

WEBSTER GROVES SCHOOL DISTRICT
Webster Groves, Missouri

TAX RATE HEARING/SPECIAL/WORKSHOP MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2015, 7:00 P.M.
Central Office Board Room

CALL TO ORDER A tax rate hearing/special/workshop meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 7 p.m., Monday, September 28, 2015 by its President, David Addison. The following members were present.

David Addison	President
Amy Clendennen	Vice President
Jean Dugan	
Steve Loher	
Joel Oliver	
Michael Shipley (Absent)	
Emerson Smith	

Also present were:

Sarah Riss	Superintendent
Diane Moore	Chief Operations Officer
Cathy Vespereny	Chief Communications Officer
John M. Thomas	Director of Student Services
JoAnn Kite	Comptroller
Tim Brown	Director of Instructional Technology
Lori Medlin	Board Secretary

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mr. Addison called for and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag prior to beginning the meeting.

AGENDA Mrs. Dugan moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver, approval of the agenda. The motion carried 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT There were no public comments.

TAX RATE HEARING The district held a public hearing on setting the tax rate for 2015-16. Chief Operations Officer Dr. Diane Moore explained the calculations used to set the proposed rate for residential property of \$5.2069. This is a decrease of \$0.1862 from the previous year. The commercial rate of \$5.2294 is a \$0.4323 decrease from last year's rate. Dr. Moore explained that changes in assessed property valuations impact the tax rate. Following a discussion, the board set the tax rate as follows.

PUBLIC
COMMENT

There were no public comments at this time

MOTIONS TO SET
TAX RATE

The vote to set the tax rate for the 2015-16 school year was as follows: Ms. Clendennen moved, seconded by Mrs. Dugan that the 2015 tax rate ceiling be set at \$5.2069. The motion passed 6-0.

Ms. Clendennen moved, seconded by Mr. Smith that the 2015 operating levy be set at a blended rate of \$5.2069 and the current year rate computed by category as follows:

Residential -	\$5.1023
Agricultural-	\$0.0000
Commercial-	\$5.2294
Personal Property-	\$5.9100

The motion passed 6-0.

Ms. Clendennen moved, seconded by Mr. Smith, that the 2015 operating levy be distributed as follows:

Incidental (General) Fund - \$3.3544

With the current year rate computed by category as follows:

Residential-	\$3.2498
Agricultural-	\$0.0000
Commercial-	\$3.3442
Personal Property-	\$3.8850

Teachers Fund (Special Revenue) - \$1.7900

With the current year rate computed by category as follows:

Residential-	\$1.7900
Agricultural-	\$0.0000
Commercial-	\$1.8351
Personal Property	\$1.9625

Capital Projects Fund - \$0.0625

With the current year rate computed by category as follows:

Residential-	\$0.0625
Agricultural-	\$0.0000
Commercial	\$0.0501
Personal Property	\$0.0625

Ms. Clendennen moved, seconded by Mr. Smith that the 2015 Debt Service Levy be set at \$0.5699.

The motion passed 6-0.

BOARD LIAISON
REPORTS

Mrs. Dugan reported the Webster Groves School District Foundation golf tournament had a great turnout and wonderful weather. The next event is the Ivory Crockett Run for Webster event on October 17.

Board members briefly discussed details related to the Missouri School Board Association conference this weekend. All members are planning to attend at least some of the events.

Mr. Addison thanked the members of the board for taking an active role in the superintendent search stakeholder meetings held for the public. The board also reviewed the updated search process timeline.

Mr. Addison reviewed the communication log procedures for clarification purposes. It was determined that if communication is directed to more than one of the board members, or to one board member and at least one administrator, it would then go on record in the communication log. This practice is in the best interest of the board of education and in the best interest of remaining transparent to the public. If the communication is between an individual and one board member, it would not become part of public record and will not be published in the correspondence log.

REPORTS FROM SUPERINTENDENT AND STAFF

AUDIT

Auditors for the Webster Groves School District issued a “clean opinion” on district financial statements. Darrell Songer of the firm Clifton, Larson & Allen made no adjustments in district reporting. Mr. Songer also added that the district’s fiscal management was very impressive regarding cash flow. District staff members were commended by Mr. Songer for their cooperation in helping the firm complete the audit. Mr. Addison asked Mr. Songer his opinion of the district’s use of cash basis accounting. The auditor said that Cash basis provided better transparency than either modified cash or modified accrual accounting. It was also noted that the vast majority of Missouri school districts use cash basis accounting, allowing for easier comparisons between districts. There was also a discussion about the use of electronic signatures for checks issued by the district. The auditor noted that this was common practice and felt that there were no reasons, from a control and financial management perspective, not to adopt such a procedure. The board instructed the policy committee to investigate any changes that would be required to Board policy to adopt such a procedure and to bring those back to the Board.

Ms. Clendennen moved, seconded by Mr. Loher to approve the audit.

The motion passed 6-0 with a roll call vote as follows: Mr. Loher, yes; Mr. Smith, yes; Mrs. Dugan, yes; Mr. Addison, yes; Ms. Clendennen, yes; Mr. Oliver, yes.

CLARK SCHOOL Principal Bill Schiller, Educational Leadership Intern Joe Hays, Counselor Jennifer Starbuck and 5th grade teachers Amy Greffet and Hannah Peterson reported successes, challenges and achievement analysis at Clark. The presentation included information on the first staff retreat held in August, a new school-wide behavior expectation plan, the generous PTO support for library and foyer space updating, as well as technology purchases. Other celebrations included the excellent approval rating on meeting student needs as noted in the Fall 2014 PTO Survey, the new art focus of “Teaching for Artistic Behaviors” in collaboration with other art teachers in the district, the focus on a healthy environment- including cafeteria and recess changes/improvements - and a top attendance ranking by the state. The group presented assessment results and actions supporting success and challenges with a plan in place to reach the super subgroup of students that have academic challenges, the focus on ELA this year, and continued work in social justice, searching for ways to best serve the students and families of color.

BOARD
CALENDAR

There was a brief discussion pertaining to a request submitted by Mr. Shipley (who was not present at the meeting) to the Board President requesting the addition of two topics to the board agenda. Mr. Shipley had asked the board to invite a speaker from VICC to the next board meeting. It was noted that at the prior board meeting the board had been informed that no changes in the program were pending and that the school district remained supportive of the VICC program. It was also felt that the VICC program merited a broader discussion, which would be most productive at a future retreat. It was noted that upcoming retreats would be dedicated to finance and to the superintendent search so the board decided to put VICC on the fall 2016 retreat calendar. It was suggested that if Mr. Shipley had specific questions related to the VICC program, these could be directed to Dr. Riss, who represents the WGSD on the VICC board. The second item related to a request for a presentation of the ASBR report to a future board meeting. It was noted that this report would be published on the District’s web site once it was approved by DESE. The board noted that the report is a more detailed version of financial reports already provided to the board and it was felt that a presentation to specific to this report would be duplicative. It was suggested that if Mr. Shipley had specific questions related to the report, these could be directed to Dr. Moore and the finance team and included in the communication log as necessary.

CONSENT
AGENDA

Mrs. Dugan moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver to approve the action items on the consent agenda:

007a: Minutes from the September 14, 2015 meeting

007b: Approve Personnel Report

Motion passed 6-0.

PUBLIC
COMMENT

There was no public comment.

RECESS INTO

CLOSED SESSION Mrs. Dugan moved, seconded by Mr. Oliver, to recess into closed session at 8:40 p.m. for the purpose of discussing property [Sec.610.021 (2) RS Mo]
The motion passed 6-0 by roll call vote: Mr. Loher, yes; Mr. Smith, yes; Mrs. Dugan, yes; Mr. Addison, yes; Ms. Clendennen, yes; Mr. Oliver, yes.

ADJOURNMENT Ms. Clendennen moved, seconded by Mr. Addison, to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.
The motion carried 6-0.

Board President

Board Secretary