of the Minutes for the Regular Meeting on November 19, 2008. (copy attached in Official Minute Book) APPROVE CORRECTION OF THE MINUTES OF MEETING ON 11/19/08

Yes – 6
No – 0
Absent – 1 (Newell) Motion Carried

Motion was made by Mrs. Isles, seconded by Mrs. Schultz to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting on December 3, 2008. APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING ON 12/3/08

Yes – 5
No – 0
Abstain – 1 (Quandt)
Absent – 1 (Newell) Motion Carried

President Spies reviewed the Agenda. He made note that the following item was added to the Agenda: CALENDAR AND AGENDA

- Add Business Item i. – Declaration of Bus #131 as Surplus

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

President Spies offered the Privilege of the Floor. No one requested to speak.

BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

BOARD OF EDUCATION
REPORT

Mr. Quandt reported that he attended a dinner meeting on December 9, 2008 hosted by the New York State Farm Bureau. Also attending the meeting were Mrs. Gillis, Mrs. Ellen Bogardus (Elementary School Teacher), President Spies, and Mrs. Josie Ennist (Food Service Director). Mrs. Gillis accepted a plaque from the Bureau on behalf of the Elementary School.

Mr. Quandt explained that third grade students had previously planted squash seeds at Schoharie Valley Farms under the supervision of Mr. Richard Ball. Students, now 4th graders, harvested the squash this past fall. Mrs. Ennist and her staff supervised students in cooking and serving the squash to the elementary school. This is the second year for this program.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

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REPORT

NYS School Boards Association

NYS SCHOOL BOARDS
ASSOCIATION

Superintendent Sherman introduced Ms. Rita Lashway, Deputy Executive Director of the New York State School Boards Association.

Ms. Lashway distributed information to Board Members and explained the benefits of school districts being a member of the New York State School Boards Association. She asked Board Members to consider membership again.

Bus Needs for May 2009 – Vote Proposition

BUS NEEDS FOR MAY
2009 – VOTE PROPOSITION

Superintendent Sherman introduced Mr. Cliff Haslun, Supervisor of Transportation who gave a report on the current bus fleet. He said he was proposing that the District consider a proposition for the vote on May 19, 2009 to purchase three 66 passenger buses and one 20-24 passenger bus at a net cost not to exceed \$340,000.

Mr. Haslun said that the Department of Transportation inspections are getting tougher. He said that last year the District purchased Bluebird Buses, but due to new mandated emission regulations, he is proposing that the District purchase International buses.

Mrs. Newell arrived at 7:34 pm.

Shelter Activities

SHELTER ACTIVITY

Superintendent Sherman reported that school was dismissed at 1:00 pm. on Thursday, December 11th and school was cancelled on Friday, December 12th due to an ice storm. There were many power outages in the District and the school was opened as a shelter for the weekend. He said that within one hour of being in contact with the Emergency Management Office, the school was operational as a shelter. The shelter facilities were staffed 24 hours per day by Red Cross volunteers. Superintendent Sherman said that 42-45 meals were served at various times during the times that the Shelter was in operation. He thanked Mrs. Ennist (Food Service Director) and her staff – Terry Jeffrey, Danielle Jeffrey, Lois Cook and Deb Benak. He also thanked Mr. Gathen and his custodial/maintenance staff – Dave Rickard, Joe Balfe, Chuck Schrom, Jeremy Karker, Don Briggs and Patrick Lamont.

Superintendent Sherman reported to the Board that we had received the review back from the State Education Department regarding the nutritional analysis of the meals served in our cafeteria. The District had met all targets established by SED. On the same day that the report was received it was shared with another inspector from SED conducting an Operational Review of our school lunch program (the same day we conducted the emergency early dismissal after serving lunch). Her comment was “that was unheard of. It never happens.” An informal exit conference with the inspector indicated only one discrepancy in operations and that was an error reported on a duplicate “free and reduced lunch” application form. These are exceptionally positive reports.

Update on State Budget

UPDATE ON STATE
BUDGET FOR 2009-10

Superintendent Sherman gave a summary report on Governor Paterson’s proposed state budget for 2009-10. He said the following were some of the proposals for schools:

School Aid

- School Aid would be frozen at the 2008-09 levels: Foundation Aid, High Tax Aid, Universal Pre-K Aid, Reorganization Incentive Operating Aid, Supplemental Public Excess Cost Aid were included in the freeze.

STAR Program

- The Middle Class STAR property tax rebate program would be eliminated.
- In addition, the floor on how much STAR exemptions may decline from year to year would be raised from 10% to 18%. This is estimated to save the state \$109 million.

Other Education Programs

- The budget proposes requiring school districts to assume 15% of the cost of preschool special education. This is an unfunded mandate transferred from the county to school districts.
- There are also cuts to various categorical programs. For example, funding for Teacher Centers would be completely eliminated.

Mandate Relief

The Governor also proposes a few mandate relief/cost reduction initiatives, including:

- Creating a new “Tier V” for new entrants to public retirement systems, that would “remove pension enhancements added after the creation of the Tier IV retirement category.” Retirement age would return to age 62 and pension contributions would be increased under the new tier.
- Exempting school districts from the Wicks Law for five years.
- Allowing districts to use excess Employee Benefits Accrued Liability Reserve funds to offset aid cuts (this allows those school districts that inappropriately placed funds in reserve to access them).
- Raising thresholds for competitive bidding and allowing districts to “piggyback” on other purchasing contracts.

Superintendent Sherman also explained that formula-based school aid savings are achieved through three main steps. These steps, combined with reductions and eliminations of categorical programs, result in a \$698 million or 3.3% year-to-year reduction in total school aid state-wide.

*First, certain school aid funding categories, including Foundation Aid and Universal Prekindergarten (UPK), will be maintained at 2008-09 levels for two years (2009-10 and 2010-11);

*Second, unlike Foundation Aid and UPK, some school aid allocations such as Building Aid, Transportation Aid, and others will not be limited to 2008-09 levels and will change year-to-year based on existing statutory provisions.

*Third, in 2009-10, a one-time \$1.1 billion Deficit Reduction Assessment (DRA) would be taken against total formula-based aids excluding Building Aid and the Universal Prekindergarten. The DRA is structured progressively so that school districts with the greatest needs and least ability to pay receive the smallest percentage reductions in aid. Individual school district reductions will range between 3 and 13 percent.

Superintendent Sherman also explained that School Districts have reported over \$1.3 billion of uncommitted reserves for the 2009-10 school year, which have been building up over time. Over 87% of districts reported unreserved balances in excess of their proposed year-to-year reduction in School Aid. (Schoharie was not one of these.)

In conclusion, Superintendent Sherman reported the following information on Preschool Special Education: Although school districts are the primary decision-makers for preschool special education services, they have no financial responsibility for that program. To better align fiscal and programmatic responsibilities, school districts will be responsible for a 15% share of preschool special education costs, reducing the State share from 59.5% to 47% of program costs and the county share from 40.5% to 38%. After this action, State funding for preschool special education will total \$590 million. This shift places the amount into the overall school budget displacing other programs and services should then be a cap or a contingency budget.

EXCEL Project Update

EXCEL PROJECT
UPDATE

Superintendent Sherman distributed information regarding EXCEL bid recommendations. A copy of the recommendations as outlined by Mosaic Associates Architects is attached to the Official Minutes. These recommendations include the following potential reductions in project scope:

1. Delete all current alternates (not included in Base Bids)
2. Delete Fitness Center (\$370,000)
3. Delete ventilation (Nurse's Office, Faculty Room, and Corridor) (\$100,000)
4. Delete paving at gym exit (\$45,000)
5. Change infill at miscellaneous openings from CMU to drywall (\$2,000)
6. Theatrical modifications (previously approved, reduced \$28K since counterweights already bid) \$14,955)
7. Simplify Auditorium ceiling (no drywall) (\$15,000)
8. Double door at back of stage as alternate (\$5,000)
9. HID house lights as alternate (\$5,000)
10. Additional Theatrical modifications as alternate (\$36,380)
11. Auditorium acoustical panels as alternate (\$9,000)
12. Omit theatrical and sound allowances (\$6,000)
13. Air Conditional and Heat Recovery in Auditorium air handling unit as alternate (would allow A/C in future) (\$25,000)
14. Fire Alarm System as alternate (\$150,000)

The total of all proposed reductions would be \$783,335.

Superintendent Sherman suggested that items 1-8 be deleted. He recommended, however, that items 9-14 be left in.

Board Members asked that representatives from Mosaic Associates Architects attend the next Board of Education Meeting on January 7, 2009 with more information and to answer questions.

BUSINESS

Motion was made by Mr. Quandt, seconded by Mrs. Schultz that the Board of Education approve the Treasurer’s Report for November 2008. (copy attached to official Minutes).

TREASURER’S REPORT

Yes – 7
No – 0

Motion Carried

Board Members reviewed the Student Activity Fund Summary Financial Statement.

The Board received the report of the Claims Auditor for Warrant #6 in the amount of \$765,729.40.

CLAIMS WARRANT #6

Board Members discussed the proposed new Board Policy #7521 – Students With Life-Threatening Health Conditions. Mr. Schlieder said he would like to see the policy rewritten to include other life-threatening conditions, as the proposal only lists one specific illness. Superintendent Sherman said that he would meet with Dr. Lorraine Davis (school physician) to amend the policy. Board Members decided to take no action this evening and will bring it to the Meeting on January 7, 2009 as the First Reading.

DISCUSSION
PROPOSED NEW BOE
POLICY #7521 - STUDENTS
WITH LIFE-THREATENING
HEALTH CONDITIONS

Board Members reviewed a proposal from West & Company, CPA’s PC for Internal Auditor Services for the 2008-09 fiscal year. Members asked for a summary of the first report for the next meeting and will make a decision on the Auditor’s services at that time.

DISCUSSION
PROPOSAL FROM
INTERNAL AUDITOR

Motion was made by Mrs. Isles, seconded by Mrs. Schultz that the Board of Education adopt the Resolution to Authorize Signature by Board President on the Updated Tax Sheltered Annuity Plan. (copy attached to Official Minutes).

ADOPT RESOLUTION
AUTHORIZE BOARD
PRESIDENT SIGNATURE
UPDATED TAX SHELTERED
ANNUITY PLAN

Yes – 7
No – 0

Motion Carried

Motion was made by Mr. Quandt, seconded by Mrs. Isles that the Board of Education declare the following textbooks as surplus:

DECLARE TEXTBOOKS
AS SURPLUS

1. (52) 1992 Amsco US History and Government
2. (86) 1984 Amsco American Studies

Yes – 7
No – 0

Motion Carried

Motion was made by Mrs. Isles, seconded by Mrs. Newell that the Board of Education declare bus #131, a 1995 8-passenger Chevy, ID #IGNEC16K2SJ451754 as surplus. The surplus vehicle will be cannibalized for parts.

DECLARE BUS #131
AS SURPLUS

Yes – 7
No – 0

Motion Carried

OTHER BUSINESS

OTHER
BUSINESS

The following informational items were distributed to Board Members:

1. Various newspaper articles regarding Schoharie Central School.
2. A letter from the State Education Department regarding a School Meals Initiative Review at Schoharie CSD, High School (Grades 7-12). The letter stated that currently, Schoharie CSD is meeting the needs of its students for all targets. This reflects well on the District’s dedication to the health and well being of the students.

President Spies stated that the next Board of Education Meetings will be as follows:

FUTURE MEETINGS

- Regular Meeting on January 7, 2009 at 7 pm in the High School Library Classroom
- Regular Meeting on January 21, 2009 at 7 pm in the High School Library Classroom

Motion was made by Mrs. Isles , seconded by Mr. Quandt to enter into Executive Session to discuss negotiations, contractual agreements and personnel matters relating to specific individuals.

EXECUTIVE
SESSION

Yes – 7
No – 0

Motion Carried

President Spies declared the meeting to be in recess at 8:52 p.m.

RECESS

The Executive Session came to order at 9:00 p.m. with Mr. Spies, Mr. Schlieder, Miss Wilber, Mrs. Isles, Mrs. Newell, Mrs. Schultz, Mr. Quandt, Superintendent Sherman, and Mr. Bonaker present.

EXECUTIVE
SESSION

Motion was made by Mrs. Isles, seconded by Miss Wilber to adjourn the Executive Session and return to the Regular meeting.

RECONVENE
MEETING

Yes – 7
No – 0

Motion Carried

President Spies reconvened the Regular Meeting at 10:09 pm.

Motion was made by Miss Wilber, seconded by Mr. Quandt to adjourn the meeting.

ADJOURN
MEETING

Yes – 7
No – 0

Motion Carried

President Spies declared the Regular Meeting of December 17, 2008 to be adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Wilber
District Clerk