

Westport Central School District

Budget and Regular Board of Education Meeting

Place: Cafeteria

Thursday, April 8, 2010

Time: 5:30 PM

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

at: 5:33 PM

by: President LaRock

A. **Roll Call**

√ Alice LaRock

√ Tom Kohler

√ Dwayne Stevens

√ Jim Carroll – entered 5:35 PM

√ Sue Russell

B. **Introduction of Attendees**

Also Present: John W. Gallagher, Ed. D., Superintendent

Jana Atwell, District Clerk

Cindy Moody, District Treasurer

Michele Friedman, Principal

Robert King, Supt. of Buildings & Grounds

Visitors: Theresa Lindsay

George Maffey

Ulrich Hoffman

Barbara Breyette

Kellie King

Kathi Desjardins

Karen Kearns

Mary Mandy

Nicole Sudduth

Vicki Wolinsky

Susan Satloff

Brenda McGee

George King

Heide King

Nancy Boyle

Cheryl Phillips

Kathleen Demetros

Adam Facticeau

Kathy Bedore

Kathryn Cramer

Janet Hoff

Ben Sudduth

Shirley Donaldson

Lynn Bubbins

Daniel McCormick

Scott Gibbs

Erica Loher

Paul Mudie

Kim Matthews

Gwen Sherman

Darcy Hudson

Pat Dougan

Sue Dougan

Joanne Mazzotte

Jennifer Newberry

Jack Thompson

Ken White

Rick Rockefeller

Jason Fiegl

Matthew Jason

Tim Sherman

C. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Recognition of Quiz Bowl Team

The following members of the 2009-2010 Quiz Bowl team were presented with certificates of merit and recognized for their qualifying placement to compete in the Regional Tournament being held in New Orleans: Nathan Gay, Alan Ware, Bo McKinley, Kevin Russell, Kelsey Carroll, Emile Goss, Devin Martin and Michael Bodnar, and co-advisors Dan McCormick and Cheryl Phillips. Congratulations!

3. Budget Discussion

Dr. Gallagher provided a powerpoint presentation describing the sequence of events from the first “rollover” budget presentation to this evening. Since the March 22, 2010 meeting, further reductions have been made in equipment, repairs and supplies across all areas of the budget as well as confirmation of a retirement. Voters will be asked to approve the purchase of a van from the bus reserve fund on May 18, 2010. To reduce the tax levy reserves will be used to offset state employment retirement system costs, some undesignated reserves will be applied, and some federal funds will be used to offset mandated staffing. Dr. Gallagher explained that the 2010-2011 budget that he is recommending this evening is a spending plan which totals \$5,200,000. The total amount of this plan can not be changed prior to our Annual District Meeting, Election and Budget Vote scheduled for May 18th. However, if additional revenues are received, they can be applied to reduce the tax levy. Between now and May 18th, Dr. Gallagher and members of the Board will be visiting community groups to answer questions regarding the 2010-2011 spending plan.

4. Public Comment (15 minutes)

Our agenda offers two Public Comment sections, one at the beginning of the meeting and the other at the end. At this time we have set aside a 15 minute period giving anyone in the audience time to share their thoughts with us. Your opinions, ideas and concerns will be considered and taken under advisement. Questions or concerns needing an explanation or further information will be addressed at our next regular meeting.

Dan McCormick advised that the Quiz Bowl team will be hosting a dinner and silent auction in the cafeteria on April 29, 2010 as a fundraising event for the team’s trip to New Orleans.

Kathryn Cramer presented the Board with a copy of a statement as a follow-up to George King’s comment at the March 22, 2010 Board meeting regarding the impact of our school budget on the elderly within our community. (See attached.)

Rick Hoffman stated that it continues to be his opinion that the school is spending too much money. He recommends cuts in head count and programs, and increasing employee retirement contributions. He questioned if the retirement incentive was made available for one specific person. Mr. Hoffman advised that he wrote a letter to our attorney suggesting changes in Board procedure. He acknowledged some changes have been made (i.e. increased length of public comment) however, he is anxious to see if other changes will occur. He also questioned the purpose for the special meeting scheduled on April 22, 2010.

Megan Sudduth read a letter addressing articles published in the “Speakout” section of the *Press Republican* “...kids should only tend to their school work and not worry about money, finances and, taxes.” Her letter addressed the importance of students having knowledge and understanding of the school and budget so that they too may have a voice. (See attached.)

George Maffey requested a simple cost analysis regarding out-of-district students. He suggested an analysis with two (2) columns – one including out-of-district students and one with only district students and footnoting any intangibles indicating how out-of-district students may affect our school.

