

News from:

Watervliet City Schools

1245 Hillside Drive
Watervliet, NY 12189

Watervliet City Schools considering changing school tax payment schedule

For Immediate Release: 1/27/09

Contact: Paul Padalino, Superintendent of Schools, 629-3200

The Watervliet City Schools Board of Education is considering changing how and when school taxes are paid by city homeowners. Currently, taxpayer's annual bill is split in half and paid twice a year, once in January and again in July. The school is looking into changing the procedures and having the entire bill due in September. If the Board of Education decides to move forward with the change, next year's full tax bill would be due in September of 2009.

There are a number of reasons the school is considering the switch. The change will save the school approximately \$50,000 a year in interest fees that it pays to borrow money to cover shortfalls between the two payment cycles.

"These savings are especially important in a year where the Governor is telling schools that there will definitely be state aid cuts," said Watervliet City Schools' Business Manager John Heid. "This is an area where a significant savings could be found, without having to look at cutting either educational programs or personnel."

Last year, the City of Watervliet changed its payment schedule so the city's full tax bill is due in January. This means homeowners currently have to pay $\frac{3}{4}$ of their total tax bill in January and $\frac{1}{4}$ in July.

"Changing the school tax bill due date to September will help make the payment schedule more even again," said Board of Education Member, Christine Chartrand, who also works for the City of Watervliet. "We have been hearing that it is difficult for some residents to have to come up with such a large chunk of money so soon after the holidays, so we hope this switch would help that."

The Board of Education heard public feedback and discussed the change to the tax payment schedule in public session at both the December 2008 and January 2009 meetings. They will also welcome feedback during public comment session before they vote on the issue at the next meeting on Tuesday, February 10, 7 pm in the Jr.-Sr. High School Auditorium. Residents are also welcome to submit their feedback by calling the District's Communication Specialist at 629-3236, through the district's website, watervlietcityschools.org, or in writing to the Superintendent's office: 1245 Hillside Drive, Watervliet, NY 12189. All feedback will be shared with the Board prior to the February meeting.

The final decision will be posted on the district website and a letter will be mailed to all residents detailing the change. If the change is implemented, the Watervliet CSD business office will officially contact all mortgage companies to alert them of the change. Residents/Escrow companies will not be sent any tax bills in July of 2009. Full school tax bills will be sent out at the end of August with a due date of September 30, 2009.

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