

Date: 5/20/99
To: Members, BOE
From: Chris Manaseri
Subject: Backup for 2nd May Meeting

We have a budget! *Essentially nothing else matters (at least as much as that), so the rest of this memo is peripheral. But please read it anyway and we'll see if we can't have a good and productive (and it looks like SHORT) meeting on Tuesday.*

NON AGENDA ITEMS:

1.0 Budget passed by close to two to one despite a slight turnout. If I were you, especially if I were one of the four incumbents returned to office unopposed, I would read this as a sign of satisfaction with a job being well done in the governance of the community's school.

Congratulations on the endorsement of your leadership and efforts that this vote represents. Now on to the task of implementing the budget in next year's program.

2.0 Speaking of that, your current **superintendent will be staying put** for a while unless you determine otherwise, to help in that implementation. Emailed all of you as soon as I heard that Mike Ford had been offered the job in Phelps. He is an excellent candidate and well fitted to the tasks that Board has lined up for itself in terms of improved instruction. This also means that I get to worry about RAITN, the computer conversion, the capital project and the CBO, as well as any new things you guys come up with for the last school year of the century, indeed the millennium.

3.0 Spent most of the day on Wednesday **interviewing potential School Business Officials to share with Waterloo** as part of our CBO arrangement. Gary Alger, Sharon Price of the City of Rochester Schools, and Gary Texido of Port Byron were the three finalists, all of whom had experience as school business officials. We have offered the position to Gary Alger and I expect to know later today if he accepts. His salary will show up in our BOCES bill and he will help with State Aid claims, making sure the CBO actually works, and with the capital project financing. I will also ask that he handle our insurance billing, investment advising and other required paperwork-type duties. I will continue to expect to do budget development and supervision of staff in non-instructional areas. We will be very well positioned to explore arbitrage borrowing and reserves which I have shied away from, with a more experienced and specialized person on board. They say a good business manager can save his own salary in a year, and I expect Gary will help us do that and more.

4.0 BOCES crew is here doing cable pulling for the computer switch-over.

5.0 Transportation/ reception office is moved, thanks to Terry and crew, with a minimum of turmoil. Terry did an outstanding job orchestrating a mid-year construction/renovation and office relocation, and we are now ready to begin demo in what will become the secondary office, so that that move can occur as early in the summer as possible. We are buying new furniture for Bonnie and Gloria and having it delivered to the county office building directly to help with that move.

6.0 Leanne is back a few hours per day and is working with Donna on making sure we catch up some from the past two months. Plan is to continue this arrangement through June or until Leanne is back to full-time capability.

7.0 Spent this morning in South Seneca visiting with Doug Chappell about summer driver ed, shared special ed, and exploring other sharing possibilities. Upshot is that we are now all set to have two teachers for the summer driver ed program again (some phone calls and leg work required on this- but we picked up Steve DeMatties from Seneca Falls when they cut him for the summer job in their budget reductions). We had thought that we might not be invited to

participate this year because one of the SS teachers backed out. Situation resolved. Barb and I will plan to meet with South Seneca and Trumansburg's Superintendents and CSE chairs next Friday to review the shared option III class we sent two kids to this year and to discuss any other special ed sharing we might wish to entertain. Total net cost for these two kids was only \$11,000 compared to twice that at BOCES, and they were serviced within our county.

This discussion turned into a very good sharing session. They have a Distance Learning Lab equipped now the way Tburg does - without the RAITN connection, but capable of interacting with us. They are exploring a capital project which might include a new bus garage, which we might want to look at sharing if it meant that we could go to two shifts and provide better service and coverage. They are also talking about a wish list of a swimming pool and middle school building and wanted to know if we had any interest in sharing program that fully. I suggested that the committee that was formed to discuss merger last year might be activated to discuss shared services such as these instead. We'll see. Bottom line - the door is open for discussion of even more sharing than we currently do.

That discussion even went as far as the potential for shared CSE chair and Athletic Directors - something that would allow us to devote more of our instructional leaders' time to instruction and standards. We'll see...

8.0 Speaking of sharing, Randy Bos and I discussed a shared approach to special ed for the county once again, and I have volunteered to try to coordinate a meeting of the four superintendents at a minimum to explore interest in creating a county-wide special ed sharing model as an alternative to the high cost and long distance of these placements at BOCES. This would be a long-range thing - nothing for next year, maybe not even for the year after. Shame of it all is that it would make perfect sense to split our special education population up as neighbors and each take a piece of the puzzle instead of each of us having to provide everything to everybody. These peripheral areas with small student populations are where bigger districts have the advantage organizationally over us little guys.

9.0 Traffic brought to you by the local prison development has spurred some concern in town for the speed limits near the school. Enclosed are copies of correspondence regarding same. I suggest we wait to get the report of DOT's survey of existing conditions, and then consider a crosswalk with monitor as a needed precaution in order to get a reduced speed limit. This in case anyone asks you about the action taken on the two complaints I've received.

10.0 Speaking of complaints: There were some about a story written by a 4th grader in the elementary literary magazine. Barb has handled this and continues to do so, offering parents the opportunity to approach the issues they have through PTA. Under normal circumstances I doubt there would've been a raised eyebrow, but with Columbine less than two weeks old at the time of our release of this annual publication, some nerves were raw. I believe Barb has handled the situation extremely well and with a great deal of sensitivity for all parties. This broke the night of our Meet the Candidates and was dealt with immediately. Copy of Barb's letter to elementary parents is enclosed FYI.

11.0 Drug Task Force approach- please see a copy of my memo to the other Seneca County supes on Dave Craig's successes at Hobart and William Smith with using data such as that garnered on the drug survey to demonstrate positive behavior changes. The website is outstanding and offers a clear view of what we might be able to do on a county-wide basis in cooperation with HWS students and our own kids. We have the technology, what better way to use it?

This could become a real 4-school partnership with the local colleges that could be a national model. Dave's work has been published and replicated at the college level already. A high school program in conjunction would be novel and noteworthy.

12.0 Please see attached **invitation to Sally Covert's Employer Appreciation Reception June 9 at the Holiday Inn**. Sally has done an outstanding job marshaling community support for the School to Work effort locally and she could use your support in saying thank you to these good people. (By the way, a sharing of Sally was one of the other things Doug Chappell and I discussed this morning.)

13.0 Elementary Musical is this weekend! (I will be out of town becoming a godfather in Virginia).

14.0 On a **personal note** - we hope to finalize Mia's adoption on Friday the 28th at 11:30. I'll be taking a few hours off.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1.0 Presentation on a potential "Romulus Foundation" by committee members Pete Gregoire (school physician and former RCS Board Pres) and Bruce Fullem (Superintendent of Sampson and Seneca Lake State Parks) will ask you to consider fronting some money from end of year 1999 funds to pay a consultant to work with a group of community members in forming a Foundation to receive charitable contributions in the name of the school and its students. Below are some of the words used to keep you up to speed on this development from the past two Board packets.

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9.0 Foundation Group Update: *Jim Delia and Pete Gregoire have honchoed getting a small group together that may be interested in starting a "Romulus Foundation". Mike Karlsen, Liz Larzelere, Mike and Mary Midey, Bruce Fullem, Carole Waite and I have met a couple of times on this, most recently this past Monday night, when we heard a presentation from Ken Grounds of the McCormack Group, a consulting firm specializing in non-profit foundations. The local group had asked me to find some information for them and so I had attended a workshop sponsored by ASBO on the topic in Syracuse two weeks ago, where I met Ken who was putting on that presentation. I asked if he would come make a pitch to us and he did. When the local group meets again April 26th at 7 in room 200, we'll see what they want to do next. Thought you as a Board should know about this discussion-stage activity just in case anything comes of it. The Foundation would collect contributions, have its own Board of Directors and make donations to the school and/or kids. Canandaigua and Clifton have them currently and Bloomfield is developing one.*

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7.0 Foundation Group *will meet at 7:00 PM the night of the budget vote in Cindy Drexler's room to discuss reference checks on the McCormick Group, consultants who specialize in helping Districts get these things going. Jim Delia, Pete Gregoire, Carol Waite, Madeline Preston, Mary Midey, Bruce Fullem, and Mike Karlsen are the ongoing members of this group. You should be forewarned that if they like what they hear from other small rural communities who have worked with these people, that they may approach you to invest \$15,000- \$20,000 for consultant fees to jump start a non-profit charitable group known as something like The Romulus Foundation, to which people with money to give away will do just that. Pete Gregoire got the ball rolling on this as a logical outgrowth of the goodwill involved in the RCS@60 project, and I volunteered Jim Delia as a respected faculty member to represent the in-house party line. They've met three or four times now and have heard a sales pitch from Kenneth Grounds, a consultant whose work I saw at a workshop recently in Syracuse. Premise would be to*

accumulate a quarter of a million dollars in donations (down the road) and give away the interest from that in perpetuity, either in scholarships or funding for special projects.

Pete and Bruce will ask you to consider hiring Kenneth Grounds of the McCormick Group to do for us what the group has done elsewhere very successfully in forming a non-profit charitable trust which gives back to the school, its teachers and its students.

Enclosed is a copy of some material from Ken Grounds including a sample proposal for the work he would do with us. The committee will NOT ask you to make a decision to fund anything tonight! They do want to bring the topic to you for your consideration in time for you to act on it with end of year funds at one of your next two meetings **SHOULD YOU WISH TO DO SO**.

Who knows? This could be the next major project we undertake (like RCS@60).

2.0 In approving the Clerk's report you will accept the election results with which this memo began. A significant thing to do.

3.0 Swim program approval should be pro forma.

4.0 Barb and Mike will update you as to how the rush toward the end of the year is going.

5.0 We have **two personnel actions** to take at this time.

6.0 CSE is busy with end of year annual reviews as well.

There... that should do it. Looks like a short a meeting....

PS - I confirmed with Harvey Kaufman that the Rural Schools Conference presentation I do on our docushare use will include a live internet feed. I'm going to show off our Board of Ed Collection to other people. You may want to actually post a message or two on the bulletin board sometime so it doesn't look all one way (even if it is). Thanks.

CM/CM

Attachments