

District Council Minutes

December 9, 2014. 3:00 at Nassau

Next Meeting: **Tuesday, February 17, 2014. 3:00 at Nassau.**

Future Meeting Dates: Tuesday, May 12.

Attendees: Sharon Ciccone (elementary teacher rep), John Farrell (elementary school rep), Jennifer Kaufman (HS parent rep), James Linacre (student rep), Steve Malkischer (secondary school principal rep), Lois Powell (superintendent), Erin Ruppert (Hagan parent rep), Vickie Setzer (Todd parents rep), and Mark Van Horne (secondary school teacher rep)

Special guest: Michele Moloney, Business Manager

Jeanne Nemes (support staff representative) is stepping down.

Action: Lois Powell to secure a replacement.

Approval of Minutes:

We reached consensus that after the Meeting Minutes are emailed to the members of the District Council if Jennifer hasn't heard back from 1-2 people but everyone else has approved the minutes via email, then the Minutes will be labeled Approved.

Budget Exit Survey Results (Michele Moloney):

Michele Moloney presented information regarding the May 20, 2014 Budget Exit Survey. Using graduates from college to get survey participation worked out better than HS students who had to get to classes on and off throughout the day. It was noted that people voting in the early morning are usually in a hurry to get to work and less likely to participate.

The total ballots: 665 (including absentee). Total yes votes = 516. Total no votes = 149. These numbers would be enough to exceed the tax cap.

71.4% (135 people) of those who responded to the survey agreed with the district's decision to stay within the tax cap. 10.1% (19 people) disagreed with the decision. 18.5% (35 people) said they had "no opinion." Some could have felt a good budget is a good budget whether it exceeded the tax cap or not. Some could have been 18 or 19-year-old students who aren't necessarily aware of the tax cap issue.

Lois stated she believed staying within the tax cap is still important and doesn't feel it's necessary to try to exceed it at this time.

15.1% (30 people) of those who responded said they did not vote in the past. Many of those could be 18-year-olds now eligible to vote for the first time.

District council members believed knowing whether or not the voter has children in the district is important.

District council members believed the age groups could be grouped better (with 18-25 and over 60 categories).

Action: Michele is going to review a different survey we use and look at how the # of children a person has in the district is asked and change the age ranges.

Revenue Generation (Michele Moloney):

Michele Moloney presented information regarding Alternate Funding Sources. Most of our revenue is generated by taxes and what is dictated by the State. We generate \$265K/year from rental of Martha Lawrence. We can bill Faith Christian for healthcare services. There's also interest earnings and State Aid.

Michele presented ideas for non-traditional revenue streams. Some are not viable because of NYS Law. NYS frowns upon pouring rights (advertising products in the building). Some areas have radio stations that have a bus channel but there are advertisements on these stations.

Any corporate sponsorships have to be competitively bid and districts cannot sell naming rights (for example accepting money for a scoreboard with the corporations name).

Procurement cards (P cards) – a district credit card where you get points (credit) for using it. Requires tight internal controls so it's not abused. Some districts do have this and we're watching those districts to see how it goes with them first.

Facilities fees – we don't charge Boys Scouts/Girls Scouts, etc. but did increase the fees for use of gym, library, etc. by other groups based on what other schools around us were charging.

Question: Do we rent out the Auditorium at the HS? I know dance programs are often looking for venues for their end-of-year recitals. It would be on a weekend.

Response: Yes, if the funds are donated to a charity or the program is non-for-profit Auditoriums can be used.

Question: Other schools rent out for dance recitals, which are for-profit, how do other schools do this?

Response: The Company makes money during the year and just needs a place for the recital so they probably donate any money raised (above the Auditorium rental cost) to a charity.

Response: I thought at a certain point in May we didn't allow it because of conflict with our own events.

Response: We have the play about 2 weeks after April Break and the Auditorium is used for concerts by all the buildings but these events are over by June or beginning of June.

Michele stated we are in the process of having an online system that will display availability of our gyms, etc. and to make scheduling them more automated.

Grants – we don't have high poverty levels here but we have gotten some grants. We recently received a Dutchess County one for \$63K, thru March 2016, joint with the Town of Poughkeepsie for salting and sanding parking lots.

It was noted that the Town was there this morning and did a fantastic job.

We are looking to doing other things with the town to improve efficiency.

We are looking into a records management grant and speaking with someone next week.

Professional development grants (leadership opportunities for teachers) sometimes we can get from the State through a consortium

Question: Is Solar an option? I know there's no cost up front.

Erin kindly volunteered her husband's services regarding discussing energy efficiency with Michele. We discussed the few pros and likely cons. We also discussed the few pros and likely cons of cell tower rentals.

We discussed the scheduling issues involved if we try to coordinate sharing programs with other schools. We used to have a "distance learning" room at the HS but we had trouble even finding common time to schedule since other schools' start/stop times aren't necessarily the same. It was decided it's worth a conversation with smaller schools likely facing the same issues.

Some school districts (such as Chappaqua¹) charge tuition to students who move out of the district on a pro rated basis. Since we can't discriminate accepting out-of-district students on a tuition basis, it can wind up costing more than the tuition brings in if a student is special needs.

Action: If anyone has any other ideas, feel free to forward them to Lois.

Budget Forum (Lois Powell / Michele Moloney):

There were about 30 participants at the November 3 Budget Forum. The next one is scheduled for February 9 with an earlier start time of 6:30 p.m. The Board of Education decided last night they wanted feedback from the administration regarding potential cuts. Groups will split up at one point so everyone gets a chance to discuss other topics.

Action: Format is not set. If you have any suggestions, contact Lois.

Action: If you want to participate, we will happily accept volunteers. Contact Lois.

Additional Discussion:

We send a budget survey to the whole community prior to the budget.

Action: We are looking for a committee to refine this. If anyone is interested, contact Lois.

Agenda for Next Meeting (February 17):

Topics:

Parent survey plans:

Survey plan for the Community – we would like to discuss when to give surveys and what to do with the results we get back. Dave Webster brought up a point about not counting the “neutral” or “gray area” survey questions but rather focusing on questions where there is a strong positive or negative opinion as well as focusing on the 10% unfavorable responses and developing an action plan for those. Lois recognizes that the District Council committed to 4 meetings per year but a 5th meeting may be needed. No District Council Members objected to the idea.

Parent survey results:

The parent engagement and satisfaction survey results were disseminated along with comments, a redacted edition.

Action: Homework for *all District Council Members* is to review the parent survey results.

Follow-up on pre-and post-assessment memo from State Ed:

A draft letter was disseminated for review.

Action: Homework for *all District Council Members* is to review the pre- and post-assessment memo from State Ed.

We will have *Baldrige Feedback* by next meeting as well.

Action: If any *District Council Members* have any additional items to add to this agenda, contact Lois Powell.

¹ See <http://www.ccsd.ws/policies.cfm?pid=18837>