

**GREENE CENTRAL SCHOOL
GREENE, NEW YORK
ANNUAL PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
MONDAY, MAY 12, 2014**

A Board of Education Public Budget Hearing was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman and Superintendent Jonathan R. Retz, in the Auditorium, Middle School/High School Building, South Canal Street, Greene, NY.

CALL TO ORDER

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Ethan Day, Vice-President
Mrs. Helen Hunsinger
Mr. Timothy Crumb
Mr. James Strenkert
Mrs. Karen Hendershott (left @ 7:25 p.m.)
Mrs. Tammie McCauley (arrived @ 6:55 p.m.)

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Richard Boeltz, President

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Jonathan R. Retz, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Mark Rubitski, Business Manager
Mr. Timothy Calice, Associate Principal 6-12 and
Director of Special Education
Mr. Bryan Ayres, Intermediate School Principal
& Athletic Director
Mrs. Shelly Richards, Primary School Principal

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Mrs. Donna Utter, District Clerk

Also present were 8 residents of the Greene Central School District.

- District Clerk, Donna M. Utter, read the Notice of the meeting.
- Chairman and Superintendent Jonathan R. Retz, introduced the Board of Education members.
- Mrs. Helen Hunsinger commented that she has been on the Board for 8 years and part of the Budget Committee for a number of years and she felt that this was one of the easier budgets to put together. Some items were added back in and there were fewer deletions. She stated that it was a pleasure to be on the budget committee.
- Mr. Ethan Day stated that the Budget Committee and Board have streamlined the budget process making it easier to review the entire budget. The emphasis is always to balance the needs of students with budgetary limits that can be supported by the community.
- Mr. Jonathan R. Retz, Superintendent and Chairman, presented the 2014-2015 school budget in the amount of \$24,533,169.
- Mr. Retz reviewed the process used to develop the budget which included prioritizing and a line-by-line analysis by the Administrative team and the Board Budget Committee.

**NOTICE OF
MEETING**

**INTRO. OF
BOARD MEMBERS**

**BOARD BUDGET
COMMENTS**

**2014-2015 BUDGET
PRESENTATION**

- Overall, the 2014-2015 budget represents a .58% increase over the 2013-14 budget. To address the budget deficit of \$643,837 created by a loss of \$301,016 through the Gap Elimination Adjustment and cost increases, some of which included health insurance, TRS and ERS, the following measures will be taken to balance the budget:

- (1) \$9,527 in spending cuts were made
- (2) Proposed tax levy of 2.97% (\$189,000)
- (3) Use of \$445,310 in reserves

- Superintendent Retz noted:

- Since 2010/11 the district has reduced spending by \$3.2 million;
- 75% of budget lines remained the same or decreased within the 2014-15 budget;
- Some identified program services were added back into the budget: one Developmental Kindergarten position; Chairperson for our Committee on Special Education; returning to the model of a Middle School Principal and a High School Principal; and a part-time Library Media Specialist.
- The Governor's Tax Rebate program whereby individual property owners will see a rebate of the difference between their 2013-2014 school tax bill and the 2014-2015 tax bill. This rebate is possible as long as the district keeps their tax levy increase below the 2% tax cap.
- Superintendent Retz explained that Greene's tax cap is actually 3.02% based on state calculations. This is why the "2% tax cap" can actually be more than 2%.

QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD:

QUESTION:

- A resident asked, how long the district can continue using tax reserves to help balance the budget?

ANSWER:

- Superintendent Retz stated that using tax reserves is not sustainable, but fortunately, Greene is in healthy shape with what is available in reserves, but will need to continue to be fiscally responsible.

QUESTION:

- A resident asked how much the district has currently in reserves?

ANSWER:

- Mark Rubitski, Business Manager, answered that we currently have 4 million in reserves, but the reserve accounts have limitations on what the monies can be used for.

QUESTION:

- A resident asked why there was such a big increase in fringe benefits?

ANSWER:

- Mark Rubitski, Business Manager, answered that fringe benefits include health insurance costs, TRS and ERS retirement costs. He stated that the retirement rates are set by the State. Greene's health insurance increased 11 ½% over last year. Mark explained that Greene is part of a consortium where our rate is based on use. As a district, we are looking into ways/programs to help reduce our health insurance costs.

**PRESENTATION OF
PETITIONS & INTRO.
OF SCHOOL BOARD
CANDIDATES**

- Superintendent Retz announced that three Petitions have been received for 2 vacant board member seats.

- Superintendent Retz announced all three candidates and introduced the two school board candidates present at the meeting:

- Mr. Timothy Crumb
- Mr. Jason Burghardt
- Mrs. Karen Hendershott

ADJOURNMENT

- Chairman and Superintendent Jonathan R. Retz adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Marie Utter
District Clerk