

Call to Order at 7:02 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: was done by Mr. Sutton, President.

Emergency Exit Review was done by Mr. Sutton, President.

Board Members Present were Mrs. B. Foster, Mrs. L. Gormley, Mr. J. Helft, Mr. R. Mausert, Mr. D. Skott, Mr. D. Sutton and Mr. D. Wilwol.
Also present was Ms. P. Cottrell, District Clerk, Mr. K. Facin, Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. P. Hatfield, School Business Admin, Mrs. K. Philpott, Director of Spec Ed, Mr. P. Dailey, K-6 Principal and Mrs. S. Vadney, 7-12 Principal.

Board Presentations:

- Mr. Sutton stated that this evening it is our privilege to receive 4 board presentations.
- Mr. Facin commented that these presentations are acknowledging the hard work of our students, our student athlete and our student athlete scholar teams. It is a pleasure to recognize these achievements as they are earned achievements. Following this, the students get to receive an ice cream social and celebrate their successes.
- 1. Academic Awards: Principal's List – Presenters John Helft, Stacy Vadney
 - Mrs. Vadney explained that these students receive an overall average of 95 or higher.
 - Mr. Helft commented on behalf of the board and himself, he would like to welcome parents and students this evening and that this is what the school is all about to acknowledge these academic achievements and that everyone is a winner.
- 2. Drama Scholar: Presenters John Helft, Stacy Vadney, Rob Allen
 - Mrs. Vadney explained that these students receive an average of 90 or higher and show dedication and active participation in a drama production.
- 3. Scholar Athlete: Presenters John Helft, Stacy Vadney, Mike Lilac
 - Mrs. Vadney explained that these students receive an average of 90 or higher and show sportsmanship and dedication on an athletic team.
- 4. Scholar Teams: Presenters John Helft, Stacy Vadney, Mike Lilac
 - Mrs. Vadney explained that these students receive an average of 90 or higher as a team collectively, two teams this season, boys and girls basketball teams.
 - Mr. Helft stated that having the whole team having a 90 average or higher is very remarkable and I would like to thank you for your hard work and dedication.
- Mr. Facin thanked each and every student that received an award this evening because you are the academic roll models of our school and we greatly appreciate that. You lead the way academically and I would like to thank the parents for valuing education because this cannot be done without that extra push at home and without those expectations and for that, we greatly appreciate it.
- 5. Highest average on a team.
 - Mr. Helft announced the highest average on a team.
 - Boys Basketball David Ciuk
 - Girls Basketball Erin Shea
 - Cheerleading Sara Gleason
 - Bowling James Lynch

Public Comment Session: Started at 7:28 pm and Ended at 7:43 pm.

- Mrs. Zilinskas spoke on behalf of the 10 teaching assistants who are losing their jobs and that 9 live in the district and are taxpayers and 2 are single parents and 5 will be left without health insurance. What worries me as a special education teacher where most of our teaching assistants are placed in our classrooms is that over the last two years and up until then, there was always a process in place

that made sense, last year it began not to make any sense and this year it doesn't make sense. The needs of our students are in jeopardy. Our students have been short changed. This year I have one less teaching assistant and the impact that it has had on the kids has been tremendous. Now this year, even before we go to our meetings which is for us to plan for the kids accordingly, we will be losing 10 more. They don't ask for anything, they are there for our kids and are very invaluable to us and especially to the kids. This dismantles our programs without them. I can't do it without them. It should be about the kids and their needs and not about the money. It is not so the teachers can do less, it's for the kids to get more. I hope I am not risking retribution because my views are very different than some of yours. Mr. Sutton stated that there is no retribution. Mrs. Zilinskas stated that she felt she needed to say that. I don't mean to be disrespectful to any of you, but I hope you can try to understand what is best for our kids and to accommodate their needs. They are part of our community. They are not getting the support that they need and are very important people. I invite you to my classroom and see how we function day by day with our teaching assistant in our classroom. I need to support them and I don't feel they are getting the support that they need, not only tonight, but every day.

- Susan Herrington, a Family Consumer Science Teacher stated that she would like to support her department and how it will impact the students. I am requesting tonight that you review this once again. The Home Ec department has a history here at Hoosick Falls and when I came here, I was very impressed with the experiences that were shared with me from former home ec students. I understand that it is not required by NYS. The loss of this department will impact several areas and I would appreciate your reconsidering this cut.
- Beth Perry, parent, I understand that we need to cut and this evening we saw some wonderful achievements tonight and these achievements are because of the teachers and the teaching assistants. Some of the teaching assistants have been with our students since they were in the elementary. We cannot lose them, we need them, so please reconsider this.

Board President's Report:

- In lieu of the public comments we just had regarding what we are facing, no one should think that any of the decisions that are being made in this budgetary process by this board at this point in time are being done with anything but with the most serious thought and knowing the consequences. That is not to say that this board will be discussing the issue at hand, it certainly is not an easy thing. Keeping in mind the current economic conditions everywhere, the board will do the best they can for the students and the taxpayers. Please don't think that any of the seven board members up here are anything but entirely focused on the situation at hand. Thank you for your input, and we will be discussing everything as we go through the budget process.
- I would like to acknowledge the accomplishments of a student and a faculty member that has been acknowledged by News Channel 13. Lisa Ferrannini, a teacher here for the past two years, has been selected as TV 13 Teacher of the Week and Kevin McMahon who is TV 13 basketball all-star and also League MVP and a leader of a team that had a great season. . Congratulations to both.

Board Forum: This is an opportunity for Board Members to ask clarifying questions and discuss issues.

1. Mr. Skott would like to thank the public for their comments tonight, we usually don't get many comments.
2. Mr. Mausert would like to thank Patti Zilinskas and Beth Perry for their concern regarding the teaching assistants positions. I know with my background, how important teaching assistants are.
3. Discussion on the Varsity Baseball team going to Cooperstown, NY.
 - Mr. Lilac stated that we have been going for 16 years. This year we will only be staying over for one night and will be playing in a tournament in Fort Plains. We have 16 team players and 4 adults attending. It will cost approximately \$25 to \$30 per student. We will be staying in the same hotel.
 - Mr. Helft stated that having the same hotel inviting you back tells us something that the kids are

well behaved..

** *A motion was made by Mr. Helft seconded by Mrs. Gormley to allow the Varsity Baseball team to go to Cooperstown, NY for an overnight stay April 16, 2010 and return April 17, 2010.

Vote: 7 ayes 0 nays; motion carried.

Superintendent's Report:

- Thank you to Patty, Sue and Beth for speaking on a very difficult topic. We are in a difficult time and have to make difficult decisions. Our staffing has grown and our student body has not. Everyone is a valuable member of this school community. There is not a school in New York that is not facing the same difficulties. It is very painful to everyone concerned. This is not an easy situation going through this budget cycle. There is no stimulus money to offset the costs this year, it is all gone. If the economy does not turn around, we will be right back here again next year. We have to reconcile an incredible deficit that needs to be made up. This is going to be difficult no matter how we proceed. This is not only in one area of the budget. We have to balance what we can offer our kids and our taxpayers. That is a very difficult balancing act. How much more can we ask for in tax dollars and how much more can they in New York State give in tax dollars.. My door is always open should anyone wish to discuss this or anything else. As far as retribution, I have never made a decision based on being vindictive and making it personal.
- Mr. Sutton commented on Mr. Facin's statement on retribution, that he agrees with Mr. Facin that there was a time of retribution in this district, but those times are gone. Now we are faced with times and issues that are very adult, quite serious and not going anywhere, this district is better than most right now.
- We are building this budget on the Governor's executive proposal. If Governor Patterson's proposal is less in state aid, we may be revisiting with additional cuts. Until that budget is finalized in Albany, we are basing this on a proposal. Money has always been added to the Governor's proposal, this will not be happening, there is no more money, that is what we are being told. These are very serious times and very painful times and I apologize for those decisions that we have considered so far, but these are really difficult times.
- Mr. Sutton stated that please keep in mind that this is a budget process, we are not sitting here telling you how it is going to be, we are doing the best we can. Board members need what you are providing us with this evening, some input and some opinion.
- I attended a meeting with three neighboring schools and we are putting together a grant to bring distance learning to our school at no cost to the school so that we can share programs with each other because we know the times are going to be difficult in the future, so we can video conference professional development, we can sit in on classes from other schools and they can sit in on our classes. We are also looking at being involved in a project based learning grant, a hands-on learning, at no cost to the district. Also we are looking at external funding for a lot of things in hopes of bringing in monies externally through our operating budget to keep things moving and progressing forward. Even our Title I grants and federal grants are being looked at with new reauthorization of the NCLB on what was once based on poverty and a guarantee revenue stream in the title grants may now go to competitive grants and we rely heavily on Title I grants for staffing and if they go competitive that puts things on a year to year basis which is vastly different.

School Business Administrator's Report:

1. Budget Presentations:

a.) Buildings & Grounds:

- review of duties of custodial staff and certifications required for some staff
- review of electric and fuel costs of prior years and budgeted for the 2010-2011 school year

- Mr. Sutton commented the last 3 years of construction. Cost reduction is a result of the new windows, new roof and changing the fuel oil from #6, replacing the old motors.

- review of special projects for this summer and for the 2010-2011 school year.

b.) Transportation

- review of staff and fleet for the transportation department

- review of mileage and schools we provide transportation to
 - review of diesel fuel usage of prior years and budgeted for the 2010-2011 school year
 - review of vehicle replacement plan and capital bus reserve
 - To remain on our vehicle replacement plan, we will need to replace bus 79 and 86 with over 100,000 miles on each and have areas of rust damage and will cost more to have them repaired in order to pass inspection and to be continuously worked on. We will replace them with two 60 seat passenger buses with storage boxes underneath for sports and music equipment for approximately \$189,000 and again we will use the capital reserve account so there will be no tax payer impact with this purchase, the purchase of the buses will again be through a 5-year borrowing and the district will receive 85% expended dollar in state aid purchased over the 5 years, the state aid will come to us in the 5 years so you bond for the 5 years.
 - Mr. Sutton asked if the driving force behind the need for replacing of buses is the state inspector coming in and deciding whether it can be fixed.
 - Mr. Weeden stated that mileage is not an issue when excessing school buses, but the wear and tear of the buses with surface rust around the wheels. Excessing the buses is not based on the mileage, but the wear and tear and rust on the buses.
 - The district does not use private contracts for transportation, we transport all of our students.
 - Vehicle replacement borrowing, two buses, approximately \$189,000, we will be using our capital reserve account so there will be no tax burden on the taxpayers. Purchase will be a 5-year borrowing and will receive 85% in state aid over 5 years.
- c.) Debt Services
- The district's bond rating from Standards & Poores went from an A to an A+, with this you get a better rate on borrowing. One thing that they look at is our debt verses our overall size of the budget and how far indebt we are. It also looks at the financial health of the district. We had five bidders on the bond that just went out on our bond for \$7.5 million for the new project and we have been doing BANS, which is short term borrowing until you are ready to bond, which means you know the amount of money that you are going to spend. We had 5 bids on our bond and our bond came in at 3.1%, locked in for 15 years. This brings down our interest payment on that borrowing.
 - You have the three-part budget that is required by state. Currently a 0% tax levy increase.

Administrator's Report:

- Special Education: see written report
- K-6 Elementary School: see written report
- 7-12 Secondary School: see written report

Committees:

- a. Negotiations: D. Sutton, Chair; J. Helft, D. Skott
 - Mr. Sutton stated as Negotiations Chair, we are currently negotiating with the HFTA.
- b. Facilities: D. Sutton, Chair; D. Wilwol, D. Skott
 - Thurs, March 18 @ 6:00 pm
 - Mr. Facin reviewed and updated on the building project as follows:
 - The stainless steel railings need to be buffed out and clean the concrete up.
 - The bleacher system will be dropped off next week and construction to begin next week followed by the press box being delivered. John and Paul are to meet with Mrs. Vadney regarding graduation. Following graduation drainage work will be completed and the security entrance in the elementary entrance way will be installed.
- c. Academic Standards: J. Helft, Chair; L. Gormley, D. Wilwol
 - Wed, March 17 @ 4:00 pm

- Mr. Helft spoke on three topics:

1. Speaker Symposium Series: Next year, have a series of lecturers / symposiums where we bring in experts from outside talking about things that hopefully are of interest to everyone in the community and students and also from outside where people would travel to listen to the topics of discussion.
2. Post Graduate Survey: Post graduates of HFCS, we want to have an idea on how well we have done our job. Intent of the survey is to see what the graduates' status is (ie. college, work, military, etc.) If the student was not successful, why they did not complete and find out ways that we can help them to continue on.

d. Audit Committee: L. Gormley, Chair; D. Sutton, J. Helft

- An audit on several areas of the school business was conducted. The report was good, there is always room for improvement.
- A final report will be coming out in about a week.
- Thank you to all involved.

e. Policy Committee: L. Gormley, Chair; B. Foster, R. Mausert

- April 1 @ 6:00 pm
- policies that were approved went back to NYSSBA and they recommended some minor changes
- next section we are currently working on

PTA: May 4 @ 6:30 pm

- Bingo Family Fun is Saturday, March 20th
- Appreciation Day March 26 for teachers and staff
- Appreciation Day April 14 for bus drivers
- approved to purchase signage for the budget vote
- Meet the Candidates night being arranged.

HFTA Report:

Old Board Actions:

1. A motion was made by Mrs. Gormley seconded by Mr. Helft to approve the Minutes of January 21, 2010 Regular Meeting. This motion was Tabled at the February 11, 2010 board meeting.

Vote: 6 ayes 0 naye 1 abstain (Mr. Mausert); motion carried.

Board Correspondence: None

New Board Actions:

A. Leaves / Resignations: None

B. Appointments:

The use of a consent agenda permits the Board of Education to make more effective use of its time by adopting a single motion to cover those relatively routine matters which are included. Any member of the Board who wishes to discuss a particular piece of business on the consent agenda may request that item to be transferred to the regular agenda for consideration and a separate vote.

- A motion was made by Mr. Wilwol seconded by Mrs. Gormley to accept by Consent Vote the following Appointments on Items 1-6:

Vote: 7 ayes 0 nays; motion carried.

1. to approve the change in assignment for Judy Quackenbush, from 6.5 hours per day teacher assistant and 1.08 hours per day bus attendant to 6.5 hours per day teacher assistant, effective March 1, 2010,
2. to approve the increase in assignment for Lisa Quackenbush from 3.75 hours per day food service helper and 0.5 hours per day teachers aide to 3.75 hours per day food service helper, 0.5 hours per day teachers aide and 1.08 hours per day school bus attendant, effective March 1, 2010,
3. to approve John Cross as assistant transportation supervisor, effective February 22, 2010. This is in addition to his school bus driver position (vice: T. Couch),
4. to approve Drew McEvoy as a Non-Certified Substitute Teacher with a BA degree at a rate of \$70 per day, effective March 3, 2010. Mr. McEvoy has been cleared by NYSED,
5. to approve Sarah Rowlands as a NYS Certified Substitute Teacher at a rate of \$85 per day effective March 19, 2010. Ms. Rowlands has been cleared by NYSED,
6. to approve Isabel McGuire for Lunch Supervision for the high school cafeteria, effective February 22, 2010 at a stipend of \$1,200 pro-rated (vice: K. Hayden),

C. Miscellaneous:

1. A motion was made by Mr. Helft seconded by Mrs. Gormley to accept the donation of a used lighting system purchased from Parkway Music by the Hoosick Falls Performing Arts Booster Club, in the amount of \$650.

Vote: 6 ayes 0 nays 1 abstain (Mr. Wilwol); motion carried.

2. A motion was made by Mrs. Gormley seconded by Mr. Wilwol to approve the Treasurer's Report for December 2009.

Vote: 7 ayes 0 nays; motion carried.

3. A motion was made by Mrs. Gormley seconded by Mr. Helft to approve the Treasurer's Report for January 2010.

Vote: 7 ayes 0 nays; motion carried.

CSE Recommendations: A motion was made by Mr. Wilwol seconded by Mr. Helft to have the Board of Education approve the appropriate special education programs and services to be provided to students with disabilities as recommended by the Committee on Special Education.

Vote: 7 ayes 0 nays; motion carried.

Subsequent Meeting Dates:

- The Board of Education will hold its Budget Worksession & Budget Adoption on April 15, 2010 @ **6:00 PM** in the high school library.
- The Board of Education will hold its Regular Meeting on April 22, 2010 @ 7:00 PM in the high school library.

2nd Public Comment Session: Started at 9:20 pm and Ended at 9:26 pm.

- A member of the audience asked Mr. Facin questions regarding the studies on distance learning.
- Mr. Facin answered that he sat in on two intensive studies done by the University of Albany. The data shows that students can learn from other areas of the country very successfully. Distance learning can save district money in regard to classes offered at different schools and still be able to receive full credit for them. New York State is behind on distance learning. Studies show that students gain as much if not more due to independent work.

Board Forum: This is an opportunity for Board members to ask clarifying questions.

Executive Session: A motion was made by Mrs. Gormley seconded by Mr. Helft to go into Executive Session at 10:00 PM for reason to discuss HFTA negotiations and personnel issues.

Vote: 7 ayes 0 nays; motion carried.

There will be no board actions following this executive session.

A motion was made by Mr. Helft seconded by Mrs. Foster to return to Regular Session at 11:23 PM.

Vote: 7 ayes 0 nays; motion carried.

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Mr. Helft seconded by Mr. Mausert to Adjourn the meeting at 11:23 PM.

Vote: 7 ayes 0 nays; motion carried.

Pamela J. Cottrell, District Clerk