**Tax Hearing Special Meeting Boone County Board of Education**

**August 24, 2017 7:30 PM**

**Ralph Rush Professional Development Center**

**99 Center Street**

**Florence, Kentucky 41042**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Tax Hearing Special meeting of the Boone County Schools Board of Education August 24, 2017 was called to order by Chairperson Ed Massey at the Ralph Rush Staff Development Center.

**Attendance Taken at 7:30 PM:**

Present Board Members:

Dr. Maria Brown

Ms. Karen Byrd

Mr. Ed Massey

Mr. Matt McIntire

Ms. Bonnie Rickert

Gerry Dusing attended as Board Attorney

Karen Evans, Board Secretary, recorded the minutes.

**II. PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge to the Flag was led by Ed Massey, Chairperson.

**III. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS**

No one spoke.

**IV. INFORMATION ON TAX RATE LEVY (Attachments On Emeeting for public viewing)**

Presentation by Eric McArtor, Deputy Superintendent COO, was given at the 7:00 Public Forum before the Special Tax Rate Hearing.

**V. TAX RATE LEVY**

Dr. Randy Poe, Superintendent, recommended the board approve to levy the tax rates producing a 4% increase in revenues rate, 65.3 cents per $100 valuation of real estate, 65.3 cents per $100 valuation of tangible property, 49.7 cents per $100 valuation of motor vehicles, as presented.

1. A motion was made by Karen Byrd, seconded by Matt McIntire to approve the approve to levy the tax rates producing a 4% increase in revenues rate, 65.3 cents per $100 valuation of real estate, 65.3 cents per $100 valuation of tangible property, 49.7 cents per $100 valuation of motor vehicles, as presented. Bonnie Rickert, Matt McIntire, Karen Byrd, Ed Massey, and Maria Brown voted, “aye.” MOTION: The motion passed 5-0.

Dr. Poe discussed the presentation by the budget committee from Mr. McArtor and the multiple reasons, as we do more with less, the new calculation on the CERS and we are also looking at a decrease of 1 to 2 million dollars. Whatever rate the board passes tonight, there will be some cuts and would like everyone to understand this, a 4% increase in revenue does not come close to the additional burdens the state has put on the district. Dr. Poe stated that hopefully we will have tax modernization that will grow the economy and does not penalize us as the SEEK formula does. Unlike the County and other system, when we grow we have more money taken away from us. We have started growing tremendously again and up over 300 students, we will need to come up with those funds. Dr. Poe discussed the growth to the county. Dr. Poe stated that if it wasn’t for the growth of the building and the district having to pay for our bonds, our rate is less than the rate levied in 2004, equals to the rate we would have if we weren’t paying mortgage payments in order to provide for that growth of students. Dr. Poe stated he does not like recommending the rate, but he has no choice but to recommend the rate, because of the growth we are opening Ballyshannon Middle School. Dr. Poe discussed the burdens of the large schools that we have and the stress of growth. Even with the opening of a brand new middle school our middle schools are still at over a 1,000 students. Dr. Poe discussed this is not solving any problems it is just keeping up with the problems we already have. If it was not bonding indebtedness for all that growth, which allows others to lower their rates, we would not be sitting in this particular situation. Rates for motor vehicle has been frozen per statutes.

Dr. Poe recommended the approval of the rates through the budget committee.

Mr. Ed Massey, board chair and member of the Budget committee, stated he has been on the board for many years and the ongoing problem is the inequitable funding that we received based on regulation, unfunded mandates, etc. Mr. Massey spoke on the IDEA and the federal funding was to be funded by 43% and today they have never funded more than 19% and discussed this issue with our Senators. Mr. Massey discussed the problem is the district must soak up the unfunded mandates out of our general fund and this along with other state and federal program and area mandates have caused us to increase our cost. The fact of the matter is, we are trying to put the mandated programs in but, then other programs must be done away with to meet the mandates. Mr. Massey stated our bus drivers, classified staff and teachers are the finest staff in the State of Kentucky and discussed the problem of losing those good quality individuals because it is hard to recruit and retain those employees when they can get other benefits elsewhere across the river or in some cases across the county and make more money. Boone has become a training ground and sending our well trained employees to other states and districts. Mr. Massey stated he has been an advocate his entire career for teachers and the fact they are underpaid for the job they do compared to other professions in other states and countries. The District must continue to find ways to fund our teachers and give them the benefits they need, take care of our classified and give them the benefits they need so that we can retain those employees to continue to provide a fair and appropriate education. Mr. Massey discussed the growth coming from Amazon and other industries that come for the good community and their children can get a top notch education. Mr. Massey spoke on some who want us to cut taxes are the same who praise the growth and development of these international companies coming to our communities and it has to go both ways. Mr. Massey stated the Constitution of Kentucky requires our legislatures to provide a free and appropriate public education that is equitable to all students, the funding is not equitable. As our property value increase we have to take the 4% just to offset the loss of money we get from the SEEK formula and the 4% is not enough to overcome the deficit that is being created by the benefit of the property tax values. The total calculation is $19.00 per $100,000 evaluation on real estate. Mr. Massey discussed that he does not like higher taxes, but the investments he wants to make are in the children of Boone County and we have the duty morally, ethically and legally to educate those children and cannot continue to do this with the declining funds. It has been shown that a quality teacher in the classroom and support staff contribute to the long term commitment and growth. Mr. Massey discussed the past challenges for the district and the continuation of lobbying our legislatures for change and defend what we have been elected to do to provide the education for our children.

Dr. Poe stated for comparison purposes with our 65.3 rate we are asking for, some have asked what other rates are and they are, Jefferson County sits at 70.4, Oldham County sits at 77.7 , Walton sits at 113.7.

Dr. Maria Brown asked has the state refined the percentage that CERS will go up and have we heard what that rate is - 19 to 28%, do we have a number. Dr. Poe stated we have the CERS rate, and if they follow the governors adjustment lead it will cost our district another million dollars, we don’t know when this will be revealed.

Dr. Maria Brown asked if the money to open Ballyshannon Middle include busses. Dr. Poe stated this does not include buses, this rate is being passed on the projected May budget so that we can put a final budget in October. In our existing budget we have planned purchases to replace, but we won’t know the numbers until the boards redistricting for Ballyshannon and how many routes we will need.

Ed Massey discussed the districts initiative with APQC and the process that looked at all of the district processes to run effect without waste and it is important for everyone to know the district was determined to run a very efficient district. Mr. Massey encouraged everyone to call their legislatures on the funding issues.

**VI. ADJOURN**

1. A motion was made by Matt McIntire, seconded by Karen Byrd to adjourn the meeting. Bonnie Rickert, Matt McIntire, Karen Byrd, Ed Massey, and Maria Brown voted, “aye.” MOTION: The motion passed 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m.

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Ed Massey/Chairperson

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Karen Evans/Secretary