



## CAZENOVIA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Education Meeting  
Wednesday, May 21, 2025 at 6:30 pm

31 Emory Ave | Cazenovia, NY 13035  
Board of Education Conference Room, Cazenovia Middle School  
Open to the Public and Streamed Live on GoogleMeet

Type of Meeting:	Special
Board Members Present:	JoAnne Race (arrived at 6:40 pm), Meghan Kelly, Travis Barr (arrived at 6:37 pm), Judith Hight, Ron Luteran, Jennifer Parmalee (arrived at 6:51 pm), Jan Woodworth
Board Members Absent:	None
Administrators Present:	Christopher DiFulvio, Thomas Finnerty, Kevin Linck

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### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Meghan Kelly, Board Vice President, at 6:35 pm. She asked all to stand for the pledge of allegiance after a moment of silence was observed.

It was suggested that the first three agenda items under New Business be voted on while waiting for three Board members to arrive.

### 3. New Business

#### A. Resolution to Approve the Election Officials for June 17, 2025 Annual Budget Re-Vote

*Motion made by Ron Luteran, seconded by Jan Woodworth to approve Agenda Item 3A.*

➤ *Vote: 4 (in favor) 0 (opposed) 3 (absent; Barr, Parmalee, Race) Motion passed.*

#### B. Resolution to Approve User Agreement for the Rental of an ImageCast Machine for the Budget Re-Vote on June 17, 2025

*Motion made by Jan Woodworth, seconded by Ron Luteran to approve Agenda Item 3B.*

➤ *Vote: 5 (in favor) 0 (opposed) 2 (absent; Parmalee, Race) Motion passed.*

#### C. Designation of Public Hearing for Annual Budget Re-Vote

The Public Hearing for the annual budget re-vote will be held on Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at 6:30 pm in the High School Auditorium.

*Motion made by Ron Luteran, seconded by Jan Woodworth to approve Agenda Item 3C.*

➤ *Vote: 5 (in favor) 0 (opposed) 2 (absent; Parmalee, Race) Motion passed.*

### 2. Discussion Items

Proposed 2025-26 School Budget: The re-vote date is set by New York State, there was confusion about this last year, as it's the same date as the Village election (June 17, 2025). Cazenovia has no say in what date the re-vote must be held.

Tom Finnerty gave a presentation on the revised, proposed budget. The levy limit is 3.14% by using the debt service fund. The recommendation is to still use the debt service fund, so as not to confuse voters, and to

stay within the tax levy limit which would require approval by 50% + 1 voters.

Chris DiFulvio reported the cost of business continues to increase, and even if the proposed budget on May 20 had passed, Cazenovia would still be one of the lowest cost per pupil districts in our region. Staying within the tax cap requires cuts of \$829,562; and if the re-vote fails we will be forced to go to a contingency budget which requires an additional \$718K of cuts.

Jan Woodworth asked about cuts to extracurricular clubs. Jenn Parmalee asked about cutting positions through attrition. Chris said the district has considered everything they can think of, including alternate sources of funding such as selling acreage at Fenner Field, and leasing land for cell phone towers. He will be meeting again with Representative Stirpe on Friday.

Chris reviewed considerations to balance the budget, including removing honors sections of 9th and 10th grade ELA and social studies; getting the MS and HS on the same schedule (by 2026-27) to allow more shared staffing opportunities between the two schools; and moving 8th grade under the MS administration. The current estimate of positions affected is 8.6. The math instructional coach position would be cut. Jenn asked what services in the Board of Education budget line item can be eliminated.

JoAnne Race asked about cutting the communications/PR service. Judith Hight reflected on yesterday's turnout at the polls, which was larger than most years, and unlike last year not related to the Board election. People came out in droves to vote no on the budget, and it's a failure on the part of communication. The turf project has tarnished our credibility of fiscal responsibility, and we didn't get the message across well enough on what cuts would be forthcoming if the initial budget failed to pass. Ron Luteran said the district is over-communicating; and with regards to the turf, the public hears about how much the turf cost, but not about the state aid that was received for that project. Meghan Kelly said the district hasn't regained those voters who voted against the turf, and asked who the communications on ParentSquare go to. Chris said it was unfair to judge the product of the BOCES PR team, because the Board didn't listen to their advice and feedback. Four districts in our region proposed budgets that would require a supermajority (including Cazenovia) and all of them failed to pass. JoAnne suggested turning this into advocacy with NYS with regards to the GEA amount that was cut, and said the newsletter money in the Board's budget line item should be cut. Chris relayed that without a communications/PR team, these responsibilities would fall back on the administration, and to expect less communication overall, including services like the printed calendar that is mailed every fall. Jenn said that we will hear complaints about lack of communication, but that it is a consequence of a restricted budget; Ron, Travis Barr, and Jan all agreed the printed calendar must go, it's a luxury we can not afford.

JoAnne suggested reminding voters every year what had to be cut each year prior, and asked about using more fund balance. Chris recommended not increasing the amount of fund balance used, as this budget already uses \$1.6M and we would be setting ourselves up for an even worse position next year. We have no money to put back into a capital fund, and our transportation center is falling apart. Chris is worried about the increasing budget gap between Cazenovia and other districts in our region, what the rankings will look like in the future, and the limit of extras we can offer to our students to make them competitive in the future. Jenn suggested asking Madison County to waive the \$36,500 in fees for mental health outside contractors. Ron asked what the Board is voting on tonight, Chris confirmed it's the total budget amount, no specific jobs or offerings. The board agreed to give up funds for conferences this year to decrease their budget line item. Jan, Meghan and Travis spoke about the lack of impact the community thinks voting down the budget has on the school district, as every year the district whittles away more and more to avoid the most impactful cuts. Jan said it would be insulting to the voters if the Board put up the same budget from May 20th for the re-vote on June 17th. Tom reiterated that if the revised budget fails to pass on June 17th, deeper cuts (an additional \$700K+) would be necessary, when forced to go to a contingency budget.

### **3. New Business**

#### **D. Resolution to Approve Proposed 2025-26 School Budget**

The proposed 2025-26 school budget to be voted upon on June 17, 2025 will be \$39,617,418.

*Motion made by Jan Woodworth, seconded by Ron Luteran to approve Agenda Item 3D.*

➤ *Vote: 7 (in favor) 0 (opposed) Motion passed.*

Ron Luteran said his questions for Executive Session can wait until the June Regular BOE meeting, and suggested forgoing the Executive Session that is on the agenda. No objections were raised.

Jennifer Parmalee said Kate Hill, from the Cazenovia Republican, had reached out to her asking for her opinion on the budget vote; Jenn asked for advice on how to respond. Ron Luteran said the Superintendent speaks on behalf of the District and advised her to refer all questions to him.

#### **4. Adjournment**

*Motion made by Ron Luteran, seconded by Jan Woodworth to adjourn the meeting.*

➤ *Vote: 7 (in favor) 0 (opposed) Motion passed.*

JoAnne Race adjourned the meeting at 8:20 pm.

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Emily Ayres, District Clerk