

From the EAWRCHS Board ...

1st Regular Board Meeting – August 7, 2012

What follows is an unofficial summary of the East Alton - Wood River Community High School District #14 Board of Education 1st Regular Meeting of August 7, 2012.

Review of Substantive and/or Non-Recurring Agenda Items to be Discussed and/or Enacted at the Regular Meeting of August 14, 2012

Discuss and Approve Cell Tower Lease Agreement:

Mr. Pearson noted that the District was still awaiting to hear back from US Cellular on its latest proposal regarding the requested lease agreement to erect cell phone antennae on the Main Building chimney.

Tentative FY 2013 Budget Preview:

The Board reviewed a copy of the tentative FY 2013 District Budget, which will be on display beginning August 12, 2012 and will stay on display for 30 days until the scheduled budget hearing and adoption, on September 11, 2012.

The draft FY 13 budget's figures are, indeed, tentative, due to the following: 1) The Board and the Union are currently negotiating the successor agreement to the current agreement, which means that salary and benefit amounts in the draft budget are not firm. 2) Some of the data used in calculating General State Aid for 2012-13 are not final, either, which could affect GSA projections in the budget.

Given those limitations of the data, FY 2013 looks to be a year in which large, one-year deficits will occur in most funds – particularly in the Education Fund. Supt. Pearson noted that this will be the biggest one-year deficits in the 13 budgets he has prepared for the Board. These deficits are largely driven by: 1) A loss of \$300,000 in projected General State Aid with smaller amounts in other state grants. The loss in GSA is mostly attributed to two factors in the formula – declining enrollment at EAWR and, more significantly, the expected 88% proration of the state aid appropriation due to the state's fiscal crisis. 2) Refunding of \$200,000 in tax dollars from this summer's taxes to Olin due to the adverse decision rendered by the State Property Tax Appeal Board for Olin's assessment in the 2003 and 2004 tax years. 3) Other local and Federal revenue losses totaling approximately \$100,000. 4) Increase in the District's health insurance premiums it provides for its employees of 8.6%, which amounts to an extra \$38,000 cost to the District.

Mr. Pearson did note that, despite these negative projections, the District is still projected to have overall Operating Fund combined surpluses as of June 30, 2013, although the surplus will be diminished substantially. The Education Fund would have a negative fund balance for the

first time in many years, expected to be down about -\$700,000.

Also, there is still a desire on the Administration's part to proceed with plans for instituting a 1:1 computer program for all of its students by 2013-14 school year. The Board reviewed a proposal from Pearson Education for staff development (working with teachers on teaching in classrooms where every student has a device with Internet access), project management, and digital textbooks from Pearson Publishing. The exciting advantages of using the same technology that students (and adults) use during the time they are out of the classroom, with the opportunity for increased student engagement, improved learning, and a decrease in student disciplinary issues are too important to not seriously consider – despite budgetary issues. Schools which have converted to a digital classroom environment report the benefits of greater student engagement in their own learning. Schools also would save some textbook purchase costs if converted to digital textbooks, as well.

The Administration will study the Pearson proposal further, as well as seek out other staff development opportunities from other sources, to insure it is getting the most of its tax dollars.

Camera System Upgrade:

The superintendent informed the Board that six of the seven new cameras are installed and operational, with the seventh camera on order (since an exterior camera was delivered instead of an interior camera). These cameras – in addition to the eighteen already on the network will provide enhanced safety and security for students and will assist the Administration in their discipline duties.

Summer Maintenance:

Summer maintenance activities are wrapping up. Several classrooms were re-painted, with some renovation to the Boys Restroom in the Main Building, as well.

Monitors:

The District was the recent beneficiary of 57 free computer monitors, which were offered by the U.S. District Attorney's office in Fairview Heights. The District was recently notified of the availability of these used HP flat-screen monitors, and took the opportunity to quickly respond to the offer. These monitors range between 17" and 19" in size and will replace many of the former CRT monitors, most of which are in some classrooms and office areas, as well as 10 old monitors in the Library.

Action Items:

The Board accepted the resignation of Josh LeMond as Asst. Girls Basketball coach. Mr. LeMond, of East Alton, accepted a teaching and coaching position in the Dupo school district within the past week. This vacancy will now be posted.