

From the EAWRCHS Board ...

1st Regular Board Meeting

November 1, 2016

What follows is an unofficial summary of the East Alton - Wood River Community High School District #14 Board of Education 1st Regular Meeting of November 1, 2016.

Hear Preview of November 8, 2016 Regular Meeting:

Estimate of the 2017 Levy: Dr. Pearson reviewed several factors that will make up the 2016 Levy, when ultimately adopted by the Board on December 13, 2016. Using the spreadsheet, he showed the effects of various projected growth rates in the assessed valuation (which will be an unknown until the Spring 2017) and their effects on the overall District tax rate. He demonstrated his methodology on determining the unrestricted rates (Tort, IMRF/Social Security), as well as the effect of the EAV growth on the operating (restricted rate) levies. He noted that the Board could reduce its Tort Levy significantly from last year (by anywhere from \$300,000 to \$60,000) and still project a healthy fund balance by the end of Fiscal Year 2018 (June 30, 2018). A smaller reduction could be made in the IMRF/Social Security levies and still have a fund balance of at least one month of “cash-on-hand.”

Mr. St. Peters wondered if the Tort levy might not be reduced as much, if the Board should decide to make major upgrades or replacement of its PA and security camera systems. Several levy amounts were “tested” showing effect on the tax rate, which was deemed to be minimal. Ms. Harding asked if the Board paid some portions of salaries under Tort, to which the superintendent responded that portions of some employee salaries are covered under Tort, after conducting a thorough time study analysis several years ago, and incorporating those percentages into its Risk Management Plan.

Dr. Pearson also noted that, due to significant reductions in the Tort Levy, the District could levy in the restricted rate funds with an 8-9% assumption in growth, without going over the 105% rule, used to determine if a “truth-in-taxation” hearing needs to be held.

He also showed the effects of zero or slightly negative growth in the EAV, with the results that the tax rate should still be lower than last year’s by 3-5 cents.

Calendar Change: Due to the desire to have more planning time for the Career Fair next Spring, coupled with the idea to avoid reducing teacher-student contact time any more than necessary, the superintendent recommended that the Board approve exchanging the School Improvement Half-Day previously scheduled for March 31, 2017, with April 28, 2017. The schedule would remain the same as the other “half-days” with student attendance in the morning, and school improvement activities in the afternoon.

Loan Request from Madison County Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Cooperative: Because the state has been tardy in its grant payments to the CTE Board and because the CTE office is facing bills and salary payments that it will not be able to cover because it hasn’t received the state grant money this year, it is asking the member districts (all Madison County school districts) to make a short-term loan to the CTE Board so that it can meet its obligations. The amount of loan requested from each member district would be based upon comparative student enrollment, which is calculated for EAWR District #14 as \$920. Since the state is informing the CTE that it expects sufficient funds to be released by late January, the CTE informed the member districts that it should expect repayment of the loans sometime next February.

Surplus and Obsolete Equipment Disposal: The superintendent would like the Board to declare that the old golf cart, which has been inoperative for the last couple of months and now is replaced by a new recently purchased UTV, be declared as surplus and obsolete equipment. He noted that Mr. Foxall might have a buyer who might buy it in order to repair it.

Freshmen Baseball: Mrs. Murray reported that she had spoken with several parents about the Board’s recent decision to drop its freshmen baseball program, asking that the Board reinstate it.

Mr. Gockel, Athletic Director and a former baseball coach, spoke to the difficulties in operating a freshmen level schedule with the lower than adequate total participation numbers experienced by the program in the last few years, as well as the pressure to have more pitchers available, due to the expected IHSA and National Federation limits on pitch counts, later this year.

The Board members and Mr. Gockel spoke to the pros and cons of fielding a freshmen team, with Mr. Gockel agreeing that, if there at least 15 freshmen would play strictly freshmen level, and another 30 to play JV and Varsity combined, then it would be doable. But, the current numbers point to about 14 freshmen with only 26 returning sophomores, juniors, and seniors combined to play the 35 JV and Varsity matches each. Mr. Duncan and Mr. St. Peters both expressed the opinion that fielding a freshmen team would really help the baseball program. Mr. Gockel

responded that, in the last few years, many of the freshmen were called up to the JV and even Varsity teams, since their numbers were inadequate to field teams or meet pitching rotation goals in some games without that freshmen participation. Practice scheduling was also discussed.

After some lengthy discussion, President Aguinaga suggested that the Board continue to discuss this topic at next week's meeting.

Hear First Reading of Policy Changes: Supt. Pearson briefly highlighted the policy changes he was bringing to the Board, ultimately to be approved at the December 13th Regular Meeting. He specifically highlighted the new travel/expense legislation that is now reflected in two policy revisions: one for Board members and the other for employees. He observed that the new law - effective in March 2017 - requires that the Board adopt a resolution in which it would set maximums on travel expenses that it would reimburse. The expenses include mileage, lodging, meals, and airfare.

The other policy revisions would be discussed in more details at the November 8th meeting, due to time constraints.

Review and Approve the 2016 Illinois School Report Card: Dr. Pearson and Mrs. Robinson will give their presentation on the highlights of the just-released Illinois School Report Card at the November 8th meeting. The Board packet for November already has copies of the report card as well as some data reports from last year's PARCC testing. The School Report Card can be found [here](#).

Audit Presentation Next Week: Dr. Pearson reminded the Board that the Audit Report would be presented by Scheffel at the November 8, 2016 Regular Meeting.

Following Executive Session

The Board approves a motion to employ Patti Scott as Asst. Girls Basketball Coach and Laura Blair as Saturday Scholars Sponsor, effective immediately. Ms. Scott, the Head Volleyball Coach, replaces the recently resigned Jesse Daniels in that position, while Laura Blair, a paraprofessional at EAWR, replaces Lee Ann Parmentier, who also resigned recently.