

*IT IS THE MISSION OF THE SCHODACK CENTRAL SCHOOLS
to develop our students to become "...active, reflective, creative learners. In our schools, they will engage in rewarding work and practice behaviors that are intelligent in both an academic and a practical sense. Students will develop the attitudes, skills and understandings that will allow them to fulfill their potential and to function successfully in their individual and social roles."*

SCHODACK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
1216 Maple Hill Road, Castleton, New York 12033-1699

October 12, 2011

Maple Hill Middle School Library

Present: J. Andrew Fleck, President, Michael Hiser, Vice President, Paul Puccio, Christine DiGiulio, Lisa Lafferty and Mary Yurista.

Also Present: Robert Horan, Monica Kim, Donna Watson, Ron Agostinoni, Michael Bennett, Jason McCord and Michele Reickert.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES – WORKSHOP

1. Meeting called to order by Board President, J. Andrew Fleck at 6:09 p.m.
2. President Fleck asked everyone to stand for The Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Lisa Lafferty moved for approval of present agenda. Michael Hiser seconded. All present in favor.
4. Approval of minutes of regular meeting: None
5. Reports:
 - a. **Workshop – Finalizing 2011-12 District Goals**

Robert Horan welcomed Jason McCord and said that Jason is going to have a major part in the District's communication plan. He went on to say that he has been gathering information from Board of Education and Administrative Retreats and that there are 4 District Goals, they relate to the Vision and the District goals. They allow administrators objectives to run their buildings and allow teachers to come up with ideas on how they want to proceed with the year. Michael Hiser had said he wants to see great teaching being showcased. We need to encourage teachers to brag. We want to be positive with the tough times we are facing. We will talk about common themes in faculty meetings. In the elementary school, we already have teachers working together. The other day, I was at CES and saw that Mrs. Ciampoli and Mrs. Charsky had opened the divider to their classrooms and were working together with their classes. Michael Hiser questions goal #2 and who was going to be collaborating. Robert Horan answered everyone, faculty, staff, community, and the district as a whole. Lisa Lafferty questioned the word "unforeseen" after much talking it was decided to use unpredictable instead of unforeseen.
 - b. **Workshop – Tax Cap Community Communication Plan**

Robert Horan and Monica Kim gave a presentation sharing information gained from

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numerous training sessions they have attended on the Tax Cap Threshold and on how to properly educate our community. The District needs to use their (the government) language "Tax Cap Threshold". The Board needs to meet with community groups, Kiwanis, Rotary, PTO's, booster clubs, etc. and give presentations so the public is educated on how the tax cap works. We want the public involved now, not just when we start working on the budget and people get angry. We need to hear from the public now.

i. Topics of concern:

1. It does not mean all taxpayers will see a 2% cap on their Tax Rate.
2. Tax Rates are adjusted based on total assessment of property within the district.
3. District is currently in litigation with two of its largest tax contributors.
4. If their assessments are reduced, the remaining assessments are spread out over all other remaining tax contributors.
5. The property tax cap limits the school district levy NOT the individual bill of resident taxpayers.
6. The formula allows for certain expenses to be exempt from the cap therefore allowing the total levy increase to be greater than the perceived cap.
7. Municipalities can exceed the "tax cap" by getting 60% of their elected officials to vote in favor of doing so. For example: 3 of a 5 member municipality board is considered the 60% required to override. If that happens and Town taxes increase it could displease residents and they could take it out on the budget they do get to vote on – school budgets.
8. Board of Education can present a budget that "overrides" the cap but will need 60% voter approval.
9. Voters are still approving a spending plan, NOT a tax levy.
10. The education community has many unanswered questions.

It is important that we understand what every line of the formula means and make it understandable to everyone. Based on current information, it starts with the 2011-12 Tax Levy. ORPS determines a growth rate that we have to use and it is given based on when your fiscal year ends. Paul Puccio asked "when will that be"? We will get our growth rate in January. Other things affecting the formula are PILOT payments, exemptions from this year and last year, pensions, which are already over the 2% cap. There are still a lot of unknowns. We don't know our 2011-12 State Aid let alone our 2012-13 Building Aid. As debt goes down, aid goes down. School districts have so many variables it makes it difficult. We have lost our railroad funding of approximately \$22,000, our education jobs fund is gone which funded almost 6 teachers, and there will be no ARRA funds in 2012-13. Andrew Fleck and Paul Puccio express that the district and Board have to be sure people understand the differences and the formulas of Tax Rate, Tax Levy and Tax Impact as well as PILOT, some people are not going to understand the meanings. Michael Hiser expressed that it is also important to show the decline in State Aid down from 8,336,104 in 2008-09 to 6,864,386 in 2011-12. We have had to use fund balance every year, right now we only have approximately 2 years in

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fund balance, when school districts run out of fund balance, they are broke. It used to be said a school district could not go bankrupt, but they are not saying that anymore. We need to think about each audience, a Senior Citizen looks at it different than a parent with elementary students would as well as an empty nester. A decrease in budget 3 years in a row is unheard of but this district did it and now it is going to be difficult. If the Superintendent goes to the legislature alone it isn't strong but if the Superintendent, a Board member and a parent go together, there is strength. We need our community to support us. All districts have to be on the same page giving their community the same information, people talk to each other. The Board asked what about a district that has more than one town within their district. That question has been asked and there is no answer yet. While people are in favor of a "Tax Cap", they need to understand the impact on the school district.

6. Board Discussion: The Tax Cap presentation included Board discussion. Paul Puccio talked about his first CES Planning Meeting; he said it was good for him. The meeting talked about the changes at CES: Common Core Standard, APPR, Block Scheduling, Teacher Assistant distribution, and time spent on specials, associating social studies and science. We need to take these and look at what is going on and how to spend time on issues and setting building goals. Issues are inter-related. Teacher Assistants being assigned by task rather than grade and dealing with things they are not trained for. One thing the Board will not give up on is the impact of change. We need to see how we can use the changes positively for the school. Paul Puccio also talked about a group of people from Schodack and surrounding towns who would like to develop a sports complex on Route 9 behind Delz Dogs. It would be a building approximately 120,000 square feet in size, dome or steel structure with soccer, batting cages, lacrosse, volleyball, etc. It's not about what the complex is worth but what it draws. Robert Horan comments on the number of these complexes located on the other side of the river. They draw activities day and night. There is nothing on this side of the river like this. There is the potential to draw hotels, restaurants etc.
7. Meeting open for public discussion: Laura Cook expressed that the complex information was interesting and asked if it was the Hart family that owns the land. Paul Puccio answered yes.
8. Policies: None
9. Consent agenda
 - a. Christine DiGiulio moved to accept a donation from Schodack Castleton Community Partnership in the amount of \$1,200.00 in support of the community charities account for summer tutoring for sixth (6th) grade students. Paul Puccio seconded. All present in favor.
 - b. Christine DiGiulio moved for approval of a resolution authorizing the District Treasurer to increase the general fund in the amount of \$1,200.00 by a donation from Schodack Castleton Community Partnership in support of the community charities account. Paul Puccio seconded. All present in favor.

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- c. Christine DiGiulio moved for approval of Twelfth Grade English textbooks “The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction” for implementation beginning 2011-12 school year. Paul Puccio seconded. All present in favor.
 - d. Christine DiGiulio moved for approval of Tenth through Twelfth Grade Astrobiology textbooks “Life in the Universe” for implementation beginning 2011-12 school year. Paul Puccio seconded. All present in favor.
10. Resignations/Appointments
- a. Paul Puccio moved for approval of Lisa M. Beerle (certification: Visual Arts) as regular substitute teacher for Janel Gregoire, effective September 16, 2011. Christine DiGiulio seconded. All present in favor.
 - b. Paul Puccio moved for approval of Theresa Hovish (certification: Visual Arts) as regular substitute teacher for Janel Gregoire, effective September 7, 2011. Christine DiGiulio seconded. All present in favor.
 - c. Paul Puccio moved for approval of substitute teacher(s): Patricia M. McCarthy, Jessica Coutsonikas, and Amanda Novak. Christine DiGiulio seconded. All present in favor.
11. Meeting open for public discussion: None
12. Michael Hiser moved to enter executive session to discuss personnel and legal matters. Christine DiGiulio seconded. Entered executive session at 8:10 pm.
13. Action items: What the Board needs to know as a Board and specifically what they want from administration about change.
14. Adjournment: Having no further business before the board, Christine DiGiulio motioned to adjourn. Lisa Lafferty seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.