

Memo

To: Members, Board of Education
From: Chris Manaseri
CC: Administrative Team
Date: 11/24/2022
Re: Meeting of October 13, 1999 (**Wednesday**)

I am beginning this memo one full week ahead of our meeting and that's always dangerous in that a lot can happen in a week. But.....

NON AGENDA ITEMS:

- 1.0 **Welcome to our newest Board Member**, Barney Farnsworth! Hope you enjoy reading, and getting lots of mail every two weeks. It feels very good to have our Board back to full strength so quickly and to have found someone the rest of the Board feels will fit in so well. Barney - in terms of the relationship you can expect from this group, I think you will not find anywhere a better, more cooperative group of like-minded individuals willing to put the needs of the kids of this community ahead of everything else. It may take a few months to learn the new vocabulary of schools and school boards, but hang in there, we're all glad to have you aboard! Nice article in the Times (see attached).

- 2.0 **Capital project is on track.** I called Suzanne Spear's office yesterday on apportionment of aid and she said the certificate is on the commissioner's desk for signature. "You're all set for aid," is the exact quote. That means your efforts over the past 15 months will bring some 1.3 million dollars of State money to the Romulus school community! Nice work everyone... This is particularly good because according to Suzanne previously, we did things out of sequence by holding our vote before we got this certificate approved. She ended up issuing a state-wide memo about this process last December saying she wouldn't approve any more of these when the vote was done prior to her approval. I was holding my breath on this one, but being on a first name basis through Rural Schools Board of Directors helped a lot. That 1.3 million is certainly worth attending four meetings a year.

Bid date has been moved to October 21 although a pre-bid meeting on September 30 did bring several contractors our way (mostly asbestos goons slobbering over the chance to make a few bucks for unnecessary regulatory-required work).

I took the opportunity last Thursday to travel to Syracuse to meet with our architect on his home turf - the Ashley McGraw Offices on the 7th floor of the 500 building on South Salina Street - and was very glad I did. I had not visited their offices before, even though we used them for both phases of the performance contract. 20 some architects, highly professional space, lots of schools and other projects going on... I think we picked a winner. Allen Kosoff followed up my visit to him with a trip here and we should have an architectural sketch of the new gym foyer/entryway for presentation to you within a month. We're having a color debate, so I asked for two versions with you to decide. The issue is whether the doorframes in the entry should be white or bronze. I won't prejudice you with my views and will wait for the drawing I requested.

Note Finger Lakes Times headline almost got it right (not one thing is happening in the cafeteria in this project). Still nice to be in the paper not on police beat.

- 3.0 **RAITN is still on hold.** All of the equipment is installed and our kids are using the room with a videotape being shuttled back and forth to Honeoye Falls and East Rochester. Hang up is **still** with the phone line. AT&T assumed it would be no big deal for the local company to run the last leg of the T-1 from 336 down. Wrong! T-burg has to construct something or other in order to complete the job. It's clearly not their fault - AT&T didn't contact them until the 13th of September. The line was ordered in June and nobody from the big conglomerate became concerned until the week before we were supposed to go online. Shows you how much corporate America understands rural America... Kids and teachers are being patient and 1000% cooperative. Expect the job to be done this week or next at the latest. Interestingly Holly Sharp from Monroe BOCES called this week to see what she could do to goose things along as she's getting complaints from the other sites that **we** aren't live yet. Not OUR fault!
- 4.0 **Distance Learning Grant Consortium** still hasn't received its funds. Clyde Savannah dropped out and we decided to spend their money on staff development. Have another meeting on that in November.
- 5.0 **Music consultant** visited on September 23 and that went well. Still haven't heard from him on a follow-up date, though I've emailed him to check on that. Music Boosters met this week with a small turnout, but at least they met... Trip planned for Peter Pan in Rochester in November will appear under the agenda section. Also enclosed along these lines is a wonderful little article I

found called "50 Violins". Check it out. That's the kind of PR I'd want our small school with the BIG idea to have...

6.0 **Foundation Committee** Kick-off event occurred at Goose Watch Winery, compliments of the Peterson family last month. Follow-up meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, the night before our meeting. I'll ask Mike to share his observations and I will as well. Remember, this needs your support to make it happen, too. Otherwise we will have not invested last June's excess wisely.

7.0 **School Boards Conference:** At this point Cornelia, Norm and Anne have expressed interest in Saturday sessions. The three of you are registered and Leanne and I will plan to go up on Friday to be you for those sessions. That way five people can go to half the conference each.

I have been asked to fill in for Lori Leenay in making a presentation on DocuShare similar to last year's New Orleans and last summer's Cooperstown stint. New BOCES contact is Jeanine Wech, with whom I will share the podium on Friday at 11 AM. Lori is leaving town. Too bad, we had a good working relationship.

8.0 **Hobart and William Smith** partnership progresses. Mike, Dave Hubman, Ray Fox and I traveled to the campus on 9/28 to meet with the folks from the colleges who put together their multi-media social norms campaign, as did teams from South Seneca, Waterloo, Seneca Falls and Ithaca. The goal here is to replicate the results they've achieved in reducing on-campus drinking with a high school population. If it works, our partnership will likely be the feature of some research publications. County-wide effort to reduce drug and alcohol consumption uses college proven approach... the headlines read. In fact, they almost did. See article from FLTimes (we were in three times last week) Follow-up is still underway for Red Ribbon Week.

9.0 Speaking of FLTimes coverage, there was an article about the **speed limit near the school** which you may need to hear more about from me. Last May a gentleman stopped in to see me concerned about the speed limit through town. He gave me a contact name at DOT in Syracuse, whom I called. That gentleman convinced me to write a letter requesting a free DOT study of the situation. I did that. We received a confirmation letter that such a study would be scheduled and we would be notified of the results. No notification has yet been received. Then I read that Madaline has been sending petitions to people in the town government about the situation and as the attached shows, even to the State Senator. As a Board you need to know that: 1) I requested the DOT study in May; 2) there are two signage/decision issues: one involves a school zone sign - no real reduction in speed limit and no cost to us, the second involves actually establishing a school zone reduced speed limit (usually 20 MPH) with a crosswalk, flashing lights and a manned station during school hours - similar to what you find in Interlaken or Phelps at

- a cost to the school;** 3) we can't do anything until DOT makes a recommendation- it's their ballgame, not ours. I expect the Senator's letter, if no one else's, will likely rattle some action into occurring. Just so you know... I will follow-up my May letter as well with this new information/pressure from the community.
- 10.0 **XEROX has been back** (twice). A research team from Xerox asked if they could come interview some of our users of DocuShare, and of course I said yes. So last week an anthropologist and a research analyst came to interview some of us on videotape for feedback to the design engineers. Pretty neat! If you've been on DocuShare lately, you'll notice that we're in a new version, but it's still pretty easy to use. Also - Jeanine Wech from BOCES via Jack McCabe asked if they could lift the Romulus Curriculum sharing structure for the new EduTech Homepage. Of course, I said yes. So, at www.edutech.org there is a collection for teachers which currently features stuff our staff has posted in K-12 Curriculum at a Glance. Also pretty neat! At the recent Title III Grant meeting some techie from Batavia said to the assembled group how she always sends people to the Romulus site to see how DocuShare can be used. You guys are on the front part of the blade all right!
- 11.0 **School Based Wellness Conference.** I plan to attend this Philadelphia conference as a guest of the Geneva Regional Health System at the end of October. Through participating on their Community Advisory Board I am trying to keep us positioned for consideration as an experimental site for a hospital-run school based wellness center if Diane Ewing and others can get their Board to look into establishing these in the area. There are over 150 of them in New York State already, but mostly in urban areas. Bea Bennett and Pete Gregoire are in favor of the idea, and this was one of Laurie Asermily's pet projects as well.
- 12.0 **On the Thursday after** our meeting RCS will play host to the Seneca County Partners for Children Core Group whom we will train on using DocuShare in our upstairs lab. Dr. Marinelli, Dennis Aloia, and other high mucky- mucks from the greater community will be in looking firsthand at your technological infrastructure and building.
- 13.0 **BOCES Refund from 98-99 arrived this week** - \$31,000 that we will be able to use as local revenue to help with the shortfall of anticipated versus received State Aid. Remember that you chose to raise the levy by 1%, not quite enough to compensate for the less than anticipated State Aid. This \$31,000 will cover the rest. Problem solved until next budget cycle.

AGENDA ITEMS:

- 1.0 Key issue of the evening's meeting is the **audit report**, a copy of which in draft form is included for your review. Jack Little or someone from his office

will be present to go over the findings with you. Gary Alger will also be present for this piece as response to these concerns becomes his headache now. Best approach for you prior to meeting may be to read the executive summary- it does a nice job of saying we're okay except for fund balance.

- 2.0 Lots of **conferences** to send people to. One is worth mentioning to you because it is out of the ordinary. We are going to front the money to send Sally Covert to the Middle School Conference in Lake Placid this month. The deal is we will want back from her BOCES account an amount equal to our expenditure. The reason we're doing this and sending her there is that she will be looking (along with Bob Ike) for an internship opportunity from us this spring. Mike and I want Sally to do some diagnostic and remedial work with our middle level program - sort of an outsider (as opposed to Bob who is too close to the forest to see the trees) analyzing our practice against external norms and prescribing change. BOCES doesn't see this as part of her mission for them and it isn't, so rather than let the opportunity pass us by, I suggested this creative financing approach.

You will hear more about internship proposals for Bob and Sally soon.

- 3.0 You'll find a recommended **new exemption** for the disabled with low income that comes to us from Jim Bastian's office. I discussed this with Anne Morgan our local resident expert of taxes and she recommends that we enact same. Anne also recommends that we update our senior citizen exemption numbers to match these new county ones.

- 4.0 **Update on Energy savings.** Mike had asked us to look into the creeping up of our energy costs as reflected in our electric bill. I asked Ernie Rookey, our energy consultant, to do the enclosed analysis. You will find two factors which we don't (yet) control: 1) the actual increase in number of workstations and other uses of electricity and 2) the cost per unit for electricity. If we hold constant the cost per unit, you find that we are still saving substantially over the base year of 1995-96. This applies to consumption as well in both electric and fuel oil costs. If you'd like more detail, I can ask Ernie to come to a meeting to share with you how he earns his \$10,000 per year for the next 6 years off this deal. I am still convinced that the EPC was among the smartest things we've done- particularly during that difficult time when we couldn't get voter approval to continue our building improvements.

I mention not yet controlling energy costs so you know that we are participating in additional cooperative work along these lines through Paul Yeager (the guy who found Ernie Rookey for us) and the BOCES energy office. We will be part of a pool of bidders who will purchase energy as a cooperative once the deregulation hits in full force. Barney may be able to help us out in this regard with his professional expertise. More to come on this as it develops- probably through Gary.

- 5.0 The reason for meeting on a Wednesday this week is our **BOCES Board vacancy** that needs your vote. Enclosed for your edification are brief bios of the candidates from whom you must choose. Another of the improvements we've suggested to others.
- 6.0 **Evaluation and Professional Development Committee** needs your approval. Norm, you're gonna love this one. We have a new requirement that every District in the State develop a plan for the annual evaluation of every professional employee, and a separate plan for the development of a professional development plan. (This brought to you by the Department of Redundancy Department). Now to top this off, the Regents passed the first requirement in August and the second one was on their schedule for September - BUT they wanted you to appoint your committee and convene it prior to October 8. This when they haven't published any schedule of training sessions on the requirements yet (although I'm told by the boss that they are to be scheduled across the state from 10/15 to 11/30). SO, what we need from you tardily this evening is an appointment of this committee which, ironically by regulation, must be composed of a majority of teachers as selected by the teacher's union. Theresa has been kind enough to solicit the volunteers from her ranks and we suggest that the admin team as well as a selected PTA rep (I'll solicit Annie Bachman from SDM - they meet Thursday - who had expressed an interest in such a process last year) be included. Listed names appear on the agenda. Please approve and we will begin soon.
- 7.0 **Under committee reports** expect to hear from Mike Karlsen and Cornelia Johnson (along with Barb Quinn) on the latest shared services meeting with South Seneca. Also expect to hear an update from Mike and me about the Foundation effort.
- 8.0 **Barb and Mike** will report to you on Fire Prevention Week and other activities in their areas.
- 9.0 We have some **personnel** action including a redact on salary for a long term bus driver appointed at too high a rate in error. The correction will undoubtedly stir the pot about pre-negotiation issues with the CSEA, as we have several regular employees earning less than the \$9.50 per hour we pay our subs. I expect Mike and I will hear about this one at our Labor Management Relations Meeting scheduled for October 18 at 3:30 (got that, Mike?)

And that should do it, assuming nothing earth-shattering develops between now and a week from now.