

Date: 6/2/99
To: Members, Board of Education
From: Chris Manasari
Subject: June 8 Meeting

It's June and we're into figuring how much money we have left and preparing for next year. So far so good, as you will see.

NON AGENDA ITEMS:

1.0 Capital Project: In reaction to some downturned faces around here about the prospects of getting anything done at all this summer on our capital project, I called Albany last week to check on the status of our approval. The good news is that Dr. Mike Mirsky, our project manager, says they started on them on April 8 and plan to have them done circa June 8. That would put us receiving approval before this month is out, and potentially issuing bids before then as well. Given a favorable turn around on bids by the end of July, we might be able to start some things this summer! I took that as very favorable news and am starting to get anxious about getting hands dirty again on a building project. No official word yet, but certainly a much brighter picture than I had imagined. We will be working around things by Fall for sure!

I also called Suzanne Spear's office about the certificate of apportionment of aid (the money), and she told me she would hand carry the paperwork upstairs if necessary to be of assistance to us. (Suzanne is on the Executive Committee of the Rural Schools Board with me - see, all that time out of office at meetings DOES pay off!)

2.0 Computer Replacement: The BOCES boys are pulling cable and we are on track for the summer conversion to ethernet from token ring. This will also include the upgrade to Windows 95 on all teacher and lab workstations, except the reused older machines in the library and guidance offices (which will still do everything they can now including word-processing and internet searching, the functions we have in mind for them). Donovan Lopez, our project coordinator, says we will have no problem being complete for end of summer. The money for this is already on our BOCES bill, and comes from the underexpenditure of special ed placements at BOCES this year. Remember that we will generate an additional \$100,000 in BOCES aid in 2000-01 because of this improvement now.

3.0 RAITN Lab is on schedule for summer installation as well. I spoke with Holly Sharp about holding our bill until June 25, so that we might have SED building plan approvals in time to make us legal. We have several kids signed up for courses and we're looking forward to being fully operational in September. I have issued a PO on the capital fund to allow them to order equipment, although technically we should have SED approval first. If you want to make sure that lab is functional by September, though, I needed to move on it ahead of schedule.

4.0 CBO plans are in full swing. Rhonda met with the implementation crew and Superintendents on Tuesday to make certain we would be okay technology wise. There is some concern that the workers are behind schedule in putting up walls, etc., and that we might have to wait until July 12 to actually move. Larry Driscoll assured us that he would exert pressure to get the installation crew back on schedule for a June 28 move date.

I had Bonnie and Gloria order new desks and chairs and had them shipped directly to the CBO. They also will have a laser printer to keep up with the Joneses. This should help expedite the move, and allow them to feel better about their new digs.

5.0 Gary Alger will be appointed by the BOCES Board June 14 as a shared business official between Romulus and Waterloo, in place of John Baker, as we enter the CBO (see attached from Randy and me to Larry). I am very excited about the experience and the personal attributes Gary will bring to our districts and hope you are, too. I will ask him to come to Board

meetings on occasion, to brief you on business and CBO matters, including one in July to introduce himself to those of you he has not met. While Mike Renee will still be in charge of the CBO proper, I have informed Gary that his chief function with us at the start will be to make sure that the CBO works for Romulus. After that we'll be into the capital project, state reports, and budget planning.

6.0 Terry has things started on the conversion of the business office to the secondary/guidance suite, with demo begun last week. David is furniture shopping for computer space for kids to use, and things seem to be going along well with this move.

7.0 Expenditure Report and Fund Balance Projection show us ending the year in the black (thankfully - I NEVER want to be in a position to tell a Board otherwise), and allows us to make some plans around expenditures of currently unexpended funds. We do shuffle the deck at the end of each year, and I'd like to spend some time on how we might do that this year to afford three things: the capital project zero-tax impact you asked for in November; the replacement of cafeteria tables with round folding tables; and the potential for affording the consultant discussed last time out.

As of the end of May, with only one month of the fiscal year left, it appears that we will underspend our 98-99 budget by some \$447,954. That's 7.9% of the adjusted budget. That means we should end up spending on all the things it took to run the place this year, INCLUDING the computer upgrade from special ed savings, a little more than 92% of the adjusted budget.

If we want to make the capital project zero tax impact as promised in November, we need to move \$98,500 into the capital account from the general fund. \$25,000 of that was our Nozzolio money and the rest we said would come from salary breakage and unanticipated Federal Impact Aid. This is a given and will appear on the agenda. To NOT do what we said we would and could would be a grave error and a courting of disaster with the public whose money this really is. After we do this, we have \$349,457 unexpended, or 6.2% of the current year adjusted budget. (Meaning after we keep that promise, we still only spend 94% of the budget.)

Barb and Mike and I want to change the cafeteria into a more inviting environment and tried out a circular folding table with attached seating much to the students' appreciation earlier this spring. We would like to spend \$26,000 replacing all of the current seating arrangement with these more appealing tables. If we do that, now we're at \$323,457 or 5.7% unexpended.

Add to this the cost of a consultant to handle organizing a Foundation effort at \$22,000 over 18 months, and we come to \$301,457 or 5.3%. That leaves us spending only 94.7% of what we planned to spend AND doing the capital project at no cost, upgrading the computers and the cafeteria seating, and starting a foundation.

This also leaves us dipping into the fund balance by only \$35,000, after losing anticipated State aid and not going through with a \$50,000 budget transfer from debt service that we have every right to do (but which would only add to our excess fund balance by \$15,000). Bottom line? We can do a lot of good things for the district with money we have the authority to spend, but lacked the need to in executing the 98-99 budget. The question I pose to you is... Why not?

With our budget anticipating rolling over only \$299,000 to reduce taxes in 99-2000, we are still left with close to a 7% unallocated fund balance, exceeding the 2% legal limit by a healthy 5% margin. This is your financial picture as I see it, so you know.

Now we need to talk about some items...

AGENDA ITEMS:

1.0 Honor Society Induction conflicts with our start time, so I suggest we attend it and hold our meeting afterward. Mike should be there, Tom and Norm should be there, so why not as

many of the rest of us as can make it? These are our finest - scholarship, character, leadership and service - so being there to watch them receive this honor is an appropriate thing to do for a Board of Education.

2.0 Textbook presentation: Alan Gelatt has offered to come to present the textbook he wishes to change to for Earth Science in the 99-2000 budget. We have done this several ways before, but it's nice to have a teacher at the table to help us understand the whys and wherefores of the selection he recommends.

3.0 Routine should be.

4.0 The question is put before you. **Do you wish to use the McCormick Group to help organize a foundation** to benefit the school and the kids? I emailed Ken Grounds about his availability to do a conference call on Tuesday the 8th and he's with another client that evening. He could do one on the 22nd if you'd rather wait. Judging by the discussion last time, we would choose to do this if money were not an issue. The diatribe above tries to convince you that it's not. So, I ask the question...

Attached is a one page summary of the proposal distributed to you last time along with a copy of an email response from Ken to my question about the feasibility of such a project here in Mayberry. I will give Ken, you and the committee that actually does this my wholehearted support, time and devotion if this is a direction you wish us to go.

If you want to table to hear from Ken Grounds via teleconference next time out, that would be preferable to a flat no at this time. I did call Marc Reitz, our attorney, and he does not see any legality issues with establishing such a contract.

5.0 Our auditors tell us we need to **transfer funds from our Tax Certiorari Reserve** officially by Board action to cover an adjustment of \$9,412.85 from the ConRail settlement. I ask that you approve same.

6.0 As alluded to above, we need to move some **money from the general fund to the capital fund** to make the capital project pay for itself. We told the public, at your suggestion last Fall, that we had enough money in our reserve and on hand (thanks to salary savings and excess revenues from Federal Impact Aid) to make the capital project "tax neutral." This is that money. We need to move it from one account to another to pay the bills for the capital project appropriately. This transfer does that.

7.0 Authorization to allow the Red Cross to use our buildings and grounds in case of emergency needs renewal. This should be a "no-brainer."

8.0 Barb and Mike will update you further on our Adventures in Assessment Land and other items.

9.0 Janice and Steve Hyde are in the process of adopting three children of Vietnamese heritage and **Janice has requested a child rearing leave** for next year. This is a wonderful opportunity for her to spend time with the children she hopes to bring to our school! Please support her in this process by a speedy approval of her request.

10.0 We have several **personnel items** some of which are easy , some a tad harder and more involved. With trying to get July's first payroll to come out right, we need some input.

- **Angel Kreiger** currently works for us as an aide, and could easily substitute when needed at a higher rate of pay.
- **Summer hires** are something we've been happy with for several years now.
- **Barb Quinn and Mike Midey** should have actual contracts in hand for their reference, even though we have budgeted salaries for them at \$65,000 and \$60,000 respectively.

BOE BACKUP

- Other non-affiliated personnel include **Terry Mays** (for whom we did a three year contract a year ago including three years' worth of salary), **Leanne** and **me**.

Leanne has requested that we honor her achievement of SBA (school business) certification through the Brockport CAS program by changing her from a Civil Service Administrative Assistant to a certified Administrative Assistant. Same job title, different retirement system plus the opportunity to use three years of service in such a position to achieve certification as a regular school administrator down the road. In her discussions with me about this, I have made it very clear that we are not in a position at Romulus to create an administrative position for her, but this would serve as a launching pad for her in her search for such a position elsewhere, sometime. I suggest we have her pick up personnel functions left back by the CBO and that her pay be established at \$36,000 for this (currently \$33,500) This is not on the agenda as we have not had the chance to discuss this yet, but I would hope to have an executive session for this and other items.

Me. I have budgeted a figure showing a 3% raise for me (to \$80,546), although you might want to discuss a potential arrangement for laundering funds into a foundation if you form one. For example, you might give me a salary increase higher than budgeted which I would contribute to the foundation after taxes. It would take some figuring, but it could be done - and maybe it should wait for a year to see if there's anything to contribute to, but it is a thought to get some kick off dollars in there early. Or you might want to look at salary anyway just to be nice...(since the \$2,296 dollar amount is less than anyone else non-affiliated being proposed). Also not on the agenda on purpose.

In a not-quite unaffiliated category, I'd like to add the following for **executive session discussion** for potential action next time.

Marcy Bennett and Cindy Waugh, our two "typists" to the principals were brought to my attention at the last Labor Management Relations Committee meeting. We underpay our secretaries and we are locked into that by virtue of their falling under the CSEA contract. One way out of that box is to reclassify the job titles through Civil Service. Once we have new job titles, we can establish a mutually agreeable salary for such titles. I have spoken with these two ladies, and come up with an idea which I would like to run past you for endorsement and then to the Labor Management Relations Committee to see about implementing. Basically, I'd like to increase them each by \$2.00 per hour plus the raise they would have gotten moving Marcy from \$7.00 this year to \$9.22 per hour next year and Cindy from \$9.22 (with ten years of service) to \$11.50 next year. Frank Sinicropi has blessed the job title change to "School Secretary I", although he has nothing to do with what we pay these people. I asked Brent Cooley for some data on average pay for such titles and enclose that summary for you. We would move from far behind into the thick of the numbers with this change. Mike and Barb support it as loyalty to their people, and we need to think about retaining good folks as more employment opportunities come into the area next year.

There. That should all make for an interesting meeting! See you at 7 in the Auditorium for the Honor Society Induction or 8 in the Board Room to officially start our meeting.

CM/CM

Attachments