

Galway Central School District
BOARD OF EDUCATION
BUDGET HEARING and WORK SESSION
MINUTES

Thursday, May 9, 2013

Executive Session – 5:30 PM Budget Hearing/Work Session – 6:30 PM

Board members Present: Cheryl Smith, Board President; Dennis Schaperjahn; Joan Slagle; Lauralyn Sakala; Janet Glenn (arrived at 6:00 PM), Nancy Lisicki

Board members absent: Thomas Rumsey, Board Vice President

Others present: William F. Scott, Superintendent of Schools; Linda Jackowski, Director of Pupil Services; Michael Healey, Jr./Sr. High School Principal; Brita Donovan, Associate Jr./Sr. High School Principal; Tim Hilker, School Business Official; Michael Sherman, Operations, Maintenance and Transportation Supervisor; Faculty; Staff; Students

Motion was made by Dennis Schaperjahn, second by Joan Slagle

To move into **Executive Session** at 5:30 PM in the High School Conference Room for matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.

All voted aye to approve the motion. 5-Yes 0-No (Janet Glenn, Board Member, arrived at 6:00 PM)

Motion was made by Lauralyn Sakala, second by Nancy Lisicki

To move into the **Budget Hearing/Work Session** at 6:30 PM in the High School Library.

All voted aye to approve the motion. 6-Yes 0-No

A **Budget Hearing took place** as required by NYS law. Mr. Tim Hilker, School Business Official, gave a presentation of the 2013-14 Proposed Budget. Details are available on the District's website and in a district newsletter and school report card being sent home to each community resident. The community is invited to attend "Soaring into the Future" meetings with the Building Principals on May 15th at 10 AM or 6:30 PM in the High School Library to further discuss the budget. A question and answer period followed the budget hearing where those present express their concerns, asked questions and obtained feedback from the Board. The community may contact Mr. Tim Hilker, School Business Official or Mr. William Scott, Interim Superintendent of Schools, at (518) 882-1033 if they have any questions regarding the budget or to address any concerns they may have.

Motion was made by Janet Glenn, second by Nancy Lisicki

To approve an extension of **David Fredette's unpaid Family Leave of Absence** from his Math Teacher position to include the 2013-14 school year, September 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014.

This motion was DENIED. The Board of Education felt that granting this leave of absence was not in the best interests of the educational needs of our students.

All voted Aye to DENY the motion. 6-Yes Votes 0-No Votes to deny the motion.

Motion was made by Dennis Schaperjahn, second by Nancy Lisicki

To approve a one year **leave of absence for Elizabeth Wilson** from her Special Education Teacher position effective September 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014.

This motion was DENIED. The Board of Education felt that granting this leave of absence was not in the best interests of the educational needs of our students.

All voted Aye to DENY the motion. 6-Yes Votes 0-No Votes to deny the motion.

Discussion took place regarding the option of renewing services with School Dude or to go back to using paper "**Use of School Facilities**" forms when people request to use the building. It was decided to go back to using paper forms which seemed to work better and to not renew the contract with School Dude.

Motion was made by Janet Glenn second by Dennis Schaperjahn

To adopt the **2013-14 school calendar**.

All voted aye to approve the motion. 6-Yes 0-No

Cheryl Smith read the attached **letter** which addresses items contained in a letter dated April 17, 2013 that was read by the GTA at a recent Board meeting.

Motion was made by Janet Glenn, second by Lauralyn Sakala

To move into **Executive Session** at 7:27 PM for matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.

All voted aye to approve the motion. 6-Yes 0-No

Motion was made by Dennis Schaperjahn, second by Nancy Lisicki

To return to **regular session** at 8:00 PM.

All voted aye to approve the motion. 6-Yes 0-No

Motion was made by Janet Glenn, second by Dennis Schaperjahn

To **adjourn** at 8:02 P.M.

All voted aye to approve the motion. 6-Yes 0-No

Respectfully submitted,

Linda M. Casatelli

Linda M. Casatelli
District Clerk

Cheryl Smith, Board President, read the letter below to those in attendance at the May 9, 2013 Board of Education Meeting:
Response to GTA letter 4/17/13

The BOE has conducted an ongoing and very transparent budget creation process during which very specific issues were raised regarding District expenses and the best ways to be conservative with our funding. All areas of the budget were carefully reviewed. On April 18, 2013, at our Board of Education meeting, a Galway Teachers' Association representative read a letter signed by Carrie Herron, the Association president. I feel compelled to address some of the inaccuracies and assertions contained in the letter.

Specifically I reference this portion of the letter:

"The proposed cut to the math department will have adverse effects on college and career readiness and test scores. As the district transitions to Common Core State Standards and to an increase rigor in the required Regents exams, we cannot afford a step backwards in mathematics instruction. Project Lead the Way and STEM initiatives at Galway have been observed by several progressive districts that are looking to start or enhance their schools with similar programs we are offering here. Proposed cuts to the technology department would have effects k-12. Maintaining these classes would add to the diversity of the course offering at Galway and provide an appealing and competitive program to current and prospective families."

I quote Principals Michael Healy's and Brita Donovan's response to high school staffing which was sent to the Jr./Sr. High School staff for clarification.

To be clear:

There is not a cut to math programming, rather an addition in both classes and AIS services offered during the 2013-14 school year. Specifically, we have added a high school math option, "Integrated Algebra with Financial Applications" and more AIS than we currently offer in Jr/Sr High. These offerings are in addition to our current 2012-13 offerings. We also will be offering Pre-Calculus for college credit through SUNY Albany's University in the High School program.

Technology teachers in the district will remain at 1.5 FTE, the reduction referenced in Mrs. Herron letter should be clarified to reflect the .5 enrichment position in the elementary school. We will continue to offer the current courses in technology – the only change will be switching Project Lead The Way Digital Electronics to Project Lead The Way Biotechnical Engineering – a direct recommendation from the Technology Department.

We need to be aware that programming and staffing are very different. Please be aware, we are adding a significant amount of programming to our current course offering – including new opportunities in both Math and Technology, a direct result of needs expressed by each department.

The enrichment position has been replaced by a collaboration with Skidmore College at no cost to the District, as well as with an increase in an art position by .5 FTE.

The District has been deficient in coverage of physical education requirements. The new structured wellness program will correct these deficiencies.

Based upon the work of our Stakeholder Councils during the 2011-2012 academic year, the Board of Education gave a strong directive to the new administration to increase the rigor and content of our curriculum. Our administrators met with all grade levels and departments and utilizing the faculty input, formulated a comprehensive K-12 schedule and curriculum aligned with the new common core standards. The faculty requests and recommendations included a solid, uninterrupted time for core instruction at the elementary school. In her report to the Galway Board of Education last year, Education Consultant Melodye Eldeen, recommended, "a schedule should be developed that maximizes instructional time for students". At the Jr./Sr. High School, honors classes will be offered in all core areas beginning in seventh grade and additional academic intervention services (AIS) have been added, also mentioned in Ms. Eldeen's report.

The GTA also references unnecessary software purchased by the District. The purchase of the individualized evaluation software enables specific skills based assessments of each student and the data is then provided to the teachers for use in individualizing instruction for their students. The software was a recommendation of our new administrators and Ms. Eldeen's report recommends expanding benchmark assessments and urges teachers to use consistent assessments.

Mrs. Herron indicates further, "*We hoped that with our joint agreement for salary and health care concessions that we would be able to avoid any further cuts to the educational program of our students.*" The schedule and curriculum offerings have actually increased for our students for next year. Ms. Herron previously indicated on many occasions that an acceptable APPR plan was the trade-off for any concessions.

As detailed above, the scheduling and curriculum review has been a very collaborative process with much input from the faculty. I urge Ms. Herron to reconsider her unit's leadership's rejection of the administration's offer to hold regular, collaborative, "council" meetings with all administrators and faculty representatives. The GTA leadership favors meetings with only the superintendent. All parties need to be present for true shared decision making to occur. We look forward to continued collaboration between our administrators, faculty and staff.

Cheryl Smith, Galway Board of Education President