

**West Carroll Board of Education
Truth in Taxation Public Hearing
Regular Board Meeting
December 14, 2011**

Truth in Taxation Public Hearing

The Board of Education of West Carroll Community Unit School District No. 314 held a public hearing for Truth in Taxation at the West Carroll Intermediate School Library/Media Center, 801 South Street, Thomson, Illinois.

The public hearing was called to order by President Highland at 6:30 p.m.

Members present: Jerry Anderson; Tim Atherton; John Brigham; Mike Highland; Dawn Rath
Members Absent: Bev Kilpatrick and Mark Klein

Administration: Superintendent Craig Mathers; Principals Robert Lamb; Julie Katzenberger; Jeanette Ashby; Special Education/Preschool Director Pam Delp

Others present: Brad Field; Pat Sanchez; Media (Jon Whitney, Samantha Pidde, Michael Miller)

Presentation – 2011 Tax Levy

Superintendent Mathers presented the 2011 tax levy – \$5,551,172. This is \$100,000 less than the 2010 tax levy and is only a 3.48% increase over the 2010 tax extension. The county has seen little to no growth in EAV which will drive the bond and interest rate to increase slightly. The district is trying to be cognizant of what is going on within the community, as well as, the district. Levy amounts for IMRF, social security, and tort are less or remain the same as 2010 and actually, are \$114,000 less than the 2009 levy. Because the levy is less than 105% of the 2010 tax extension the Board was not required to hold a Truth in Taxation hearing. As a government entity, holding a hearing allows the community to be aware of the tax requests.

There were no additional questions from Board members or audience.

Close – Public Hearing

Motion by Atherton to close the public hearing and convene the regular December meeting of the West Carroll Board of Education at 6:35 p.m. Second by Brigham. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

The Board of Education continued with the agenda of business.

Consent Agenda

- Minutes – November 9, 2011; Regular Meeting
- Minutes – November 9, 2011; Regular Meeting, Closed Session
- Minutes – December 5, 2011; Policy Committee Meeting
- Minutes – December 5, 2011; Facilities Committee Meeting
- Financial Reports; Payment of Bills; Activity Accounts; FRIS Report
- Destruction of Closed Session Tape – Special Meeting, February 11, 2010 and Regular Meeting, February 18, 2010 (3 tapes)

The JoCarroll Energy bill for the Primary School, once again, was over \$24,000. Mr. Mathers stated the bill will not be paid until an accurate reading has been taken.

Motion by Highland to approve the items of the consent agenda as presented. Second by Atherton. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

Public Comments – None.

Correspondence

Thank you card from the family of Shirley Titus.

Administrative Reports

Pam Delp, special education/preschool director, reported the second turn around of the December child count has been finished. The district has 227 students with an active IEP which is 19% of the student population. Bert Smith and Tricia Poffenberger have received hearing screening training on how to use an Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) tool. This is used to screen children from birth to three years of age. Early Step is currently sharing equipment with Whiteside County Health Department but staff has written a grant to receive their own equipment. Early Step participated in the ISBE Birth to Three Evaluation conducted by the Erikson Institute. A narrative report will be received once the evaluation is complete.

Robert Lamb, high school principal, stated that Clint Cowman, assistant principal, was supervising the Holiday Tournament and unable to attend the meeting. 2012-2013 student registration will begin in late January. January 10th all sophomores will tour the AVC to show them what classes are available for students to take. The district limits the number of students who may attend the AVC. A student's attendance record and GPA are part of the criteria used to allow students to attend. Mr. Lamb congratulated IMEA All State Music recipients: Ben Rogers – chorus, Andrew Watts – chorus, and Allen Piper – band. Ben Rogers has also been selected to have an opportunity to sing the National Anthem at the state basketball tournament in Peoria. Congratulations were also given to Illinois State Scholars: Garrett Badke, Melissa Fitzpatrick, Breanne Field, Patrick Fritz, Nichole Johnson, Chad Mull, Allen Piper, and Ashleigh Stingley.

Jeanette Ashby, primary school principal, attended a two day workshop on Danielson Frameworks / Best Practices for Teacher Evaluation. The workshop was very good and informative. The Primary School received a \$700 donation from Pamida to be used as the school wishes. She thanked Pamida for this generous donation in support of the district students.

Julie Katzenberger, middle school principal, thanked Mr. Titus for conducting the Fall into Winter Concert and for providing a musical program for the Mt. Carroll Rotary. She, also, extended her condolences in the loss of his mother. Mrs. Katzenberger also thanked the Middle School custodial staff for all the hard work they do at this time of the year. The Middle School is very busy with many athletic tournaments and other activities scheduled. Boys' basketball is finishing up, girls' basketball is just beginning, and wrestling will begin the first part of January. The students are very busy. The Middle School hosted two student teachers: Kris Bland and Aaron Blair. They will both graduate from Ashford University. Both teachers were very enthusiastic and professional.

Brad Field, technology director, explained that the bandwidth in each building has increased from 1.5mb to 5.0mb. Many positive comments have been received regarding the increase. Mr. Field attended a meeting on e-rate where an update was received on iFiber. iFiber is projected to be available in Carroll County mid 2013. Mr. Field is researching the possibility of moving some of the district technology operations and software to Cloud Computing. This would help with the district use of bandwidth and some applications are free to education.

Craig Mathers, superintendent, reported November attendance was down a little from October – 94.75%. The flu season has started. The staff Holiday Get-Together is December 21. All Board members are invited to attend and enjoy the festivities. Quality Circle meetings were November 14 and December 12. At the December 12th meeting there were no issues to discuss from any of the buildings. The 2012-2013 draft school calendar was discussed at Quality Circle. The AVC students have an art exhibit at the Freeport Art Museum. The theme of the show is "40 Years of AVC". The students have done a really nice job. Mr. Mathers attended a superintendent's lunch with Representative Jim Sacia. A major part of the program was discussion on consolidation. The governor originally wanted to decrease the state's school districts from 900 to 300. When that was not feasible he appointed a commission to study consolidation. They looked at making dual district consolidate (elementary and high school) but backed off of that idea. They are now looking at the

rural areas to consolidate the high schools. Mr. Mathers asked all Board members to check out the web site and continue to monitor the discussions on consolidation. Representative Sacia predicts that pension reform will happen in the spring legislative session. Mr. Mathers shared with the Board information on Denise Babcock who embezzled funds from the Clinton schools and e-rate. This includes \$4,200 of West Carroll e-rate reimbursements.

Board Committee Reports

The policy committee met on Monday, December 5, 2011. Updates to policies will be discussed later. The facility committee met jointly with Eastland and Chadwick/Milledgeville December 5, 2011 to discuss one (1) percent sales tax. The purpose of the meeting was to see if there is enough support to put the question on the March ballot. To be on the March ballot a decision must be made by January 2, 2012. Atherton stated it was a good meeting but the results of the meeting were not what we wanted. Chadwick/Milledgeville is ready to put the question back on the ballot but Eastland is not. Discussion was held on when would be the best time to put the question on the ballot. Brigham stated there is not a united front. The committee discussed the possibility of a 0.5% tax that the business community might be more receptive of. Mr. Mathers has talked with Pam Brown, Savanna Chamber of Commerce. She will bring the question up at the Chamber of Commerce meeting on December 20 to see if the 0.5% would be accepted. The sales tax money would be used for facility upgrades and abatement of bond and interest. Mr. Mathers reminded the Board the Middle School will need a new roof in the near future. Mr. Mathers also reminded the Board that the sales tax question was significantly defeated the last time. What has changed since then? Anderson asked if any community leaders attended the meeting. There were none. Atherton stated there has been no response from Palatine Oil to a letter sent by the district. Atherton is frustrated about the support shown to Palatine Oil and not to the school district. Palatine Oil may leave at any time. A town is dead if it doesn't have a school district. All Iowa counties have the one (1) percent sales tax and currently, nine counties in Illinois have it including JoDaviess. Ogle County may try putting it on the ballot in March. Atherton asked if it is possible to put both questions on the same ballot – 0.5% and 1%. Mr. Mathers reminded the Board that the last resolution stated up to 1% because the county board was responsible for setting the rate. The county board is no longer part of the equation. The resolution must be specific on the amount of the sales tax rate. Mr. Mathers is not certain if both questions can be on the same ballot. He will check into that question. Brigham feels that would be too confusing to voters. Brigham stated the business community support would be a huge help. Atherton said the community does not understand that buying locally you would be supporting your community, as well as, your school. The deadline for the March ballot is January 2. If the Chamber meeting is positive on the sales tax question a special meeting will be necessary. Mr. Mathers pointed out that the Board must have a community member to run a "yes" referendum. A planned projects list ("bricks and mortar") is now available. This list will show the community what the sales tax will and can be used for. Brigham stated running a referendum will take a huge effort and it will need a united front with the other districts and the business community. You do not want to rush the effort. When asked how a referendum campaign would be financed, Mr. Mathers stated he would seek donations.

Old Business

2011 Tax Levy

Motion by Brigham to approve the 2011 tax levy for West Carroll CUSD #314 as presented. Second by Anderson. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

AVC Funding Plan

The AVC Board of Control approved a tuition only funding plan for the next school year. Stockton hasn't revealed what their district will do for next year. West Carroll will see a decrease in costs to AVC. Approximately, \$34,000 less for the same number of students attending this year.

New Business

Board Policy Updates

Highland and Kilpatrick spent a considerable amount of time reviewing PRESS policy updates. Updates include FOIA, accounting and audits, areas under personnel, curriculum content, and new procedures for concussions and parent notification. Student athletes with a concussion must have a doctor's clearance to be able to return and participate in the sport. Revisions have been made to policy 8:30 and 8:30 – E2. Visitors that are sex offenders must give a seventy-two (72) hour notice before coming to the school buildings.

Motion by Highland to approve the first reading of updates from PRESS policies, Issue 77, October 2011, and revisions to Board policy 8:30 and 8:30 – E2. Second by Atherton. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

Technology Presentation

Technology must enhance student achievement and must support classroom instruction. The teachers, as well as, the students must be able to use the equipment. What does the district need to move forward with technology? Upgrades to infrastructure; be it electric or broad band? What devices will be used for instruction, professional development, curriculum, and digital content? The first thing the district needs to be able to do is address parental questions by putting procedures and policies in place. Mr. Field stated everything must be in place prior to the implementation of the one on one initiative. The best concept for technology is to have all the pieces together to arrive at student achievement and growth. Mr. Field also stated a key piece to the one on one is community involvement with support and encouragement. It is essential to get the business community on board for support. Atherton asked what do the administrators think. Superintendent Mathers asked the administrators for their opinion of the Mooresville conference before they answer Mr. Atherton. Mrs. Katzenberger and Mr. Lamb stated the school was very impressive. They have had the one on one for four years. Their staff was very excited. Mr. Field said not any school has just jumped into the initiative. You must have your ducks in a row. Professional development is a major key. The initiative must be staff driven. Board members asked if district staff is ready or could be ready for the change. There are various levels of technology skills within the staff and staff must be willing to learn. The principals stated the one on one initiative is not for every classroom. Rath asked how Eastland was doing with the one on one. They have had a few glitches that they are working out, but it is going well. Superintendent Mathers stated I am watching and learning from the mistakes being made. Mr. Lamb said Mooresville is always asked what would you do over. A huge item is to shift thinking and open trust to begin such a large project. Everything must be about student engagement and involvement. The Board contends that times are changing and we are going to have to get on board. Superintendent Mathers and Mr. Field are looking at several different options to increase broad band width until iFiber is available in the area. When iFiber is available the district will still need a service provider. Mrs. Katzenberger said wireless and additional band width is necessary. Superintendent Mathers stated the district must do the ground work and make the investment step by step and determine what the best fit for the district is. Highland reiterated the district must have a plan in place by 2013 (iFiber in place). He stated progress must be made and we need to move forward.

2012 – 2013 Strategic Action Input

Mr. Mathers asked the Board to look at the plan from 2011-2012 and see that most of the items on the plan have been accomplished. The Board must now look towards 2012-2013 and determine what their goals will be. The goals of the 2012-2013 strategic action plan brought forward by members of the Board are as follows: balanced budget; technology; professional grant writer on staff; professional development for staff evaluation and curriculum common core standards (training); facility upgrades (general upkeep); transportation adjustments; possible change in school day time; professional development of teachers to work towards master degrees; continue and improve community

involvement; signs for West Carroll pride, spirit and support. If any Board member has additional ideas they are to email them to Mr. Mathers.

West Carroll High School Curriculum Handbook

Mr. Lamb stated there are nine changes to the handbook from the previous year. The most important is a change in math classes driven by state testing. The end goal is to have students taking four years of math. The high school staff will be teaching seven classes next year. This will make a difference in the curriculum and the class sizes should be smaller. Classes being added are Macro Economics, European History, and Ag – Pre-Vet. Several classes may be taken for college credit. A student could possibly earn 38-41 college credits which would take care of a freshman year in college.

Motion by Rath to approve the first reading of the 2012-2013 West Carroll High School Curriculum Handbook. Second by Anderson. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

West Carroll Education Foundation

Board members were provided with a list of grant requests approved by the Education Foundation in the amount of \$26,177.38. The amount of requests increase each year but not all can be funded. The Foundation has twelve members comprised of administration, teachers, Board, and community. Highland stated the district is very grateful and appreciative of all the Education Foundation does.

District Parking Lots – Request for Proposal

Working cash funds will be used to repair, seal coat, and stripe the district parking lots. Hopefully, the district will be able to do all of them. Highland stated this is where you could use funds from a 0.5 – 1% sales tax.

Motion by Brigham to approve the Request for Proposal to repair, seal coat, and stripe the district parking lots as presented. Second by Anderson. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

School Calendar Waiver

The district holiday waiver expires June 30, 2012. Superintendent Mathers is working on a school calendar for next year. It is no longer required to file a waiver with the State of Illinois but the district does have to conduct a public hearing. General consensus of the Board of Education is to hold a public hearing on the use of legal school holidays in January before the regular meeting.

WCHS Storage Shed

Additional storage room is needed for the football equipment at the High School. The Athletic Department would like to purchase a shed and have it installed next to an existing shed behind the high school. The expense will be paid by the football activity account. Anderson asked if the proposed shed was going to be big enough and Atherton wondered if the equipment could be stored at the Intermediate School.

Motion by Highland to approve the purchase and installation of a storage shed at West Carroll High School to be purchased by the football program. Second by Anderson. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

Illinois Music Educators Association All-State Music Festival

Motion by Brigham to approve the West Carroll High School overnight trip to the IMEA All-State Music Festival; January 25-28, 2012. Second by Anderson. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

Closed Session for any lawful purpose including, but not limited to:

Motion by Rath to go into closed session at 8:20 p.m. for the discussion of items A. appointment, employment, discipline, performance or dismissal or removal of specific employees; B. collective bargaining matters or consideration of salary schedules for one or more classes of employees; and E. student discipline cases. Second by Highland. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

The Board of Education returned the regular meeting to open session at 9:23 p.m.

Action on Closed Session Items

Motion by Highland to uphold the administrative decisions for out of school suspensions and transportation suspensions at West Carroll High School, Middle School, and Primary School as presented. Second by Rath. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

Motion by Rath to approve the administrative recommendation to employ Karen Phillips as bus driver for the Northwest Academy route. Second by Brigham. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

Motion by Brigham to approve the administrative recommendation to have Missy Hartman as a volunteer assistant girls' basketball coach at West Carroll High School. Second by Anderson. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

Motion by Anderson to release Lisa Holmes from West Carroll employment as a bus driver. Second by Atherton. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

Adjournment

Motion by Atherton to adjourn the regular December meeting of the Board of Education at 9:30 p.m. Roll call vote: 5 yes; Kilpatrick, Klein absent. Motion carried.

Sandra Aude
Recording Secretary


Beverly Kilpatrick, Secretary
West Carroll Board of Education


Michael D. Highland, President
West Carroll Board of Education