

## **THE VIEW FROM HERE**

**DAVID WESTHOFF**

**SEPTEMBER 9, 2011**

The Budget Hearing and Annual Meeting are scheduled to be held in the Elementary School Cafeteria starting at 8:00 P.M. on Monday, September 12, 2011. Unlike Board of Education meetings that are legally considered as meetings held in public, the Annual Meeting is a “public” meeting. The difference may seem slight or insignificant, but in truth, the role of the public and of the Board of Education is these two meetings are vastly different.

In a “*public meeting*” the governance role and responsibility of the Board of Education does not come into play. The residents of the School District of Poynette actually have the authority to speak to any and all Agenda items and to vote on each agenda item that requires action. The public also elects the “*Chair*” to conduct the meeting.

In a meeting held in public- a Board of Education meeting- the governance authority and responsibility of the Board of Education applies. The President of the Board of Education constructs the Agenda with input from the total Board and Administration. The President of the Board also conducts the meeting. The public present for such a meeting is not free to speak on agenda items and usually are authorized to speak only when they sign up prior to the Public forum provided in the Meeting Agenda. The public does not vote on Agenda items, only Board members vote.

The Budget Hearing/Annual Meeting in the School District of Poynette that will take place on Monday, September 12, 2011 includes several opportunities for the public to vote on specific Agenda items: (1) Transportation Policy, (2) Disposal of surplus equipment and a Resolution to authorize the Board to sell the Dekorra Elementary School Site, (3) the 2011-12 property tax levy, (4) Set the date for the 2012 Annual Meeting (5) Elect a Chairperson to conduct the Annual Meeting (6) Set the salaries for the Board officers and members, (7) Set the length of the school year, (8) and reimburse Board members for actual and necessary expenses when traveling outside of the school district in performance of duties.

Our nation’s public schools truly depend upon the input of the Public. I look forward to meeting with you at our Annual Meeting. Thank you.