

Date: 8/6/98  
To: Members, Board of Education  
From: Chris Manaseri  
Subject: Backup for August 12 Meeting

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*Please remember that we are scheduled to meet on WEDNESDAY this coming week to take care of some of BOCES's business in filling a seat on their Board. The information below is meant to help you prepare for that meeting.*

**NON - AGENDA ITEMS:**

**1.0 Email addresses:** If you've got 'em bring 'em. Enclosed is a sheet with ours and room for yours that we will use to create a user group and allow you access to docushare. Hey, we might as well get with the program if we expect our staff to.

**2.0 EPC:** We finally got clearance from Marc Reitz to submit contracts for phase two borrowing and you will see an item on the warrant to pay the first installment of the phase two loan. We're all set in the budget for this, so no problem there. Now to get the room motion sensors installed will probably take some time, but at least Ernie will be able to pay for last year's roofing once this money comes in. We're all but done with this project and in looking back on it, I think we've made out quite well. The building looked good for our grads last weekend, especially the courtyard done as part of this project. And we even got new Band unies out of the roofers insurance company...

**3.0 Speaking of Projects:** SED called on Wednesday to let me know that they DID finally approve the schoolhouse drawings as submitted and that we would "someday" (note direct quotes) get a Certificate of Occupancy for it. Yeah! Now are any of you suspicious enough to think they withheld that until after the RCS@60 weekend on purpose? (My money's on Norm)

**4.0 Project 98:** Terry and I spent two hours with Allen Kosoff on Wednesday looking over plans and costs for the work we discussed last meeting. On Tuesday Ed McGraw had called with some bad news. The State will not approve construction of a secondary gym for us - our numbers do not support it. Ed spoke with Mike Mirsky, the gentleman who has been our project manager at SED since I've been here, and he did not tell him the school involved. Ed's suggestion was to turn the mech drawing room into the new weight room and add a classroom to the gym to replace it. Apparently the State will allow us to add classrooms but not gym or locker rooms. My response was to leave the mech drawing room alone, and add a "special ed" classroom to the gym, specifically geared toward OT and PT - allowing us an exercise area that fits both bills. Ed seemed to think that would work to draw aid, as long as we don't move the girls' team room. Seems the deal is we can get aid on all approved renovations as long as we don't add on, and that we can get aid on additional floorspace only for certain "instructional" purposes. Given our special ed numbers and costs, this may be the way to go. We use it during the day for OT, PT adaptive phys ed, weights and exercise, and the community uses it mornings and evenings. Auditorium includes new curtains, additional lights on electronic controls, new seating and carpeting and a new sound system, and the Distance Learning Lab goes in the media center lecture room. The south parking lot gets paved and the area by the gym gets sidewalk and curbing to become our main entrance. I've even called for quotes on cameras to monitor our entryways which can be hooked to our PC's. I have scheduled an evening meeting 8/26 with the architect and our community and Board facilities committees to hone input and plans. Allen's notes from our meeting are enclosed FYI.

**4.0 Kidspace** has called to schedule a visit to their site in Pennsylvania. This is the outfit that is very interested in developing a home for troubled youth on the north end of the Depot. There is a bus trip leaving from Seneca County for an overnight on 8/27, but that's our new teacher orientation, so I'm passing. I have spoken to a Marty Ward of their offices just today

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and scheduled my own visit in September ( on the 14th tentatively). This is something that one of you could join me on if you wished. Marty tells me their plans are for a fully self-contained 500 bed home for emotionally disturbed children and that they would not require anything of the local district unless we send a kid there ourselves. They run the program, they provide housing, they bill home school districts directly, and there appears to be no undue burden placed on us. I have a contact name in State Ed also ( aptly dubbed *Roland Smiley*) who is out of town until Monday. Perhaps by our meeting I'll know some more about what's going on with this. Sounds encouraging, though. Lot's of potential professional jobs in the area, and some movement in the right direction for the real estate market to accompany those jobs?

**5.0 PR is what you want?** Despite the FLTimes lack of coverage and a skimpy issue of the Reville Between the Lakes, there is your superintendent's kisser on page one in reference to RCS@60. Also note the Chase Bank ad which is in proof form only at this point. Tom Seever no less! This will run in local business publications around the Syracuse area this Fall. Nice little perks worth sharing - FYI. Please note they wrote the text not me ( it's too brief to be my writing).

**6.0 Tax Collection:** Alice Karlsen and I met with Chase Bank's reps on Tuesday and ironed out some of the details of our tax collection processing for this year. We will once again encourage taxpayers to use the lock-box service by providing a pre-addressed envelop with their bills, and by limiting Alice's collection hours from 2-4 pm only. Alice has reviewed the sort of reports the bank will generate, and is making her own arrangements to visit the Syracuse facility to see it for herself. You will be asked to approve the contract for printing the bills, etc., with the agenda portion of the meeting. I am very confident this change will go smoothly.

**7.0 CBO:** I spoke with Jerry Macaluso from Seneca Falls and he will ascertain his Board's interest, if any, in continuing to look at the CBO concept by the end of this month. Gary Alger will know his fate at South Seneca by next week, and we may have some interest in a partner there. More to come by September.

**8.0 United Way bus solicitation:** The folks at UW ( Dana Allen is co-chair of this year's fund raising campaign) called last week to see if they could borrow a schoolbus and I said yes. The plan is to encourage shoppers at the outlet mall to donate back- to -school items for needy children. The ploy is that a bus will be a better attention-getter to store those contributions in than any other sort of booth or table. We'll deliver one in exchange for our driver getting a few mall gift certificates to splurge with. They needed an answer well before you met again, so I took the liberty of saying yes for you. Hope you don't mind. Superintendents get fired when they make too many of those assumptions.

**9.0 RCS@60 Finances:** The schoolhouse fund took in \$1950 over the weekend and the RCS@60 account about \$2800. Remember that we finished 1998 in the black by 8 grand, knowing that we'd still have expenses. However, because we didn't have invoices, we couldn't encumber that money for direct use - instead it added to our available fund balance. So, this money will help cover some of the expenses which we didn't pay out until the event itself - i.e.- the caterer, etc. PTA still owes us for their plaque and we owe for the Valedictory one. The photographer will have proofs for me on Monday and I'll have some shots to share with you Wednesday night. All in all not only a good time, but a break even event as well. Only 151 videos paid for so far, so we need to do some work there still. They should be ready @ September 1. I meet with Pete again on Monday. He will have a copy of file footage that he does not use for us to add to our archives as well. We have received several thank yous from attendees and the FLTimes printed two letters to the editor ( which I DID NOT write) last night. Attendance numbers were interesting from the registration book also... over 1/2 of the living graduates from the Forties were here, 43% of the Fifties and about 1/4 of the other decades, except the 90's who haven't been out long enough to notice. Overall one in every four people who ever graduated from the place over 60 years signed in at registration - that's a pretty successful attendance rate.

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**10.0 STAR Impact is now known.** Over 200 people in the Romulus District will see a total of over \$140,000 savings on their school tax bills this September! ( That's 9 million dollars worth of primary residences) I enclose a copy of the article I did for the Bulletin about this FYI. This should help us in our struggle to pass a budget next year!

**11.0 Superintendent Evals** are tabulated and enclosed for your review. You should want to discuss in exec ( without me if you like). I think they say you think I'm doing okay with the exception of one area which I'm not sure is really mine to take responsibility for. In any event, it doesn't look to me like I'll be fired this month.

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

**1.0 Routine** is, including the private school request. Gloria is back from her first session in Albany and Mrs. Wargo rejoins us next week to help prep us for audit. We are still digging out, but making progress. I spoke with Kay Huntone at Hilton and she's behind, too. Change does that to District's as Jack Little warned us...

**2.0** With the loss of Ida May Elliott, who handled some of our group session type counseling with kids, we are looking to increase the time we get from Jeff Eveland, our substance-abuse prevention counselor, by half a day at an added cost of \$1700 for the year. That's about \$42.50 per day for the half-day on Fridays that we'll pick up. This **service agreement** is an ongoing partnership between the four county schools and the county itself, instituted in 1983 when Peter Burke, Ozzy Zaverella and I met with some State OMH/ DSAS types following Nancy Reagin's Chemical People programs on PBS, and is part of an on-going effort to address substance abuse issues in our county. I currently co-chair the county's Substance Abuse Task Force with Board of Supervisor's Chairperson Patsy Amidon. This year we plan to use the kids who attended leadership sessions during last year's Red Ribbon Week to plan this year's events; we plan to re-administer the Substance Abuse Survey given 3, 6, and 9 years ago; and we plan to start a new program in all the county's schools on "Asset Building", an alternative approach to DARE. ( There - all that ought to help those evals on *War on Drugs*). Bottom line for today's agenda, we need to approve the contract with the additional cost to help cover our loss with Ida May leaving. ( She is now working for Family Counseling - an outfit that Norm's wife Bonnie and I are on the Board of Directors of).

**3.0** Authorization is sought to have the county print our **tax bills** once again. This is another example of school district and county cooperation, in which all 4 schools participate. This is particularly important this year as the STAR program changes much of what needs to appear on the bills, including the percent of levy increase and the amount of STAR generated savings to the taxpayer. ( Now if we could only get all four schools to use the lock-box tax collection service... South Seneca does.)

**4.0 Setting the tax rate** is probably THE most important item of business for this evening. Figures shown on the agenda are the final results. They are \$0.02 higher than we told people they would be, because the assessed value of the District as a whole went down by \$200,000 from last year. I include for you some worksheets which show what we thought it would be versus what it is. Also shown is what would have been the case if the Depot Lakefront had sold for as little as \$2 million in time for last year's assessment date ( March 1). Note that a \$2 million dollar value added equates to about 20 cents less on the rate. If we get that break in time for next year that's one more thing that will help our taxpayers without hurting our program. Couple that with STAR kicking in for all homeowners next year, and we should be able to make the case that the levy can go up to counteract our diminishing fund balance without it hurting people's tax bills.

I include for your reference that slide from our budget info sessions this past Spring which helps put our \$15.00 tax rate in perspective along with a list of neighboring schools rates. Both of these might be handy pieces of information in case you are accosted by unhappy taxpayers once bills are mailed ( late August).

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**5.0** You're meeting on Wednesday because..... You need to select someone to cast a vote for for the **BOCES Board**. Please do. Material from Dr. Marinelli's office is enclosed to help you in that process.

**6.0 Bus Routes** for this year are slightly modified on East Lake Road for better balance. Highest number assigned to any bus is 52 kids and that includes high schoolers who drive instead of riding.

**7.0 Barb** will tell you about summer school and what we have planned for beginning the year, and **Mike** will tell you about faculty conferences this summer and sports. (Reads like a commercial for "right after these words from our sponsors"...)

**8.0 Dave Saunders** has been out over a year on a comp claims and has submitted a letter of resignation instead of going through the CSEA process we did with Ellie Reynolds two year ago. I have told Dave that we'd like to have him back once he and Gabe Lombardo get done messing around with the shoulder injury Dave suffered in a fall here. Alice is picking up about the same amount in tax collection she did last year as a part-time aide.

**9.0 Personnel** brings a couple of routine items in replacing some drivers and monitors, but one item worth noting in particular in Mary Lee Comstock. We lost Walt Troutman as senior custodian and replaced him with a cleaner. Walt had been getting a \$0.50 per hour stipend for being in charge of the building in the evenings after Terry's departure ( Terry arrives 5:30 am and leaves 3 pm). What we propose is giving Mary Lee the same \$0.50 per hour to act as head of housekeeping for the night crew. She has done a marvelous job this summer honchoing the kids we hired, has a pleasant personality, and is very good at what she does. This makes good sense to me and is requested by Terry. I hope it makes good sense to you. We still make out well on savings over Walt's salary.

**10.0 Soccer coaches.** Mike found some and is pleased to be able to add to our athletic offerings in his first year as AD! We will now field Modified, JV and Varsity Soccer for both males and females. Quite a shift from football's loss in '95. ( And we're still here!) Folks said that once our tax rate was higher than our neighbors and once we couldn't field a football team we were gone... not quite true yet anyway.

There - that ought to give us enough to do to have a meeting. Expect an exec for my evaluations now that they're tabulated and an early evening, I hope.....See you **WEDNESDAY!**

CM/CM