School funding, sales tax a concern for Hoopeston Area officials

A trip to the annual school board convention last month has local officials concerned about the future of school funding.

First, Illinois raised the base pay for teachers to $40,000 annually. Second, state officials are considering a plan for the state to contribute more to education, along with a property tax freeze.

At Thursday’s district board meeting, member Rich Eisenmann, chairman of the board’s finance committee, said people in the education session he went to are concerned that there will not be enough money to go around.

Eisenmann said the freeze would be on the rate, so districts with significant economic growth would get more money through higher equalized assessed valuations. “We’re not in that kind of area,” he said, citing a proposed hotel and new gas station as examples of local economic growth.

“They give us a dollar and we spend a dollar,” Eisenmann said of the state. “They’re not going to give us any more than that and we need to put out more than that.”

In his remarks, Supt. Robert Richardson corrected Eisenmann, saying the district gets a dollar and can’t spend more than that but, “the state of Illinois has been doing that for many, many years.”

Richardson is concerned about the state changing the funding model from property taxes to the state. “That scares me, absolutely scares me to death,” he said. While not saying property taxes are the best way to fund education, “until they come up with something better, a bird in the hand is my pick every time,” he added. “We’re at the mercy of the state’s laws.”

Richardson wondered whether Gov. JB Pritzker gave thought to the effect raising teacher base pay to $40,000 would affect district, who will pay more from the start to the end of a teacher’s tenure.

Raising the minimum wage to $15 per hour and education-based funding are also bad for the district. “A government big enough to give you everything you want is big enough to take away everything you have,” he said.

The board also discussed the one percent school facilities sales tax referendum that will be on the March 17.

See FUNDING on other side

Area churches list Christmas Eve, Day services

Area churches have listed their Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services, which include:

- Chestnut Street Church of Christ, 709 E. Chestnut St., Hoopeston, Tuesday, Dec. 24, 6 p.m. Candlelight Service. The children will hold their Christmas program then.

- East Lynn Community Fellowship, 41428 Main St., East Lynn, Tuesday, Dec. 24, 7 p.m. Candlelight Service. Gordon and Brooke Allen will share special music. John Smiley will bring the message. We hope that you can share something with us.

- First Christian Church of Hoopeston, 502 E. Main., Tuesday, Dec. 24, 7 p.m. Candlelight Service

- First Presbyterian Church, 915 E. Orange, Hoopeston, Tuesday, Dec. 24, 7 p.m., Candlelight Service.

- Hoopeston United Methodist Church, 403 E. Main, 9 p.m. and an informal service at 11 p.m. Both will have communion and candle lighting.

- Morning Star Church, 201 N. Chicago, Roseville, Tuesday, December 24, 10 p.m. Candlelight Service.

- Roseville Church of Christ, Tuesday, Dec. 24, 6 p.m. Candlelight Service

- St. Anthony Catholic Church, 403 S. Third St., Hoopeston, Tuesday, Dec. 24, 6 p.m. Candlelight Service.

- Valentine’s Day Mass, Wednesday, Dec. 25, 9 a.m.

As the Holiday Season is upon us, we find ourselves reflecting on the past year and on those who have helped to shape our business in a most significant way. We value our relationship with you and look forward to working with you in the year to come.

We wish you a very happy Holiday Season and a New Year filled with peace and prosperity. From the Computer Works, Inc., and to you!...
**From the Blotter**

A fluffy mountain bike was found at 9:30 a.m. Thursday at First Ave. and West Maple. The owner may identify and claim it at the police station.

No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 5:58 p.m. Saturday at Elm and Sixth Ave.

Police said Dorothy Rickert, 71, of Hoopeston, in a 2014 Chevrolet, failed to yield and struck the front driver’s side wheel of a New Holland tractor, driven by Rogelio Rivera, 49, of Hoopeston.

**Funding continued from other side**

ballot.

Eisenmann called the sales tax “a make or break deal for the school,” saying without it, “we’re probably going to end up having to make cuts. We’re going to have some very somber decisions to make.”

If passed, the sales tax may be used for capital improvements, school resource officers and mental health professionals.

A wish list of district improvements includes air conditioning at John Greer and Maple, possibly a resource officer, as well as aesthetic improvements to some middle school halls, which some students say cause a “blah” feeling.

Richardson said the board must decide how it will use the money if the tax is implemented. According to information he’s seen, it is suggested to have a big push for the referendum starting 30 days before the vote. “An informed public is what we want,” he said.

In unrelated action, the board is taking a short break in its timeline to visit Holy Family School, tabling action on approving Upchurch Group to design specifications for the Honeywell demolition.

Richardson said under the proposed agreement, the district would pay Upchurch 10 percent of the overall project cost to create specs and advertise for bids. If the board rejected the bid, the agreement called for the district to pay Upchurch 7.7 percent of the project cost, “and we still wouldn’t have it turn down,” he said.

After discussion, Richardson said he would contact Milford School District about how they handled demolition of their old high school.

In personnel action, the board:
- Approved Ginger Bertram’s resignation as seventh grade volleyball coach and hired Suzanne Boyer as the new coach.
- Approved Tim Walsh as district building and grounds supervisor and Mason Layden as transportation and grounds supervisor.
- Approved the resignation of John Clemen, who resigned last month to take a position in the Milford School District.
- Approved Mattie Drayer’s resignation as high school personal aide.
- Approved Ron Cadle as high school assistant track coach.
- Approved, pending background check, volunteers Theta Lee and Baylee Bushong, FFA; Adam Colunga, wrestling; and Chandelle Davis, volunteer sixth grade volleyball coach.
- Increased the athletic director stipend to $15,791.50.
- Approved a search for a high school girls physical education teacher for the 2020-21 year.

Principal John Klaber said the position is necessary because the school would like to add an advanced PE class and have an updated schedule. Current, aids are called upon to monitor students while showering and dressing and sometimes driver’s ed teacher Ross Bryll is called in for PE duty, causing havoc with his schedule.

Also, he said, the class is trying to do a pickleball unit in a small gym, which leaves no room for those not playing to engage in physical fitness activity. The final reason, Klaber said, is “we really need female coaches,” and a PE teacher could help that situation.

The board unanimously approved the search.

**Briefly**

Christmas closings

- Hoopeston Public Library will be closed Monday- Wednesday for Christmas. It will reopen Thursday with regular hours.
- Hoopeston city offices will be closed Tuesday and Wednesday.
- Public Services will not collect trash on Wednesday.
- Fast Lanes will close at 3 p.m. Tuesday and be closed all day Wednesday.

- Just the Facts will not be printed Wednesday or Thursday. Publication will resume Friday.

**At the library**

Littles @ the Library will not be held this week.

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**Classifieds**

**APARTMENTS FOR RENT**

2 bedroom upstairs apt. Many updates, move-in ready. $400 month. Call 217-504-4670 or 217-304-1103

**HELP WANTED**

NAPA Hoopeston is looking for a full time Counter/ Delivery person. Successful candidate will be very knowledgeable about automotive parts and able to answer phones and wait on customers. Must do daily and monthly paperwork and be capable of doing all activities the store manager does in case of his absence. ASE certified counter person preferred but not required. If interested, pick up a application at NAPA 226 E Main St. Hoopeston.

- Quality Solutions is looking for full-time delivery drivers skilled in efficiency, organization, and flexibility. Delivery Drivers will deliver bottled water and bagged salt to commercial and residential customers and must have knowledge on how to perform basic maintenance on the vehicle when not driving. Apply in person at 102 N 1st Street in Hoopeston or call us at 855-692-7824.

- Sygna is hiring Class A CDL drivers. Experienced drivers with clean records only please. Pay is $12,500 sign on bonus. Sygna is also looking for students for their CDL school. You must be 21 and have your Class A permit to be eligible. We have part time and seasonal work available as well. Go to www.sygmanetwork.com or call us at 855-770-3210.

- Full-Fill Industries Henning, IL offers job opportunities for full time/ part time employment. Choose the schedule that fits your life style: 1, 2, 3 or 4 days a week. Candidates must be 18 years old, and can pick their shift. Machine operators are needed for 1st & 2nd shift. We also offer fulltime positions with a full benefits package. If you are interested in working for a growing company, apply on line at www.full-fill.com go to employment or employment opportunities and apply as indicated. EO:

- **MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE**

BlanQuilt Weighted Blanket w/ Cover. New, used 2 times. $169.00 new or offer. Call Betha 217-293-6876

*Email publish@justthefacts.net or call (217) 283-9348 to place your ad!*

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**Rossville Family Restaurant**

will be open Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, 6 a.m.-3 p.m. each day.

**Serving Christmas Dinner**

10:30-2:30 p.m. Christmas Day.

Choice of oven roasted turkey or baked ham.

Reservations suggested - 217 748 6201

**On the fifth day of Christmas, my True Love gave to me...**

5 Golden Car Wash Tokens... (available for only $25!) Can be purchased at The Pink Poodle

**HOOPESTON CAR WASH & MILL-FORD CAR WASH**

Major Credit Cards now accepted!