

**GENEVA COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER 304  
227 NORTH FOURTH STREET, GENEVA, ILLINOIS  
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF A REGULAR SESSION  
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Board of Education of Community Unit School District Number 304 met in a regular session on Monday, December 12, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. at Coultrap, 1113 Peyton, Geneva, Illinois.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

- 1.1 Roll Call
- 1.2 Welcome
- 1.3 Pledge
- 1.4 Reminder to sign attendance sheet

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Moran.

Board members present: President Tim Moran, Vice President Mark Grosso, Matt Henry, Michael McCormick, Kelly Nowak, Policy Committee Chair Mary Stith. Late: None. Absent: Bill Wilson.

The President led everyone in the Pledge and reminded them to sign the attendance record.

District administrators present: Tom Rogers, Principal Geneva High School; Doug Drexler, Associate Principal Geneva High School; Robert McElligott, Director of Transportation; Craig Collins, Assistant Superintendent Personnel Services; Dawn George, Assistant Superintendent Student Services; Donna Oberg, Assistant Superintendent Business Services; Patty O'Neil, Assistant Superintendent Curriculum & Instruction; and Dr. Kent Mutchler, Superintendent.

Others present: Heidi Roed, Marci Olesen, George Jackowiec, Chris Bourdage, Dwight Swartwood, Edward Butts, Herb Stith, Brenda Schory (Chronicle), Bob McQuillan, William Clancy, Steven Lane, Gail Ryan.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- 2.1 Regular Session November 28, 2011
- 2.2 Executive Session November 28, 2011

Motion by McCormick, second by Henry, to approve the above-listed minutes, as presented. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Grosso, Henry, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Moran. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**3. RECOGNITION, AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None

**4. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

The Superintendent thanked the members of the Financial Task Force for the time and effort they have devoted in developing long and short-term financial planning options for the Board's consideration. He explained that the upcoming winter break allows the O&M staff to super clean in the buildings and to complete some maintenance projects.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The President read the following statement:

The meeting agenda includes an opportunity for comments from the audience. It is the prerogative of the Presiding Officer to recognize members of the audience who wish to address the Board during the time reserved for public comment. No discussion of individual students or personnel matters is permitted, as those items are appropriate for closed session pursuant to Section 2 (c) of the Open Meetings Act. If you have a concern regarding an individual student or a personnel issue, you are asked to bring it to the attention of the administration. In the interest of providing all visitors an equal opportunity to address the Board, comments will be limited to five (5) minutes. Those individuals needing more time should submit their thoughts in writing to the Board's recording secretary. Visitors addressing the Board need to come to the podium, use the microphone, and state their full name and address because the proceedings are video recorded for later broadcasting to the community. The Board reserves the right to edit the video recordings for the purpose of excluding any public comment regarding an individual student or a personnel issue. Per Board of Education Bylaw 0167.3, "No interviews should be conducted in the meeting room while the Board is in session." If members of the press/audience want to conduct an interview, they should wait until the conclusion of the meeting, or go out in the hallway or to another room.

The President added that the Public Comments opportunities on the agenda are not question and

answer sessions. Questions that can be answered simply will be. Complex questions should be submitted to the Board or administration either via e-mail or letter for a response.

There were no comments from the public.

## 6. BOARD DIALOGUE TOPICS & PENDING ACTION CONSIDERATIONS

### 6.1 2011 Tax Levy Extension

At its November 14, 2011 meeting, the Board approved the Resolution Regarding Estimated Amounts Necessary to be Levied for Tax Year 2011. The next step in the levy process is to approve the 2011 Tax levy and submit it to the County Clerk before the last Tuesday in December as required by State statute. Approval of the 2011 tax levy is an important step in the budget process because the 2011 levy receipts cover half of the 2011/2012 budget.

The Assistant Superintendent Business Services explained that the tax levy sets forth the maximum receipts that can be received from property taxation in a given year. The 2011 levy request is for \$77,591,395, a 3.7% increase over the previous year's extension. The Levy is filed by fund but is limited in aggregate by the Property Tax Extension Limitation Act (PTELL). The Tax Cap Formula limits the actual amount that the school district will receive. Because the 2011 levy will increase less than 5%, a Truth in Taxation hearing was not required.

At the November 14th Board meeting, four options were presented for the Board's consideration relative to the levy request. The Financial Task Force developed a fifth option for the Board's consideration. Options 1 through 4 were reviewed and Option 5 was presented.

Option 1: Levy with no refunding or abatements and full CPI-U. Increase over prior year (5.31) - .42 per \$100 EAV. Average increase per \$288,000 = \$403.

Option 2: Levy with 2011 refunding, 2012 refunding and abatement, Education Fund Levy abatement, and full CPI-U. Increase over prior year (5.31) = .23 per \$100 EAV. Average increase per \$288,000 = \$307. November 2011 refunding completed at a savings of \$742,000. January 2011 refunding will complete the 2004A refunding at a projected combined total savings of \$1,033,000. November 2012 refunding and abatement moves debt out one additional year at a cost of approximately \$7 million dollars additional but gives a decrease in rate for the immediate levy years. Resolution by Board of Education required each year to abate the Education Levy increase. This option moves debt out one year at a cost of \$7 million dollars; gives some relief to tax payers but adds cost.

Option 3: Levy with 2011 refunding, 2012 refunding and abatement, and no CPI-U. Increase over prior year (5.31) = .35 per \$100 EAV. Average increase per \$288,000 = \$336. November 2011 refunding completed at a savings of \$742,000. January 2011 refunding will complete the 2004A refunding at a projected combined total savings of \$1,033,000. November 2012 refunding and abatement moves debt out one additional year at a cost of approximately \$7 million dollars additional but gives a decrease in rate for the immediate levy years. No CPI-U levied means a permanent loss of levy extension. This option, with no CPI-U, impacts all future levies.

Option 4: Levy with 2011 refunding, 2012 refunding and abatement, Education Levy Increase Abatement, \$10 million fund balance abatement, and full CPI-U. Increase over prior year (5.31) = .32 per \$100 EAV. Average increase per \$288,000 = \$307. Resolution by Board of Education each year to abate the Education Levy increase. Resolution to abate \$10 million dollars in fund balance reserve from the Education Fund. This would mean approximately \$20 million dollars reduction in the Education Fund over the next 6 years. Would reduce the Fund Balance limit in policy below 30% (17%). Bond rating would be lowered.

#### Option 5:

Levy with 2011 refunding, full CPI-U, Education Fund abatement to a \$15 million balance. CPI-U 1.5%; Operating Rate \$4.54; Debt Service Rate \$1.05; Total Tax Rate \$5.59. Option five would take 33 1/3 percent of the market value of a \$288,000 house to \$95,990 or and increase up to \$279.

Regardless of which option the Board chooses, property taxes will go up due to the State funding formula. Currently, the District has received no funding from the State other than General State Aid. The State owes the District \$50 million and if they don't come through with the money, Option 5 would provide the stability we need in the Education Fund balance. We want to keep the Operations & Maintenance and Transportation Fund balances at the current levels. A resolution to rebate from the

levy fund would need to be passed by March 1, 2012.

The administration and Financial Task Force recommended Option 5 which maintains \$15 million in the Education Fund balance and complies with Illinois School Code as well as Geneva 304 Policy 6220's requirement for 30% unrestricted reserves in the operating fund budget.

Option 5 makes aggressive use of our reserves and continues to pay off indebtedness. The Financial Task Force considered feedback received that requested that we not incur additional debt at the back end as some options did. Option 5 is sustainable on the bond side, provides some relief to taxpayers, and allows the District to maintain its high bond rating.

Board discussion, comments, questions: thanks to the Financial Task Force members for their work, agree Option 5 looks to be the best option, and also don't want to load up debt on the back end; appreciate the options and scenarios provided for consideration, the Board has until March 1st to adopt a resolution (correct, and we will continue to monitor the finances and if a better option is found, it will be brought to the Board for consideration); when we know the actual levy amount, there maybe even other options to consider; during discussions at the Board's most recent retreat, the Board was in consensus that we would try to find solutions to lower the District's debt; if we levy with a 1.5 rate at the very most the reduction would be \$240 (correct); there is no relief for our taxpayers (yes, there is) but only marginal relief, had hoped for more relief with a zero increase in the levy for at least two years; we'd all like that but levying for the full amount allows us the greatest flexibility to provide some relief for our taxpayers - if we don't levy, it will cost us \$16 million and not allow us to try to reduce our long-term debt - Option 5 will allow us to keep the amount for the levy down; agree would like to see no increase in the levy but then we can't give our taxpayers any relief; then we need to reduce our overhead in any way possible (we have reduced the budget by over \$5 million and that is what has allowed us to have the reserves we do and what allows us to be able to reduce where we can - but there are some expenses that we can't control); the budget is the next step and the Financial Task Force will be looking for ways to reduce the budget over the next few years; feedback from the community is to reduce our budget and use some of our reserves; if we are to reduce our budget, then we need to do it; we need to remember that our revenues are down because we aren't receiving any funding from the State (we also need to remember that a budget is only a plan, if we under spend, those dollars go into our reserves, additionally, we don't want to put our District in a position of being penalized by the State for not maintaining the required amount of reserves); why keep \$15 million in reserves (to cover our expenses if the State makes late or no payments to the District); will having only \$15 million in reserves impact our bond rating (no, it will not); regardless of what we do with the levy, we won't know what we will actually get until next spring.

The Financial Task Force has tried hard to be responsive to feedback provided by Board members and community members. They asked that Board members provide any additional feedback on the recommendation to the Superintendent or the Assistant Superintendent Business Services.

Motion by Nowak, second by Henry, to approve the 2011 tax levy extension, as recommended. On roll call, Ayes, five (5), Henry, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Moran. Nays, one (1), Grosso. Motion carried.

## 6.2 Authorization to Let Bids: GHS Burgess Field Turf Installation

Burgess Field has not been rebuilt since 1994. The goal posts need replacement and the track requires widening to eight lanes. Regardless of whether the field is replaced with grass or field turf, the field needs to be replaced because of crown and drainage issues. In order to complete the renovations by the start of the 2012-2013 academic year, the replacement and renovation project is scheduled to begin in May 2012. In April and November 2011, the Board accepted donations to replace the grass with FieldTurf. The administration requested authorization from the Board to solicit bids for the renovation of Burgess Field, including track widening and goals posts, for completion in August 2012.

Board discussion, comments, questions: prices may have gone up since this was last considered (agree, but hope to get bids and bring a recommendation to the Board in February); are we bidding both the field surface and substructure (yes); with the renovation of the field the Board may want to review use by public and private entities (good idea); are funds in the budget for the renovation (yes, in this year's and next year's budgets); will the Board see all the bids (yes, with a recommendation for the most reliable lowest bid).

Motion by Henry, second by Stith, to authorize the administration to solicit bids for the renovation of Burgess Field, as presented. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Grosso, Henry, Moran. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**6.3 Authorization to Increase .50 FTE Special Education Services Harrison Elementary & .20 FTE Speech Services Friendship Station Preschool**

Increased enrollment among special education students at Harrison Street Elementary School and Friendship Station Preschool, and Illinois State Board of Education case load limits, necessitates an increase in staffing levels. A .70 FTE increase (.50 FTE at Harrison and .20 FTE at Friendship Station) was recommended by the administration. The anticipated cost for the additional FTE is \$32,000 and would be funded through the Federal IDEA Grant.

Board discussion, comments, questions: how much remains in our contingency fund (about \$50,000).

Motion by Henry, second by Nowak, to authorize the administration to add .70 FTE special education services, as presented. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Nowak, Stith, Grosso, Henry, McCormick, Moran. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**6.4 Authorization for Web Application Specialist Position, Technology Department**

With the resignation of a Technician in the Technology Department in June 2011, the Director of Technology reassessed staffing needs in the department. To better serve students and staff, the Director of Technology recommended not filling the technician position (7 hrs/day, ten months), creating a new Web Application Specialist position (5.75 hrs/day, ten months), and increasing the technology assistant position at the high school (5.75 to 7 hrs/day, nine months). The new Web Application Specialist will handle web programming, SharePoint designing and deployment, and SQL Scripting, as well as focus on the development and integration of current and future online tools, cloud resources, and synchronized data. The Web Application Specialist is an important position and the majority of the work would be done during the summer months.

Board discussion, comments, questions: net cost or savings (slight savings).

Motion by McCormick, second by Henry, to approve the new Web Application Specialist position and the elimination of one Technician position, as recommended. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Stith, Grosso, Henry, McCormick, Nowak, Moran. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**6.5 GHS Out-of-Country Trip Proposal: England 2013**

The Geneva High School Principal requested permission for GHS students and staff to participate in an out-of-country trip to England during the 2013 Spring Break. The trip is expected to provide an educational and cultural experience for students that reinforces and enhances the English III curriculum and cultural appreciation. The request is in conformity with District policy.

Board discussion, comments, questions: is there historical data on the number of students that have participated in this type of trip (don't have exact numbers but the average is typically 12-15 student participants - the trip won't happen unless they get the required number of participants); please provide the Board with the number of student participants for the last few trips (will do).

Motion by Nowak, second by McCormick, to approve the 2013 out-of-country trip, as presented. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Grosso, Henry, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Moran. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**7. WORK-STUDY TOPICS & FUTURE ACTION CONSIDERATIONS**

**7.1 Policy 8506, Diabetes Management at School, NEW, First Reading**

This policy is a new policy developed in response to recent Illinois legislation. It has been reviewed by the District's school nurses, the administration, and the Board Policy Committee. It is presented for a first reading at this time. It will be brought back to the Board for second reading/adoption in January.

**8. INFORMATION**

**8.1 Suspension Report**

A Board member thanked the administration for providing historical data for comparison. It appears that so far this year, the number of out-of-school suspensions is about half of what they were at this time last year.

**9. CONSENT AGENDA**

9.1 Monthly Financial Reports & Interfund Transfers

9.2 Personnel Report: Resignations, Retirements, Leave Requests, Changes in Assignment/FTE, New Hires

Long-term Substitutes

Sullivan, Diana, GMSN, Social Worker, 1.0 FTE, 11/28/2011 - 1/27/2012

Samuelson, Carla, WAS, Reading Specialist, 1.0 FTE, 1/5/2012 - 4/4/2012

New Hires Support

Dean, Richard, Garage, Bus Driver, 9 Month, Start Date 12/12/2011

Stolfe, Cynthia, GHS, Hallway Supervisor, 4 hrs/day, 9 Month, Start Date 12/13/2011

Resignation Support

Barber, Kathy, HES, Building Secretary, 10 Month, Effective 12/16/2011

Reappointments/Reclassifications Support

Clark, James, GHS, 2nd Shift Temporary Custodian to 2nd Shift Full-time Custodian, 9 Month, Effective 12/12/2011

Chapman, David, GHS, Study Hall Supervisor 5.25 hrs/day to Special Ed Assistant 7 hrs/day, 9 Month, Effective 1/3/2012

9.3 Bid Summary/Award: School Buses, Two Years, Midwest Transit Equipment (IC), \$672,922 (net amount after buy-back)

Board discussion, comments, questions: relative to 9.3, will we need to have Tier 4 vs. Tier 3 engines due to emission regulations, which is just one more unfunded mandate requirement, and what impact will that have on costs, maintenance, etc. (we use non-urea buses - IC has their own engine that meets emission regulations, the difference in cost is about \$600 for the urea engine, and we don't have any problems with the IC bus engine); have we looked at a three-year, buy-back plan (we have, if we go to three years, there is more maintenance and inspection requirements, once a bus reaches 10,000 miles there is more maintenance that has to be done, we'd have to stock more parts and inventory for maintenance and we would have to add a second mechanic, which would add salary and benefit costs).

Motion by Henry, second by Stith, to approve Consent Agenda Item 9.1 through 9.3, as presented. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), Grosso, Henry, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Moran. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

**10. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON BOARD OF EDUCATION ACTION**

Comments included: our taxes are out of control, debt is partially the administration's fault and partially the fault of the citizens who voted for the referendums and those who didn't vote, suggest that the Board come up with three options to reduce the debt and provide relief to taxpayers and then let the community decide which option to go with, the Board has lost the community's trust and needs to win it back - also you could have supported no levy increase tonight, and we have a bus garage so use it and keep buses longer than two years; appreciate showing how each of the five options impacts a \$288,000 home, does the levy amount include the \$240 increase and will the rate stay level (it does not increase the debt, we have some bonds that are callable and some that are not), at the 2007 bond issuance, why were we able to exceed the amount (that requires a more complex response and we will get back to you), would like to see the Board not do that in the future; reviewed the William Blair report, have run a company and dealt with many economic cycles, the Board needs a conservative ten-year plan to forecast both costs and expenses, it appears you are looking at only year-to-year and you can't leave a debt-free legacy without a long-range plan.

**11. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS AND REPORTS**

*Policy Committee, Financial Task Force, Facilities Task Force, Joint PTO, Geneva All-Sports Boosters, Geneva Music Boosters, Geneva High School Theater Boosters, Academic Foundation, GEARS, K-12 Discipline Committee, Geneva Coalition for Youth, PRIDE, REMS Grant*

Board members reported that improvements and changes are being made to the District's website's frequently asked questions section to enhance communication and make the site more user-friendly. Community members were encouraged to visit the District's web site and provide feedback to the Board or to the District's Communication Coordinator regarding the changes. The Sports Boosters are planning another Trivia Night in February 2012.

**12. NOTICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

**13. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSIDER MATTERS PERTAINING TO COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATING MATTERS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC BODY AND ITS EMPLOYEES OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2)]; PENDING LITIGATION [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11)]; AND THE APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT, COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE, OR DISMISSAL OF SPECIFIC EMPLOYEES OF THE PUBLIC BODY [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)]**

At 8:03 p.m., motion by Henry, second by Stith, to go into executive session to consider matters pertaining to collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives; pending litigation, and the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body. On roll call, Ayes, six (6), McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Grosso, Henry, Moran. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

The President noted that action was not anticipated following executive session.

At 8:10 p.m., following a break for the room to clear, the Board moved into executive session.

At 9:06 p.m., motion by Grosso, second by Stith, and with unanimous consent, the Board returned to open session.

**14. ACTION POSSIBLE FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No action was taken.

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:07 p.m., motion by Grosso, second by McCormick, and with unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

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PRESIDENT

SECRETARY \_\_\_\_\_

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RECORDING  
SECRETARY