

## **Tax hike coming for residents in Lackawanna Trail School Districts**

BY ROBERT L. BAKER, STAFF WRITER / Published: May 15, 2018

FACTORYVILLE — The Lackawanna Trail School Board voted 5-4 Monday night for a 2018-19 proposed \$21.2 million budget that will hike taxes 3.09 percent in the Lackawanna County part of the district and 2.7 percent in the Wyoming County part.

In voting no, board member Karl Beichler said, “I don’t want to see this school district broke, and I don’t want to see what we’ve built get destroyed, but we can’t keep going the way we’re going. We’ve got to get back to the basics and straighten this out.”

It was a sentiment echoed by about two dozen residents who complained for about 90 minutes about being taxed to death.

Benton Twp. resident Susanne Green pointed out her school property tax bill had gone up 25 percent in eight years.

“Something is desperately wrong here,” she said.

Board member Michael Mould, who voted for the budget, said his heart went out to the people who spoke passionately against raising taxes.

“We share your concerns. But we’re also facing pressures on the pension front, cyber charter schools, sharply rising special education costs and inadequate state funding,” he said. “It’s not lost on me that we still have a lot of work to do.”

The increase is expected to raise an additional \$296,000 for the district.

The hike is necessary because the district depleted its cash reserves in certain areas and costs, such as insurance, rose, district Business Manager Keith Glynn said earlier this month.