

Date: 10/9/98
To: Members, Board of Education
From: Chris Manaseri
Subject: Backup for First October Meeting (the **14th**)

*Talk about your experiment in democracy! Remember you will be meeting on **WEDNESDAY** next week due to the BOCES Board special election. Because of the date shift, neither Barb nor I will be able to attend this meeting and Leanne is still out recovering from her surgery, so her attendance is not to be expected either. Basically you guys are on your own. So I've tried to make it a 20 minute meeting for you with nothing controversial or lengthy. Hope I succeeded. Watch out for the NEXT meeting though, as we'll be playing catch-up.*

NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

1.0 New Project is on track. We did receive the special ed clearance we didn't know we needed, and the Regional Associate was a pleasure to work with on that. Additionally, we have received the SEQRA environmental signoff from Dr. Mirsky in State Ed Facilities Planning as well. This all means that our vote will be legal if the public approves our plans. November edition of the Bulletin will stress the project and we will devote much of our November 10 meeting to the public address of plans, finances, etc.. Good news for now, as I start to get to faculty meetings, SDM, and Parent groups about the proposal. Enclosed FYI is a yellow sheet showing the "tax neutral" status of our financing plan along with a copy of the article in the Reveille about same. FLTimes has been a little slow on the uptake on this one, and given their 8 million dollar headline gaff when they first reported it, we might hope for better coverage come November and crunch time. Maybe Lori can be persuaded to give us some good coverage of our November 10 public session. She is not likely to be at this meeting, but any chance you get is worth jibing her about it. OR maybe one of you guys should write a letter to the editor supporting the project at zero tax impact....(*not* me).

2.0 CBO: We met with Larry Driscoll yesterday and gave him the parameters of the report we'd like him to finalize for us showing details of cost and savings expected in a refined model. We have given him until the week of November 16th to come up with a workable plan that we can all live with. Expect to make a decision about buying into that plan or not come December - in time for budget cycle.

3.0 Audit Report is enclosed for you and they were kind to us. More under agenda section.

4.0 Distance Learning: I attend a meeting in Sodus on Tuesday to visit their new lab and to get down to brass tacks on the grant we are a part of. Between Nozzolio's largesse and this grant, we WILL do distance learning next year whether we get the capital project or not.

5.0 SDM met last night. No minutes prepared yet, but new emphasis forthcoming on peer mediation and on quantifying the amount of student and teacher involvement in extracurricular activities and the scheduling of same.

6.0 Middle Level Visit from Parishville-Hopkinton School District on September 30 was very successful. We expect they will follow-up by sending some of their teachers our way later this year.

7.0 RCS@60 still awaits the final version of Peter McDonald's video which we expect soon. I'll see to it that you all have a copy of your own as Board Members. Same will apply to yearbooks which are being ordered now for Spring. (You don't need to order a spare beyond your own kid's ordering).

8.0 Newspaper Supplement: If you didn't notice the supplement in last Sunday's papers (and the comments from your Superintendent among others about it in the Times), I have a couple of copies of it on my bulletin board. The new tests are coming and they do mean business. The advertising supplement is one more example of the Commissioner's outreach beyond the school walls. I just wish they paid equal attention to pleasing the internal customers - teachers, principals, and superintendents, when it comes to informing us about details and changes in a timely fashion.

9.0 Leadership Seminar in Rochester on Friday the 16th. I mentioned to Mike as President the importance of you all recognizing the current demography in school administration. There aren't very many of us to go around. It's starting to become a buyers market and that means little places like Romulus are going to be hard pressed to compete with more affluent districts in attracting and keeping administrators. We were VERY fortunate to have Mike Midey waiting in the wings with Rick Bley's departure, but if we hadn't.... This Regional Workshop on the emerging crisis in School Leadership is an initiative of the Commissioner and the Board of Regents to help focus attention on the problem developing and to help formulate solutions. We are okay right now, but....you need to be aware as the "owners" of this school district that might not always be the case.

10.0 FYI - copy of NYCC's in-house newsletter forwarded by Liz Larzelere features Sally Covert's efforts with School to Work and Adopt a Class. Sally has done an outstanding job for us these past two years, and has emerged at BOCES as a leader among this subgroup of STW and Tech Prep players.

11.0 Mollenkopf Letter enclosed FYI. The Mollenkopf's were big fans of Ida May Elliott's and write at this time to support the idea of a school social worker. As you know, Ida May filled a role as parent involvement coordinator for the Pre-K grant that spilled over into many other areas including parent support and counseling, case management, and advocacy for many children and their families after they were Pre-K graduates. When Ida May resigned, Barb immediately approached me about a school social worker position, but I wanted to move slowly for a couple of reasons, primarily money. The experimental Pre-K grant is going to dry up soon - exactly when we still don't know. The replacement program (IF we are eligible for funding for one) will NOT include the parent involvement position. I am worried that we may lose Pre-K funding altogether in the short term and will have to ask you to choose to let it go away or to fund it with tax dollars - let alone worried about funding a social work/parent involvement position on top of that. However, there is a contingent who might rally behind the suggestions offered by the Mollenkopfs.

In the meantime we have taken the following steps to try to pick up some of the pieces which Ida May offered to us. We have increased our contracted time with the county for Jeff Eveland's services by an addition half-day per week. Mary Grace has also lined us up with an SU master's degree candidate in need of an internship which we will split with Seneca Falls. Barb Quinn has also been working with Brook Brewer at the Depot (Ph.D. psychologist) on offering some parenting classes through their offices at no charge to us. SO - our take is that we are being fiscally responsible AND responsive to the needs of kids and parents at this point. We would LIKE to consider creating a school social worker position for next year - but have to wait to see how we will afford it.

In all likelihood there will be several things we'd LIKE to add to help spend some of that salary breakage we got - and I will give you a list of those at budget time (which starts in only two months) and YOU will have to make some choices. Added School to Work FTE, an additional half-time math position, Pre-K on local dollars, a school social worker, football?, an additional foreign language, computer lab replacements, distance learning on-going costs - any and all of these are going to need to be balanced against a tax levy increase which you might actually be able to hold the line on this year. Some tough choices coming up...

I have spoken to the Mollenkopf's about their letter and told them you'd receive it in your back-up but that I would NOT put it on the agenda for discussion because both Barb and I will not be at this meeting. I told them I would put it on the agenda for October 27th, though. If they decide to attend on Wednesday, having been informed that it would not be an agenda item, I strongly suggest you politely inform them that we do plan to address the issue among other wish list items at the second meeting of the month.

12.0 Mia wants to say thank you (I *KNOW* she does, even though her little vocal chords aren't fully in synch yet with her little brain) for the kindness and welcoming that you showed her through your very thoughtful gift as a Board. Her dad would like to say thank you, too. He kind of likes working with you guys - at least that's what he tells her.

AGENDA ITEMS: Short and sweet - on purpose to keep us all out of trouble.

1.0 Minutes and Warrants will be routine. Questions should be called in ahead of time if you've got them so I can try to answer for you.

2.0 Conferences coming up in the next couple of weeks are offered for your approval. Two of the four are grant funded, the other two within budget.

3.0 Budget transfer corrects a misplacement of expenditures divided between principal and interest in paying for the EPC loan. No loss of funds, no overexpenditure, I just put too much in principal and not enough in interest by the same amount and the auditor caught it. This is an after the fact correction to last year's accounting only. Because it's over the \$2500 limit it requires your say so or it'll show up in next year's audit.

4.0 I'd like you to officially acknowledge **receipt of the audit report** enclosed, although we will not review it with Jack until next meeting. Note please the white papers accompanying all the other stuff for a real good read on our fund balance over the last five years. This executive summary is a handy new piece of information and allows you to see that we are getting closer and closer to not being able to rely on the savings account to help keep taxes lower than average.

5.0 THE PURPOSE FOR MEETING TONIGHT (Wednesday) is so that we can be a nice team player with the other schools and select a BOCES Board member to fill a vacancy on their Board. I did call Linda Foster, the BOCES Board Clerk, and express our desire to know something more about the candidates. She called back to say their Board had discussed our concern but felt they couldn't/ shouldn't do more than supply your home addresses to the candidates and let them do their own campaigning. Their fear is that they would/could be accused of unfairly campaigning for one or the other by disgruntled non-selected candidates (some of you remember our own Board table one night when that happened). SO - I enclose for you the only information I have received - a copy of a letter from Ernie Mori of Newark, and a copy of a letter from Linda Foster explaining the disqualification of some other potential candidates. I DID tell Linda that we were getting to the point of frustration with the process such that should we not be able to cast an informed vote about these things, that we would likely next time opt not to call a special meeting and just concern ourselves with our own business rather than try to be team players. So - cast your votes as you will and let's be done with this particular fiasco. Please note that a roll call is required for anything other than unanimous voting on this one. I've asked Mike Midey to take the notes.

6.0 Mike as the only administrator at the meeting can and will choose to tell you whatever he wants to about whatever he wants to. I just hope I still have a job next meeting.

7.0 Substitute appointments should be made so that we can use these good people.

THERE! That's as clean and simple as I can make it four days ahead of time. Hope it all goes well. We do need at least four of you to come together for what looks to me like 20 minutes on Wednesday night. Please do.

Call with any concerns - or email me at Cmanaseri@wfmil.rcs.k12.ny.us OR post a message so all can see on the BOE Bulletin Board on DocuShare.

CM/CM