

TAX

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could be raised using just the Act 1 index.

Before Melone made his presentation, the board heard from Tom Rainey of Bonita & Rainey, who performed an audit for the district for the 2010-11 school year.

Rainey's report showed the district actually spent about \$1.3 million less than what it had budgeted, and the district also had a surplus of \$657,000 in revenues.

Melone said that brought the district's fund balance, akin to a savings account, to a total of \$2.5 million, but most of that money will be needed to cover shortfalls in the 2012-13 budget.

Melone noted that salary and health care benefits will continue to increase over time. This year the increases will set the district back by \$1.5 million. Salaries and benefits contribute to about 69 percent of the budget.

"Even if you use the fund balance to cover this cost, you still have a \$1.5 million deficit for the next year and then some," said Melone.

Last year the board faced difficult decisions in its budgeting process due to a major decrease in state funding. The district managed to save money by not replacing retiring teachers, furloughing about five teachers, curtailing certain programs and cutting costs for transportation and supplies.

The district also completely revamped its curriculum,

and Superintendent James McGovern said the district has few options to fill the funding gaps.

McGovern estimated the district's fund balance will be left with \$30,000 after this year's budgeting process.

"The governor intended to make school districts use everything they have," said McGovern. "We have taken drastic measures ... we're doing more with less. Now we're just going to have to develop alternate sources of funding."

McGovern also said negotiating teachers' salaries, which will occur at the end of next year when the current contract runs out, will not solve the long-term funding problems.

"You can't count on negotiations to solve the issues," he said. "We have fantastic teachers. We're doing well because our people are good, and we don't want to sacrifice that."

The board will vote on a proposed final budget in May before voting on a final budget at the end of June.

In other news, the board ...

• Heard from Johnna Evans, president of the Lake-Lehman Foundation, about its upcoming annual tea at the Penn State Wilkes-Barre campus in April. The foundation will award scholarships to Lake-Lehman seniors at the April 15 event. Students have until March 1 to apply for various scholarships offered by the foundation. Application forms can be found on the district's website.

• Accepted a letter of resignation from Christopher Rocky Davis, secondary

health and physical education teacher, effective Dec. 23, 2011, and appointed Krystal Miner of Hunlock Creek as a temporary substitute in the position with a salary of \$42,419.

• Appointed Wendy Ide, of Shavertown, and Alyson Paulauskas, also of Shavertown, as special education substitutes. Board member David Paulauskas abstained from the vote for Alyson Paulauskas due to his relation to the appointee.

• Appointed the following coaches for the 2011-12 school year: Larry Egan as volunteer assistant softball coach, Sherry Metz as junior high assistant girls basketball coach, Janice O'Brien as assistant swim coach, Kelly Spencer Adamshick as head girls soccer coach, Paul Callahan as varsity assistant girls soccer coach, Corey Brin as head boys volleyball coach, Shane Kupsy as varsity assistant baseball coach, Walter Sorber as junior high assistant baseball coach, Brian Gorski as volunteer assistant baseball coach, John Sobocinski as head track and field coach, Williams Kvashay as varsity assistant track and field coach, Gary Grandinetti as varsity assistant track and field coach, Justin Mazur as junior high assistant track and field coach, Scott Summa as junior high assistant track and field coach and Matthew Nonnenberg as junior high assistant track and field coach.

• Appointed David Gambel, of Pocono Lake, as assistant band director and indoor

percussion instructor for the 2011-12 school year.

• Appointed Dante Marmo, of Old Forge, as a volunteer indoor percussion instructor for the 2011-12 school year.

• Approved a medical leave of absence for Judith Heller, food service staff, effective Dec. 8, 2011 through Jan. 13, 2012.

• Appointed Kelly Magdalinski, of Shavertown, and Teri Weston, of Hunlock Creek, as support staff substitutes.

• Appointed Richard Sluzale Jr. as head custodian for the junior/senior high school effective Jan. 12, with a salary of \$12.30 per hour.

• Exonerated John Davis, of Sweet Valley, from payment of real estate taxes on property located in Ross Township due to a disability that occurred during a period of war or armed conflict as determined by the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

• Authorized a refund for Anthony J. Jr. and Diane Walaitis for two properties in Harveys Lake Borough in the amounts of \$85.17 and \$42.58 as determined by court order of the Luzerne County Board of Assessment Appeals.

• Endorsed a grant application for the Luzerne Intermediate Unit No. 18 for the "Plains Veterans Memorial Educational Opportunity Center" project.

• The next Lake-Lehman School Board meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 13 in the junior/senior high school library.

CLUBS RING BELLS FOR SALVATION ARMY



The Salvation Army's Annual Red Kettle Christmas Fund Drive received a boost from members of the Dallas Kiwanis Club and the Dallas and Lake-Lehman Key Clubs. Members of the clubs manned a kettle and rang bells at Thomas' Food Markets in Dallas and Shavertown. From left, are Susan Dobash, Dallas Kiwanis Club; Ashley Grayson, Dallas Key Club; and Jordon Nichol, Dallas Key Club.

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