SCHOHARIE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION

DATE:	MARCH 18, 2009
TIME & PLACE:	7:00 P.M. – JR. / SR. HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA
KIND OF MEETING:	REGULAR AND PUBLIC FORUM
ELECTED MEMBERS PRESENT:	ISLES, NEWELL (arr. @7:50 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:	STACEY ADAMS, JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL MARYELLEN GILLIS, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL LINDA NEVULIS, DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM & PUPIL SERVICES JAMIE ROCKHILL, DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS SHAWN GATHEN, SUPERVISOR OF BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS 1 MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE; 23 DISTRICT RESIDENTS; 55 STAFF MEMBERS; 9 STUDENTS

CALL TO ORDER

President Spies called the Regular Board of Education Meeting and Public Forum of March 18, 2009 to order at 7:08 p.m.

APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING ON 3/4//09

Motion was made by Mrs. Schultz, seconded by Miss Wilber to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting on March 4, 2009.

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

APPROVE MINUTES OF SPECIAL BID AWARDS MEETING ON 3/9//09

Motion was made by Mr. Quandt, seconded by Miss Wilber to approve the Minutes of the Special Bid Awards Meeting on March 9, 2009.

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

CALENDAR AND AGENDA

President Spies reviewed the Agenda. President Spies said there was a full agenda for the evening and there were no changes or additions.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT

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Reality Check

REALITY CHECK PRESENTATION

Superintendent Sherman introduced Ms. Becky Yung, Reality Check Coordinator from SUNY Cobleskill, NY. Reality Check is a program about exposing the deception marketing practices of tobacco companies and empowering young people to take a stand against them. Reality Check is not against smokers; it's about getting people to understand how tobacco companies manipulate youth into smoking and getting hooked.

Ms. Yung introduced area high school students Natalie Spiess (Sharon Springs), Dina DeCarlo (Cobleskill-Richmondville) and Samantha Johnson (Cobleskill Richmondville who distributed information to Members and gave a presentation on the Reality Check program.

At the conclusion of their presentation, the students gave Board Members a Tobacco Advertisement Free Magazine Resolution for their review and possible future action.

President Spies said that Members would review the Resolution and it would be discussed at a future date.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

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PRESENTATION - WELLNESS CHALLENGE

Superintendent Sherman introduced Jamie Rockhill, Athletic Director, and Carrie Brooks, Jr./Sr. High School teacher, who gave a presentation on a Wellness Challenge project that they have developed for all faculty and staff members. There are two parts to the challenge – Fitness and Weight Loss. Staff members can sign up for one or both. Ms. Brooks reported that 102 faculty and staff members have signed up for one or both challenges. They are divided into 14 groups of 6 for the weight loss challenge and 14 groups of 5 for the fitness challenge. The fitness challenge is to do physical activity outside of the work place and record the time and report it to their group. The weight loss challenge is watching your diet and is percentage of body weight loss, not pounds. The program is in conjunction with the Student Wellness Week, which is during prom week in May. Ms. Brooks said that they would like to possibly have students involved next year.

President Spies thanked Mr. Rockhill and Ms Brooks and said Board Members would like to hear the results.

Presentation of 2009-10 Tentative Budget

PRESENTATION OF 2009-10 TENTATIVE BUDGET

Superintendent Sherman and Mr. Bonaker gave a power-point presentation on the 2009-2010 tentative budget. The following is a summary of their presentation.

Factors impacting the 2009-2010 Budget

- The state budget "deficit reduction" amount (minus $549,000) the Governor proposed for SCS would result in the District receiving $169,000 less in state aid in 2009-10 than was budgeted for in 208-09.
- The result of the governor's proposal and the estimated cost increases created a budget gap between revenues and appropriations of approximately $909,000.

Major costs impacting the Budget

- Health Insurance premiums (rising 5%-10%)
- Retirement System contributions (ERS and TRS rate increases of 10%-30%)
- Contractual salary increases and associated Social Security/Medicare costs

Superintendent Sherman said it was important to keep in mind that revenues are estimates and are subject to change due to formula recalculations based on student enrollment/ actual attendance, and subsequent action by the Legislature in reaction to the Governor's aid to education proposal.

New items that were included in the February 4th Preliminary Budget

- Software Upgrade for Financial Management System: $24,000 (This is necessary
- for compliance with State Comptroller and independent auditor requirements.)
- Repair of both chimneys: $40,000
- Repair of playground/tennis court fence: $11,000
- Tractor lease/purchase: $12,000 each year for 3 years
- Local subsidy for the Food Service Budget: $25,000

The total of these items is $112,000 and would represent a 1.44% increase from the current 2008-09 tax levy.

Items requested that were not in the Preliminary Budget

- Lockers for the gymnasium in boys' locker room: $45,000
- Sealing of the parking lot: $20,000
- Grounds equipment: $6,800
- Time clock upgrades: $25,000
- Emergency access road paving: $15,000
- Equipment for cleaning operations: $7,000
- Equipment for bus garage: $10,000
- Additional instructional equipment: $20,000
- Modifications to Technology Lab: $6,000
- Upgraded equipment in Home and Careers: $7,000

What was reduced or eliminated in the Preliminary Budget?

- 3 Elementary School Teachers: $150,000 (includes benefits)
- 2 Teacher Assistants: $30,000 (includes benefits)
- 8 Curriculum Coordinators/Assistants: $30,000 (discontinue)
- Conferences/Seminars: $12,000 (50% reduction)
- Late Bus Routes: $16,000 (eliminate)
- Field Trips: $8,000 (50% reduction)
- Non-aided equipment: $19,000 (delete)
- Supplies: $5,000 (no "student supplies")
- Maintenance: $5,000 (no "non-essential" activities)
- Driver Education: $14,000 (salary and vehicle cost)
- Athletic Program: $20,000
    - Not recommending elimination of the JV program as there is instead a reduction in the number of contests and tournaments

The total of the above reductions/eliminations is $309,000 which represents 3.94% of the 2008-09 tax levy.

The following developments have occurred since the presentation of the Preliminary Budget on February 4th:

- Federal Stimulus Package: estimate of $145,693 that can be reduced from staff salary line items and paid in the Federal Funds Budget.
- Recalculation of tuition rates for BOCES students: estimate of $12,000 (that can be reduced from tuition line item)
- Recalculation of Finance Manager software system (a reduction of $9,670 in 2009-10)
- The District will bill another school district for their share of the cost of student transportation to Tech Valley High School (a revenue source of $6,004).
- Elimination of $47,000 in cost shifts for pre-school special education students based upon statements by our state legislators.

(Mrs. Newell arrived at 7:50 pm.)

The dollar impact of the above factors is $220,367 (reduces tax levy increase to 5.72%).

The total Tentative Budget is $19,989,347, which is a $413,186 (2.11%) increase from the 2008-09 budget that was approved by the voters. These are the major impact factors:

- Salary adjustments for employees: + $156,266
- Health Insurance for employees cost increase: + $166,423
- Debt Service Payments (buses and capital projects and tractor lease/purchase): + $76,681
- Subsidy for Food Service Program: + $25,000
- Repairs to Buildings/Grounds: + $51,000
- Energy costs are decreasing by - $23,000
- Non-BOCES Tuition Costs are decreasing by - $79,600
- Instructional program areas have been reduced by - $76,332

<u>2009-2010 Tax Levy Impact</u>

- The projection, at this time, is an approximate 5.72% increase in the tax levy, due to the Governor's proposal for a deficit reduction in the state budget, and the resulting take-away of aid from school districts.
- The preliminary tax levy increase would have been in the 2%-3% range, if the district were to receive the state aid according to the formulas in the current state law.
- We should have a clearer picture of the estimated revenues before the state-mandated deadline (April 23) for the Board to adopt the Proposed Budget.

Superintendent Sherman made note of the following key dates:

- Board adopts Proposed Budget between April 8th and April 23rd
- Public Hearing on Proposed Budget – May 6th
- Vote by public on Proposed Budget / Bus Purchases / 2 Board Seats – May 19th

This concluded Superintendent Sherman's presentation on the Tentative 2009-2010 Budget.

Public Forum PUBLIC FORUM

President Spies said the floor was open for the Public Forum at this time. The following comments / concerns were made by members of the audience:

- How many students from Schoharie Central are attending Tech Valley High School?
- Does the District transport students from other schools to Tech Valley?
- Would the Board consider eliminating sending students to Tech Valley?
- What is the approximate cost to educate a student enrolled at SCS?
- Concern that teachers won't be able to supply pencils and paper to students whose parents cannot afford to.
- Concern that students attending Tech Valley are already college-bound, and students attending a BOCES class are probably not college-bound (concern that BOCES classes would be cut)
- How many administrators are employed at Schoharie Central and how many live in the school district?
- How many teachers are employed at SCS? How many live in the District?
- How many non-instructional staff are employed at SCS? How many live in the District?
- Are the teachers paying any part of their health insurance?
- Has Superintendent Sherman met with all of the people who work at SCS to brainstorm with them on how to keep the taxes down? Would staff forego a raise to help with tax reduction?
- Is the cafeteria using local markets?
- There are 2 bills currently sitting in the Assembly: Circuit Breaker Bill and Progressive Income Tax Bill; Has the Board or Superintendent contacted Assemblyman Lopez or Senator Seward?
- What is the importance of purchasing a new tractor? Could the current one be repaired or possibly purchase a used one?
- Has the District looked at school bus routes? Could any be combined?
- Many teachers felt it was important to not cut the 3:30 late buses as it impacts many students who stay after school for extra help.

The following were responses to the above questions/concerns:

- There are currently 2 students from SCS attending Tech Valley.
- The District currently transports students from Berne-Knox-Westerlo (SCS bus passes by their school on the way to Tech Valley); however, SCS will be billing Berne-Knox for their half of the transportation costs.
- The approximate cost to educate per student is $9,000.
- There are 6.6 FTE Administrators; none live in the District
- There are 101 teachers employed by the District; 20 live in the District
- There are 102 non-instructional employees; 79 live in the District
- 88 teachers receive health insurance; 49 of them pay a portion of family coverage
- The Superintendent has not met with all employees. The budget is prepared with meetings between staff and administrators to recommend what is needed for their programs. The administrators then report this information to the Superintendent.
- Yes, the cafeteria is using local markets.
- Superintendent Sherman has much contact with both Assemblyman Lopez and Senator Seward.
- The current tractor would cost approximately $5,000 to repair. President Spies said that the Board will be further discussing on whether to purchase a new one or repair the old one.
- Superintendent Sherman said that bus routes have been looked at in the past, and will be looked at extensively for next year.
- Several Board Members felt that it was important to not cut the 3:30 late buses.

President Spies closed the forum at this time so that the Board could move on the remaining Agenda items. He said that further Budget discussion would take place later in the Meeting.

Universal Pre-K

PRESENTATION - UNIVERSAL PRE-K

Superintendent Sherman and Director Nevulis gave a Power-Point presentation on a Universal Pre-Kindergarten Proposal for Schoharie Central School. He said the primary purpose of this grant program is to provide four year old students with a universal opportunity to access high quality, pre-kindergarten programs that would prepare them for future school success. He said allocations are determined by a state aid formula using data supplied to the State Education Department by the District.

Superintendent Sherman said that the physical space in the classroom would be organized into the following 10 indoor interest areas:

- Blocks
- Dramatic Play
- Toys & Games
- Art
- Library
- Discovery
- Sand and Water
- Music and Movement
- Cooking
- Computers

A typical day for Universal Pre-Kindergarten is:

- Arrival / Breakfast (approximately 5-10 minutes later than K-12 students)
- Free play
- Large Group Circle
- Centers / Small Group Instruction
- Music and Movement
- Lunch
- Outdoor / Indoor Gross Motor Skills
- Large Group Summary of the Day
- Dismissal

Superintendent Sherman said that parents work as volunteers for the program and conferences are held monthly. Assessments are done on a regular basis and shared with parents throughout the year.

Funding and Staffing

- Pre-school planning grant - $15,000
- Pre-school funding ($74,000)
- Cooperative agreement with another agency such as Head Start
- Transportation done by contractor, not funded by school district
- Agency funds the lunch program
- A Schoharie Pre-School Teacher (mandatory)
- A second pre-school teacher not funded by the District.
- An aide funded by the District and another agency
- The District is the LEA and provides program supervision in cooperation with the selected agency.

Where do we go from here?

- An endorsement by the Board to proceed with planning
- A recommendation to develop an RFP for a cooperating agency/group
- Permission to begin utilizing the Pre-School Planning Grant

Marion Jaqueway, a district resident, asked if this program was just for socialization or if the children would actually be learning their ABC's and basic skills. She also wanted to know who would qualify for this program. Superintendent Sherman responded that the curriculum is State Education Department approved. He said the program is a Universal Pre-K so all 4 year olds in the District would be eligible at no charge.

Mrs. Isles asked if there were any costs incurred by the District. Superintendent Sherman said that he does not anticipate any incurred expenses other than the salary of the Pre-School Teacher. He also noted that the Schoharie teacher must be certified. He said he would like to see the program start in September.

President Spies said he was skeptical that the District can operate the program without any cost at all. Superintendent Sherman said that based on the cost of the teacher's salary and benefits, plus setting up the classroom and paying one half the cost of the aid with no benefits is within the budget.

President Spies felt that it was a big "leap", but if it were feasible to do it cost-free and we could try it on an experimental basis, he would support it. There was a concern, however, if the expense would grow down the road.

Mr. Bonaker pointed out that the UPK program is operated in the Special Aid Fund Budget, and not the General Fund School Budget.

Mrs. Schultz said there was a need in the community as there are so few pre-school programs offered in the community. She feels that socialization is extremely important.

Mrs. Jan Baptiste, a first grade teacher, said that so many students come into Kindergarten who have not been exposed to books. She said that if they enter without knowing letters or letter sounds, they are lost from the start as reading is introduced in Kindergarten.

Mr. Quandt asked Superintendent Sherman if he was looking for a vote this evening. Superintendent Sherman said he is looking for an endorsement to start the planning process.

Superintendent Spies said that there were staff contractual issues that needed to be resolved before committing to the program.

Motion was made by Mr. Quandt, seconded by Mrs. Isles to authorize the Superintendent and Mrs. Nevulis to begin utilizing the Pre-School Planning Grant.

AUTHORIZE MRS. NEVULIS AND SUPERINTENDENT TO BEGIN UTILIZING THE PRE-SCHOOL PLANNING GRANT

Yes – 6
No – 1 (Wilber) Motion Carried

PERSONNEL – INSTRUCTIONAL

Motion was made by Mr. Quandt, seconded by Mrs. Schultz that the Board of Education accept the recommendation of Superintendent Sherman to appoint Ted Popolizio and add his name to the Certified Substitute List, effective 3/19/09.

APPOINT T. POPOLIZIO CERTIFIED SUBSTITUTE

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

PERSONNEL – NON-INSTRUCTIONAL

CHANGE JOB TITLES FROM CLEANER TO CUSTODIAN

Motion was made by Mrs. Schultz, seconded by Mrs. Isles that the Board of Education accept the recommendation of Superintendent Sherman to change the job titles of the following individuals from Cleaners to Custodians, effective 3/19/09, serving an 8-week probationary period, with hours to remain consistent with the current schedule: Superintendent Sherman explained that all four individuals recently passed their Civil Service Test.

1. Keith Cross
2. Patrick Lamont
3. Belinda Liddle
4. Cheryl Price

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

APPOINT NON-CERTIFIED SUBSTITUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Quandt, seconded by Mrs. Isles that the Board of Education accept the recommendation of Superintendent Sherman to appoint the following individuals and add their names to the Non-Certified Substitute List, effective 3/19/09:

1. Shawn VanGasbeck
2. Karen Hotaling-Baker

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

BUSINESS

TREASURER'S REPORT

Motion was made by Mrs. Newell, seconded by Mr. Quandt that the Board of Education approve the Treasurer's Report for February 2009. (copy attached to official Minutes).

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

President Spies said Member received a Revenue/Budget Status Report in their information packets.

CLAIMS WARRANT #9

The Board received the report of the Claims Auditor for Warrant #9 in the amount of $466,963.00.

CSE, CPSE AND/OR 504 RECOMMENDATION

Motion was made by Mr. Schlieder, seconded by Mrs. Isles that the Board of Education accept the recommendation of the Committees and approve the authorization of funds to implement the special education program services and placements consistent with such recommendations regarding the following students:

1. #09352 Initial Eligibility Determination Meeting
2. #09847 Requested Review
3. #0259 Requested Review
4. #9006 Amendment – Agreement No Meeting
5. #0191 Requested Review
6. #0190 Requested Review
7. #9907 Requested Review
8. #00155 Requested Review
9. #0271 Initial Eligibility Determination Meeting
10. #0270 Requested Review

CSE (cont.)

11. #0272 Initial Eligibility Determination Meeting
12. #0204 Amendment – Agreement No Meeting
13. #0177 Amendment – Agreement No Meeting
14. #0184 Requested Review

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

WAIVE 1st READING PROPOSED POLICY #6421 EMPLOYEE PERSONAL IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Motion was made by Miss Wilber seconded by Mrs. Isles that the Board of Education waive the 1st reading of proposed new policy #6421 – Employee Personal Identifying Information and refer it for action at the next meeting on April 8, 2009.

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

APPROVE LEGAL NOTICE FOR ANNUAL VOTE ON SCHOOL BUDGET AND BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER ELECTION

Motion was made by Mr. Quandt, seconded by Mrs. Isles that the Board of Education approve the Legal Notice for the Annual Vote on School Budget and Board of Education Member Election on May 19, 2009.

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

APPROVE USE OF FACILITIES – MAGIC AAU BASKETBALL CLUB

Motion was made by Mrs. Isles, seconded by Mrs. Schultz that the Board of Education approve a Use of Facilities Request from Magic AAU Basketball Club for the High School Gym on Tuesdays and Thursdays, March – June, 2009 (when baseball teams are not using gym).

Mrs. Newell asked if insurance was required for this club; Mr. Gathen responded that they already have the insurance.

It was also pointed out that school events normally held in the auditorium/theatre will move to the high school gym while the construction project is underway. These activities will take precedence over all non-school activities.

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

APPROVE HEALTH/ WELFARE SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH SCOTIA-GLENVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL

Motion was made by Mrs. Schultz, seconded by Miss Wilber that the Board of Education approve the Health/Welfare Services Agreement with Scotia-Glenville Central Schools, effective for the 2008-2009 School Year.

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

APPROVE REQUEST ODYSSEY OF THE MIND TO ATTEND STATE COMPETITION IN BINGHAMTON, NY 4/4/09

Motion was made by Mr. Schlieder, seconded by Mrs. Newell that the Board of Education approve the request for the Odyssey of the Mind team to attend State Competition in Binghamton, NY on April 4, 2009.

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

The District will pay approximately $125.00 for overnight accommodations for Mr. Vosburgh (coach for the high school team) and for Mrs. Antonovich (Odyssey of the Mind Coordinator). There will be no cost for transportation.

BUGET DISCUSSION (cont.)

Budget discussion resumed. Board Members asked Superintendent Sherman and Mr. Bonaker to provide information on the following items:

- Put 3:30 late buses back in budget
- More information on staff cuts
  - Discussion about what programs will be cut with the teachers being cut
  - Anticipated classroom sizes
- More discussion on Tech Valley students (It was noted that there were 3 students in the budget)
- Mr. Quandt – Concern that only extra-curricular activity seeing reductions is athletics.
- Mr. Schlieder – Would like a list of courses and electives offered in the high school that are not mandated.
- High School electives by enrollment
- List of clubs and how many participants in each
- President Spies – other potential areas for discussion – fuel, health insurance, electricity

OTHER BUSINESS

OTHER BUSINESS

The following informational items were distributed to Board Members:

- Various newspaper articles regarding Schoharie Central School.
- Capital Region BOCES Early Edition March Newsletter

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

FUTURE MEETINGS

- Regular Meeting and Budget Adoption on April 8, 2009 at 7 pm in the High School Library Classroom
- Regular Meeting and BOCES Budget Vote on Monday, April 20, 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 10:40 p.m.

RECESS

The Executive Session came to order at 10:45 p.m. with Mrs. Isles, Mrs. Newell, Mr. Quandt, Mr. Schlieder, Mrs. Schultz, President Spies, Miss Wilber, Superintendent Sherman, and Mr. Bonaker present.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Mr. Quandt, seconded by Mrs. Isles 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 11:34 pm.

Motion was made by Mr. Schlieder, seconded by Mr. Quandt to adjourn the meeting. ADJOURN MEETING

Yes – 7
No – 0 Motion Carried

President Spies declared the Regular Meeting and Public Forum of March 18, 2009 to be adjourned at 11:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Wilber
District Clerk