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, February 24, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. at Williamsburg Elementary School, 1812 Williamsburg Avenue, 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 7:02 p.m. by President Grosso.

Board members present: President, Mark Grosso, Leslie Juby, David Lamb, Michael McCormick, Vice President, Kelly Nowak; Policy Committee Chair, Mary Stith, Finance Committee Chair, Bill Wilson. Late: None. Absent: None.

The President welcomed everyone, reminded them to sign the attendance record, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

District administrators present: Tom Rogers, Principal, Geneva High School; Kelley Munch, Communication Coordinator; Craig Collins, Assistant Superintendent Personnel Services; Donna Oberg, Assistant Superintendent Business Services; Patty O'Neil, Assistant Superintendent Learning & Teaching; and Dr. Kent Mutchler, Superintendent.

Others present: Lynn Fors, Martha & Claire Scatterday, Joe & Megan Beitzel, Mike Abts, Ron Stevenson, Bob McQuillan, Fred Dresser, Beth, Gary & Emma Pappas, Wynn & Marlin Church, Kathy VanSpankeren, Chris Bourdage, Tom Anderson, Joy Baez, Andrea, Patricia & Brian Dahlberg, Jessica Dean, Denise LaCure, Rose Klauba, Jim Sronkoski, Brenda Schory (KC Chronicle), Jeannella Alford, Claire & Grace Ginsberg, McKenna Merges

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Per Board Policy 0167.3, Section C, Attendees wishing to speak at the Board meeting must register their intention to participate in the public portion(s) of the meeting upon their arrival at the meeting. Complete the form found in the Welcome to Our Meeting brochure (print legibly) and give it to the Presiding Officer or the Recording Secretary before the meeting is called to order.

Comments included:

Before you vote on the debt options, I'd like to know what's in them. What will the next ten years of taxes look like for an individual's property taxes with those options? I'd like to see the amounts for five-to-ten years of extensions. It's difficult for us to make that assessment. I've seen what's proposed but not the affect on my property tax bill or a representative sample of a typical tax bill. (The options are available on the District web site and the Finance Committee has discussed this and has scenarios associated with the options. The Board's goal is to flatten the debt. Doing nothing causes the debt to escalate. We are working to pay down principal whenever possible and hope there will be some new growth over the next few years. As a rule of thumb for estimating the impact for an average taxpayer on a $300,000 home, the EAV is $100,000. The 2013 EAV for the entire Geneva taxing school district is about $1.25 billion. $100,000 over $1.25 billion is your portion of any increase in a tax bill. A $1 million increase in debt service would be $80.00 in incremental taxes. If the increase is $8 million it would be $480 for the average taxpayer. For the owner of a $600,000 home, the EAV would be $200,000. A $1 million increase would be $160. That is a good rule of thumb for determining the impact.)

My question is: What will each option do to my yearly taxes? There are five options and it's hard for me to decipher every option. It would be nice to know what the tax impact would be on the average $300,000 home for every option being considered. (It's been since October that the Board has discussed this topic at a board meeting. The Finance Committee has been discussing this all along and I'd like to see the Board take action related to this topic in March. There are more than five options and it's likely that there could be a combination of the options discussed. We want to determine the best fit for the District and the taxpayers.)

As a Geneva taxpayer and the Assessor for Geneva Township, I wanted to say that from the assessor's office there is good news and bad news. It looks like property values are stabilizing in Geneva and may increase slightly this year; although we don't have all the figures from the county or state yet to know what is going to happen next year. Last year, commercial and industrial property values were stable and we lost very little value. It is important to know this because the more commercial and industrial property values we have results in less tax burden to the residents. There were a number of complaints for the Board of Review this year but we gave up less than 4% of what was being asked from residential and gave nothing away for commercial/industrial complaints. We work closely with the Board of Education's attorney (Josh Whitt, Whitt Law, LLC) and have a very cooperative relationship with him. The assessor encouraged anyone interested to attend an appeal process hearing in order to better understand the process. (The President, on behalf of the Board of Education, thanked the assessor for her professional work.)

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1 Regular Session February 10, 2014

3.2 Executive Session February 10, 2014

The President noted that a Board member had requested an amendment to the regular session minutes of February 10, 2013, and the minutes presented for approval reflected the change.

Motion by Stith, second by Juby, to approve the above-listed minutes as presented. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Juby, Lamb, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Wilson, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

4. RECOGNITION, AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS

4.1 Tradition of Excellence Award: GHS Students

National Merit Scholarship Program; Girls' Gymnastics

The Superintendent remarked that we are all very proud of our students and the staff members who work with them and the Tradition of Excellence Award is the highest award presented by the Board of Education.

The Principal thanked the Board for the opportunity to present these students in recognition of their accomplishments. He also thanked the coaches.

Students recognized:

National Merit Scholarship Program - Commended

Brian Dahlberg, Alana Goodrich, Emma Pappas, Ryan Schneider

To receive National Merit Scholarship Commended status, students must place among the top five percent (or above the 95th percentile) of the more than one million students who took the 2012 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

National Merit Scholarship Program - Finalist

Jeannelle Alford, Rian Kormos, Destin Tunca

To receive National Merit Scholarship Finalist status, students must place among the top one-half of one percent (or above the 99.5 percentile) of college-bound students in Illinois on the 2012 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

IHSA State Gymnastics Meet – Fifth Place Team

Megan Beitzel, Dominique Brognia, Claire Ginsberg, Grace Ginsberg, McKenna Merges, Claire Scatterday

In addition, Freshman **Claire Ginsberg** was named the IHSA All-Around State Champion and individually placed third in floor exercise, fourth in vault and beam, and eighth on bars.

The students and their coaches were congratulated on their achievements and the students were presented the Tradition of Excellence Award.

5. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

The Superintendent reported that this Thursday is a ½ day of student attendance for parent/teacher conferences as well as other activities and this Friday is an institute day with staff members involved in professional development activities provided by the District, the Kane and DuPage Regional Offices of Education, and VALEES.

The Assistant Superintendent for Personnel Services asked Board members to add two upcoming events to their calendars. On May 8th at 3:30 p.m. at Geneva Middle School South retiring staff members will be recognized at a reception. Retiring staff members will also be recognized during the May 12, 2014 Board meeting. He noted that three administrative assistants with the longest tenure in the District will be retiring this year - Pam Burgeson, Central Office, Nancy Lindenmuth, Geneva High School, and Linda Sikora, Geneva Middle School North. Along with retiring Payroll Specialist Kathy Wollert, these individuals represent nearly 100 years of service to the District. He added that our administrative staff does great work behind the scenes to make sure our District runs smoothly and we want to recognize these individuals later this spring for their service to the District. He commented that while it is not usual that we lose our three longest-serving administrative assistants in any one year, that is the case this year and it is a special opportunity to recognize their good work. He encouraged Board members to attend the May 8th reception if their schedule permitted.

6. BOARD DIALOGUE TOPICS & PENDING ACTION CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 GHS Out-of-Country Trip, Spain, Summer 2015 (Tabled 2/10/2014)
The Geneva High School Principal and World Language instructor responded to questions from Board members related to chaperones for additional/optional excursions and hotel accommodations. (Any additional excursions would include all students and chaperones. Student safety is a priority on these trips. Hotel accommodations are all arranged and confirmed by ACIS Student Tour Company.)

6.2 GHS Out-of-Country Trip, England, Summer 2015
No discussion.

Motion by Wilson, second by Stith, to approve Items 6.1 and 6.2, the Summer 2015 trips to Spain and England, as presented. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Lamb, McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Wilson, Juby, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

6.3 Policy Updates – 2nd Reading

1422 **New,** 3122 & 4122 **Revised**, *Nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity*
1522, **Delete**, *Nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity*
1422.02 **New**, 3122.02 & 4122.02 **Revised**, *Nondiscrimination Based on Genetic Information of the Employee*
8462, **Revised**, *Child Abuse and Neglect*
9130, **Revised**, *Public Complaints and Grievances*
2413, **New**, *Health Education*
2414, **New**, *Sex and Family Life Education*
5517.03, **New**, *Teen Dating Violence*

A Board member noted that Policy 2414 contained a typographical error; i.e., the word should be advance, not advanced. The Policy Committee Chair noted that many of the new policies and revisions to existing policies were legislative requirements and requested that the administration ensure that parents would be informed of the new and revised policies.

Motion by Juby, second by Lamb, to adopt the new and revised policies as presented. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), McCormick, Nowak, Stith, Wilson, Juby, Lamb, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

7. WORK-STUDY TOPICS & FUTURE ACTION CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 Debt Restructuring Discussion
The Board President noted that one of the goals of the Board of Education is to pay off debt and flatten the debt service payment each year in order to make it easier for taxpayers to plan for their property taxes.

The Finance Committee Chair reported that over the last several months, the Finance Committee has discussed debt restructuring and has explored a number of options to achieve that goal. To date, the District has abated about $8.2 million and is on target to abate $5.9 million this year. Through abatements, the debt service rate has been lowered by as much as $0.26. The District has also refunded bond issues for savings in 2010, 2011 and 2012. The goal is to continue to pay off debt. The feedback we've received indicates that residents prefer smaller increases they can plan for each year vs. large jumps in their tax bill. All of the Board members also pay taxes. The Finance

Committee looked at a variety of options which included abatement, refunding, defeasance, setting aside additional funds to pay down principal when possible and flatten out debt payments and levy rate, and using reserve funds without jeopardizing the District's finances or bond rating, and maintaining the Working Cash Fund at the current level to be used for cash flow purposes. Over the last few years, we've been trending at about $15 - $16 million in debt payment with abatement. The Committee also looked at the possibility of reducing the annual debt service payment to about $17 million. At the last Finance Committee meeting, Elizabeth Hennessey from William Blair was asked to review options and present options for a plan that included abatement, additional funds each year for refunding, and the possibility of extending the debt.

The updated William Blair debt restructuring options were received late this afternoon.

Option I: Abate through 2016; refund/defease Fall of 2017.
Assumes current financial projection, no additional surpluses in FY2014 or thereafter.
Uses Educational Funs surpluses over $15M per current projection through FY2017.
Refund/defeasance takes place in Fall 2017.
Does not use prospective surpluses in FY2018 or FY2019.
Extends debt service payments for four years.
Note: Surplus amounts in the Education Fund are abated in the next fiscal year. Assumes full Property Tax Limitation Law Levy allowing CPI + new property is extended annually, except for levy year 2013 (1% increase).

Option II: Abate through 2016; refund/defease Fall of 2017 + $5 Million.
Assumes current financial projection and additional surplus of $2 million in FY2014 and lowering the fund balance to $14 million in the Education Fund to divert and additional $1 million to debt defeasance in FY2015-2017.
Refund/defeasance takes place in Fall 2017.
Does not use prospective surpluses in FY2018 or FY2019.
Extends debt service payments by four years from current final maturity.
Note: Surplus amounts in the Education Fund are abated in the next fiscal year. Assumes full Property Tax Limitation Law Levy allowing CPI + new property is extended annually, except for levy year 2013 (1% increase). Assumes FY2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 additional funds in the fund balance are dedicated to debt reduction in 2017.

The Assistant Superintendent Business Services reported that Hennessey ran scenarios using a $17 million yearly debt payment. Currently, the District's debt service payments are increasing yearly. We've tried to keep them between $15 - $16 million, but they'll increase up to $25 million over the next ten years. We are looking at leveling that out starting at $19 million going down to $17 million, and then down to $15 million; which is doable. However, we would have to refund non-callable bonds. Refunding non-callable bonds incurs additional costs. Staying at $19 million and only refunding callable bonds we would incur additional cost. For the District, it might be better to stay at $17 or $15 million and extend the debt out an additional four years. While there would be additional cost, it puts funds aside so that when the bonds are callable in 2017/2018, the extra funds could be used to pay down some debt in addition to restructuring and refunding the bonds.

The Finance Chair and Assistant Superintendent Business Services, in response to a public comment earlier about tax impact, noted that the options provided by William Blair estimated the tax rate for debt service and the annual savings/cost tax impact estimates on a $315,000 home. In 2017/2018 bonds would become callable and we would not abate after FY2016. We would refund and use the additional dollars set aside to pay down debt.

Board discussion, comments, questions:
The annual savings is relative to the District doing nothing. You have to look at what we are paying now. In Option II, we're at about $15 to $15.5 million annual debt service. In Option II, we'd level that off, which leaves the current debt service payment for the average taxpayer unchanged. The Finance Committee also discussed extending debt and I have thought about that. Between 2001 and 2008, the Board went to the community for referendum to raise capital to build facilities. Through referendum, the community agreed to pay off the debt. Refinancing and extending the debt pushes the debt off to the next generation of taxpayers. Fundamentally, I have a problem with that and feel it is wrong. However, I can come to grips with extending the debt a bit because I see our five-year decline in average EAV being about 16% since 2009 while the average tax bill has gone up 15%. Unemployment is about 7% in the country. But while things are improving and real estate is picking

up, I feel we need to give our taxpayers some relief now. In my opinion, Option II has the right balance and meets our top three goals: it reduces overall indebtedness, smoothes debt service payments, and provides long-term sustainable benefit to the taxpayers.

The President reiterated that the Board had just received the updated William Blair options late this afternoon and they would be available to the public by the next Finance meeting. These provided a couple of additional options in addition to those discussed in the past.

The Board members are taxpayers, too, and finding a way to deal with this issue has been an ongoing goal of the Board. There is no one thing we can do to solve our debt problem. However, we have multiple tools available that we can use to pay our debt. Instead of watching it climb, we can flatten it out and provide all of us some relief in our tax bills. As the economy grows and more people join our community, they can help us pay the debt, which was the intent of the original debt structure strategy. I'd like to see us continue to use multiple strategies to address our debt. While I have concerns about extending the debt and incurring additional costs, I have a problem with not meeting our obligations. But we have to use everything at our disposal and the economy hasn't turned around as quickly as we thought. We can also use some of the reserve balances to pay principal. I believe the Board on an annual basis needs to commit its self to save money to pay off debt when we can and to use all the tools available to us to accomplish that.

I have a couple of questions. Which of the options is the Assistant Superintendent Business Services recommending? (I'm not really recommending an option, as we are working on this in the Finance Committee. What I want to do is put a plan in place. The plan is that over the next five years we take anything over $15 M in the Ed Fund and put it towards abatement. Then take an additional $1 or $2 M, depending on what we decide on an annual basis, we need to look at it each year because we can't make a decision now for a five-year period, then set aside the extra dollar amount to use to pay off debt principal. There would be a plan and a process in place. Regarding a dollar amount, the rate amount, will be dependent on EAV, new growth, and other things that impact the formula. It's unrealistic to try to determine a specific dollar amount for five years. We know the numbers for this year but we don't know what the numbers will be for the next four years.) So, these options are all worthless? (No, they are not worthless. They are examples and projections. We have assumptions of what our projections and reserves will be.) My point is that at some point we are going to have to have to look at numbers. (Option I is just extending debt out four years and leveling out, as much as possible, the bond debt dollar amount and doing abatement through 2016. Option II is doing the same thing plus taking an additional $5 M over the next four years to pay down principal. However, the $5 M could be $7 M or $5.5 M; it just depends on what our balances are at the end of the year. I have to balance not only the Education Fund, but the Operation and Maintenance Fund and the Transportation Fund, and those funds aren't looking great over the next few years. It's balancing all of that. This is a plan and I'd like to stick to this plan but the numbers can change annually.) I understand all that, but my point is that you get the big bucks to juggle those balls, so I want to see numbers. (I am juggling those balls.) I think what we are hearing from the community is that they want to know a ball park dollar amount. I'm not saying ten years out, but I need to see numbers. (By leveling the rate, the amount that you are paying for long-term debt every year on your taxes will remain essentially the same if the EAV remains the same. If EAV goes down it will go up and if EAV goes up it will go down. The goal is to level/flatten debt.)

I understand your concerns, but neither William Blair, nor the Assistant Superintendent Business Services, is making a recommendation. The Finance Committee asked William Blair to provide additional options to flatten out the debt.

I'm not criticizing the plan; I just want to be educated on it before I vote on it.

I don't have a finance background and I understand these concerns. This is a difficult decision. But the Geneva Township Assessor just told us tonight that she thinks the EAV is holding steady and might be better, but she can't promise that for this year, let alone next year. We can make promises to the community about the numbers five years from now, but there is no confidence in those numbers/projections, they are estimates. That is the reality. From my perspective, and I'm still considering and we don't know what the state payments will be, I like the combinations. I'm just not sure how comfortable I am with extending the debt. There is a cost to extend the debt. In all other aspects of our day-to-day operations, other than the debt, the District is financially sound and I don't want that to be threatened. Over the weekend, I attended an Illinois Association of School Boards meeting with Board of Directors from all over the State of Illinois. A board member from Maine

Township was talking about debt reduction and about a really innovative thing that people aren't doing anywhere. I asked what it was and he said abatement. I told him Geneva has been doing abatement for four years. Abatement is an option that other school districts are now considering.

The Finance Committee also discussed whether or not it was a good idea to extend the debt. We considered two years but it appears that four years would be best. It is important to remember that when the debt was sold to the community it was with the understanding that future growth and new residents would share the burden because they would be using the schools as soon as they moved in. This plan would extend the debt and live up to the promise that future residents would share in the debt repayment.

I understand the frustration. We are juggling a lot of different balls. There are many variables that go into creating projections. Anyone in business knows that you don't create projections at one point in time and expect that to be your plan forever. Circumstances change and projections need to be updated and reevaluated regularly. The plan is a road map. We can't say with any certainty, nor can the assessor, what the EAV is going to be for next year or in future years. The state doesn't pay us in a timely manner. The Board has determined that we will keep two months of funds in accounts in order to pay our obligations in a timely manner. Most would agree that is good business practice. Last year, the sate made a payment that was so late that it had to be placed in the the next fiscal year, which resulted in balances in excess of where we anticipated we would be and these numbers change every year. We are looking at all of the tools available to us, with the assumption that the numbers are going to change annually, to determine at this point in time, with all of the information we have now to help us consider the relative benefits if we employ all of the tools. The goal is to determine what good practice is, and we are looking at what tools and opportunities to use to flatten the debt service. We will need to look at this every year.

We are looking for the most cost effective way to save to pay off debt principal. But right now short-term interest rates are so low that it doesn't generate much interest income to help pay off debt when it comes due. Consequently, we are looking at a combination of all options/strategies.

Option II is targeting $15.1 M. If EAV goes up or down, if everyone's goes up equally, an individual's portion of the $15.1 M will be exactly the same. We need new property online. EAV changes for existing property does not impact an individual's portion of the $15.1 M. Additionally, abatement is not paying down debt. It is an offset. We collect taxes in one year and use it if it is above the $15 M to offset our debt service the following year. It is a smoothing mechanism. It doesn't save anyone taxes. You pay it upfront and that allows it not to cause a spike in your taxes.

I like the idea of flattening debt and putting aside funds to pay principal. But what if we extend debt four years and three years into the plan we determine that our assumptions weren't as conservative as we thought, can we change our minds? (Once you've done the refunding. . .) We can't refund until 2017. (Correct we don't refund until 2017. And we can change our mind up to 2017.) So if our assumptions are way off, we can change our mind about the plan. (Yes, up until you do the refunding we can change our mind.) Then we are really not being held to anything until 2017 and I think that it is important to know that if our assumptions weren't very good, we would know that pretty quickly and could reevaluate our options.

We are being held to a plan based on our best estimates today. (Correct, it is just a plan.) That is all that anyone can expect of us.

The plan allows us a little flexibility.

Pushing out the debt a little, gives us some optionality. If we do have some incremental growth, and I hope we do, if we can, we can pay incremental debt depending on the structure of it. Just because we have the incremental cost doesn't mean we have to realize it. It's like having a 30 year mortgage and paying it off in 15 years. You save a lot of interest.

I'm in favor of paying off principal and that whenever we have that opportunity we have that optionality.

I'd really like to see us use some of the reserve money to use to pay callable bonds off and take the Education Fund down from $15 M but I don't know yet what that lower amount is. I'd also like to see the money go right into the Bond & Interest Fund so it sends a clear message where the Board is heading even though there might not be some investment opportunities. (It's not just the investment opportunities. You are putting money away for five years down the road. If you put that money in the Bond & Interest Fund, it is restricted and you can never touch it again. If you put it aside as a reserve in the Working Cash Fund, it is still there to pay down debt. But if something happens in three years and we need to use some of those reserve dollars, it cannot be taken out of Bond & Interest.) I always save for everything, so that is my guiding principal. (I understand that but I don't want us to have those restrictions by putting those funds in Bond & Interest.)

Board members were encouraged to communicate any ideas or question to members of the Finance Committee or to the Assistant Superintendent Business Services prior to the March Finance Committee meeting.

8. INFORMATION

8.1 Student Discipline Report
8.2 Geneva High School 2013-2014 First Semester Counseling Report
8.3 Property Tax Appeal Update

Relative to Item 8.3, it was requested that the Assistant Superintendent Business Services provide a breakdown of attorney costs associated with the property tax assessment complaints and appeals process as they had received in the past. (We don't pay the full amount. We have an intergovernmental agreement and share the costs with other Geneva taxing bodies.)

9. CONSENT AGENDA

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

Long-term Substitutes Certified
Titus, Colette, FS, Speech Language Pathologist, 1.0 FTE, from 3/14/14 to 4/10/14
Khan, Sabha, FS, ELL/Special Education, 1.0 FTE, from 4/8/14 to 6/5/14
New Hires Support
Plate, Susan, District, Substitute Custodian, 12 Month, Start Date 2/25/14
Jones, Tim, CO/District, Building Services Coordinator, 12 Month, Start Date 3/24/14
Long-term Substitute Support
Ellibee, Jeff, GMSN, Special Education Assistant, 9 Month, from 2/15/14 to 4/7/14
Retirement Support
Noverio, John, WES, Custodian, 12 Month, Effective 6/6/14

9.2 Pay Request # 6, FINAL, $34,289.44, Alpine Demolition Services, Coultrap Demolition
9.3 Pay Request #1, FINAL, $159,547.41, Vortex Enterprises, Inc., GHS Flooring Replacement
9.4 ISBE School Maintenance Project Grant Application, Round 2
9.5 Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Illinois School Security Grant Application

Discussion: How do we find grants? (We search for them and some are posted by the State and the Regional Office of Education.)

Motion by Nowak, second by Lamb, to approve Consent Agenda Items 9.1 through 9.5 as presented. On roll call, Ayes, seven (7), Nowak, Stith, Wilson, Juby, Lamb, McCormick, Grosso. Nays, none (0). Motion carried unanimously.

10. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON BOARD OF EDUCATION ACTION

Comments included:
Thanks for your service, it is appreciated. Relative to Item 7, debt restructuring discussion, a Board member asked a wonderful question about our road map/plan: "Can we change directions if we find that our assumptions/projections are not what we anticipated?" From the last Finance Committee meeting, it is my understanding that if funds are placed in the Bond & Interest Fund, they can't be removed because the fund is restricted, but if we allocate money and it is kept in the Working Cash Fund, according to William Blair, those funds can be invested and used to get a better return to buy bonds in 2017. But if we need those funds back to cover operation costs before 2017 we cannot take it from Bond & Interest. Am I correct? (Yes. Bond & Interest is not in an operating fund. By resolution, funds placed in Working Cash come out of our reserve balance calculations and can be a separate line item so future Boards would know our intentions.)

The review hearing results prepared by Whitt Law show that our tax dollars are working for us. But it is my staff doing the work so my question is: Does the District need an intervener when the assessor's staff is doing their job? I am proud of my assessor staff and what they do for our community and I would like to discuss this further with the Finance Committee.

I won't be as nice as the assessor. I agree that the assessor's staff does the work and the District's attorney bills the District. Over the past 30 years I've sat through many presentations and figure out what is really being said. I will comment on some conversations I've heard at several Finance Committee meetings and at tonight's Board meeting. Debt service is not bound by the tax cap. Any levy increases are in addition to increases in debt repayments. A maximum levy will cause a large jump in yearly taxes. Abatement is not savings. I believe it is the result of the District over taxing today's taxpayers to create an artificial excess in the Education Fund above $15 M. If you didn't use abatement, you wouldn't need to tax the money to us. I can tell you tonight what an average taxpayer's increase will be if we flatten out the debt payment to $19 M a year. Using a Board member's figures, our level payment is about $15 M a year. If we go to $19 M, that is $4 M more a year. $4 M x $80 per million is $320 a year in addition to what we are paying right now and that will be billed to us until 2026. That doesn't take into any other considerations except the debt. Any levy increase would be on top of that. I agree that we owe the debt that was passed by referendum but it needs to be pointed out that the public was never given a payback schedule for what the debt repayment would be and the Board went over the debt limit of 13.7% of the operating revenues and had to get premium bonds. The enrollment projections provided in the 2007 referendum were above the numbers the District's consultant provided. I believe it is pretty easy to say that any school board in Geneva will find it difficult to pass any construction referendums in the long-term. Using the reserve balance to pay down debt is a great idea but the problem is that I've never been able to get an answer as to what the true reserve balance is, so I'll ask again: What is our reserve balance? I also request that any questions the Board members ask outside of a public meeting be posted with the answers so the taxpayers are informed as to how you are making your decisions, especially if we are the ones that will have to pay back the $301 M.

11. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS AND REPORTS

Policy Committee, Finance Committee, Boundary Task Force, Communications Task Force, Facilities Task Force, Joint PTO, Geneva Academic Foundation, Geneva All-Sports Boosters, Geneva Music Boosters, Geneva High School Theater Boosters, GEARS, K-12 Discipline Committee, Geneva Coalition for Youth, PRIDE, Fox Valley Career Center, IASB/Legislative, IASB Kishwaukee Governing Board, REMS Grant Advisory Board

Board members reported they had attended a Geneva Theatre Boosters meeting, the spring musical is *Jeckyll & Hyde;* a PRIDE Volunteer meeting, planning is underway for the spring event to thank volunteers; a Joint PTO meeting, the Assistant Superintendent Learning & Teaching presented on the Common Core; and an Illinois Association of School Boards' Board of Directors meeting. Board and community members were reminded of the Geneva All-Sports Boosters Trivia Night on March 1st.

12. NOTICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

13. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:29 p.m., motion by Wilson, second by Juby, and with unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED ______________________________ ______________________________ PRESIDENT

SECRETARY ______________________________ ______________________________ RECORDING SECRETARY