

Galway Central School District
Special Joint Board of Education Meeting with the
Hadley-Luzerne Central School District and the Galway Central School District
MINUTES
Wednesday, March 7, 2012

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by the Hadley-Luzerne CSD Board President Duane Moulton at 6:35 PM in the Stuart M. Townsend Middle School LGI Room located at 27 Hyland Drive, Lake Luzerne, NY.

ATTENDANCE

Galway Board Members Present: Cheryl Smith, Nancy Lisicki, Dennis Schaperjahn, John Sutton, Joan Slagle

Galway Board Members Absent: Janet Glenn, Thomas Rumsey

Hadley-Luzerne Board Members Present: Duane Moulton, Vance Plante, Karl Othmer

Hadley-Luzerne Board Members Absent: Lori Millis, Mary Visscher

Others Present: Kimberly LaBelle, Galway Superintendent of Schools; Paul Berry, Galway Dir. of Assessment, Technology and Student Affairs; William Scott, Hadley-Luzerne Interim Superintendent of Schools, Mr. James P. Dexter, WSWHE BOCES District Superintendent of Schools; Timothy Place, WSWHE BOCES Asst. Supt. for Administrative Services; Carrie Herron, Galway Math Teacher; Jim Reynolds, Galway Science Teacher; SMTMS Principal Patrick Cronin; HLCS Academic Services Administrator Michael DeCaprio; Gina York, Hadley-Luzerne District Clerk; Linda Casatelli, Galway District Clerk and approximately 12 others.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Was recited

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Welcoming remarks and introductions were made by the Hadley Luzerne and Galway Superintendents of Schools.

OVERVIEW OF MEETING

An overview of the meeting was provided by Kimberly LaBelle, Galway Superintendent of Schools.

PRESENTATION

Mr. James P. Dexter, District Superintendent of Schools, Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex BOCES presented in detail the attached PowerPoint presentation: The Impact of State Fiscal Policy and Shrinking Enrollment / The Impact of Shared Services.

This joint Board of Education meeting sought to address two school districts' long-term financial health, as both face fiscal challenges. James Dexter, WSWHE District Superintendent stated that the recent recession has been longer and deeper than anything previously experienced. Further compounding the problem, 31 area districts are expected to pay an average \$24,000 per person on employee health plans in the 2012-13 school year, not including employee contributions that vary between districts. He likened the cost to buying a Toyota Corolla for every family every year. "We have a completely unsustainable system," Dexter said of state public school expenses and revenues. "The way we do business now is not the way we will be able to do business in the future," he added.

A discussion of consolidation possibilities such as a shared business official, shared business office and other cost saving measures took place. Hadley-Luzerne saw sharing a business official as a way to reduce its business staff by half a position. There is currently a vacancy for a School Business Official in the Hadley-Luzerne Central School District. Officials for Galway, which only has a superintendent and treasurer to fulfill business duties, said the arrangement would bring additional expertise and potential cost savings to the district.

The business official would be employed by BOCES and shared between the districts equally. The shared business official could be hired as early as July, but a shared business office would not be available until January. Mr. Dexter informed the members that the next step would be to let him know if both schools were interested. Mr. Place would then provide the costs and data to each District. At that time the final commitment would need to be made by each board. Such a shared employee would be classified as a BOCES employee. Mr. Scott noted the window of opportunity is open between now and June for hiring quality business administrators. The Hadley-Luzerne Board of Education supported his recommendation that they begin the search during this timeframe. Mr. Berry added that Hadley-Luzerne should fill the position in the full capacity and while interviewing the candidates note that the position may be shared as we move forward. Both Boards agreed to proceed to the next step and have Mr. Place from BOCES provide the costs and data to each district for review and consideration. At that time the final commitment would then need to be made by each district.

Another suggestion was syncing both districts' business office capabilities by using the same software at some time in the future.

There was discussion on various shared services. Hadley-Luzerne Board of Education President Duane Moulton said his district has had a history with shared services, such as sharing a wrestling team and cafeteria manager with Lake George and a music teacher with Fort Edward, and a Spanish teacher through BOCES. Mr. Moulton said because of the shared cafeteria position, his district went from losing money in its cafeteria operations to making money.

Several school officials expressed concerns that unions don't understand their districts can't operate with more expenses than revenues. Dexter, the BOCES superintendent, said some school districts will go bankrupt eventually and case law will provide the only guidance for how to proceed.

He said districts are still seeing state pension and employee health insurance costs increase exponentially. Some school districts are still seeing those benefits increase despite significant cuts, he said. "We have the choice to do this (voluntarily)," Hadley-Luzerne school board member Karl Othmer said of sharing services. "Within time, I think it will be forced upon us."

Sharing Distance Learning opportunities was discussed. Galway has a successful Distance Learning program running seven periods a day. Galway currently has one running and is starting up a second Distance Learning lab. Currently Hadley-Luzerne is not utilizing their Distance Learning lab.

The Health Consortium and health plans were also discussed.

It was agreed by all this was a great meeting with an emphasis that schools need to do business differently as we move forward.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

CLOSING REMARKS

Were made by Mr. William Scott, Interim Superintendent of Schools, Hadley Luzerne Central School District and Mrs. Kimberly LaBelle, Superintendent of Schools, Galway Central School District.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Karl Othmer, seconded by Vance Plante to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM.

Yes: 3 No: 0 Abstain: 0 Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

Linda M. Casatelli

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District Clerk

Attachment: PowerPoint Presentation of The Impact of State Fiscal Policy and Shrinking Enrollment /
The Impact of Shared Services.