

Public Work Session and Special Meeting

A Public Work Session and Special Meeting of the Board of Education of the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District was held on Monday evening, September 22, 2014, beginning at 5:30 p.m., in the Board Conference Room at the William J. Brosnan School, 158 Laurel Avenue, Northport, New York, with Ms. Julia R. Binger, Chairperson, opening the meeting and presiding.

Members present: Mr. David Badanes, Ms. Julia Binger, Mr. James Maloney, Mrs. Lori McCue, Mrs. Donna McNaughton, Mrs. Regina Pisacani, Mr. Andrew Rapiejko, Mrs. Jennifer Thompson, Mr. Stephen V. Waldenburg, Jr.

Members absent: None

Also present: Dr. Marylou McDermott, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Kathleen Molander, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Mr. Matthew Nelson, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Administration
Ms. Rosemarie Coletti, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

1. President Binger called the meeting to order.

Motion was made by Trustee Badanes, seconded by Trustee McCue, to convene into Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to contract negotiations.

Unanimously carried.

At 7:24 p.m. the Board reconvened in public session in the Cafeteria at the William J. Brosnan School.

Public attendance: There were approximately 100 persons present.

2. Ms. Binger led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance; and
3. Pointed out the emergency exits.
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Trustee McCue, seconded by Trustee Waldenburg, to approve all items under 4.01

4.01 Minutes

- 4.01.1 Regular Meeting, August 25, 2014
- 4.01.2 Regular Meeting, September 8, 2014
- 4.01.3 Special Meeting, September 12, 2014

Unanimously carried.

President Binger stated that the Board had two items under New Business to address before item 5. – Communications.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion was made by Trustee Waldenburg, seconded by Trustee Thompson to approve the following resolution:

“WHEREAS, as a result of the unanticipated resignation of Dr. Marylou McDermott from the position of Superintendent of Schools, effective July 21, 2015, it is necessary for the Board of Education to commence a search for candidates to fill the impending vacancy in the position of Superintendent of Schools, and

WHEREAS, upon receipt of the aforesaid resignation, the Board began consideration of the process to obtain the services of a search consultant to assist the Board in its efforts to recruit and appoint a new Superintendent of Schools, and

WHEREAS, the Board received an unsolicited offer of assistance from four experienced school administrators who are long term residents of the District; Peter Scordo, the current Superintendent of Schools of the Elwood School district, Dr. James Ruck, the retired Superintendent of Schools of the Sachem School District, Dr. Ellen Best Laimit, the retired Superintendent of Schools of the Babylon School District, and Mr. Joseph Dragone, the current Assistant Superintendent for Business of the Roslyn School District, and

WHEREAS, the Board has decided to accept, with gratitude, the offer of the foregoing individuals to act as a Search Committee to assist the Board in the recruitment and selection of a new Superintendent of Schools to continue the academic and organizational excellence of the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District; and

WHEREAS, the aforesaid offer was made on an unsolicited voluntary basis, without fee along with a proposed process for the recruitment of a new Superintendent of Schools, which process is acceptable to the Board, in keeping with the processes employed by school districts to fill the vacancy in the position of Superintendent of Schools,

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Board of Education gratefully accepts the proposed assistance and appoints, Peter Scordo, Dr. James Ruck, Dr. Ellen Best Laimit and Joseph Dragone as a Special Committee to assist the Board in its efforts to identify and appoint a new Superintendent of Schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education directs that Board Counsel assist the Special Committee and the Board in its search efforts, and further authorizes the payment of all reasonable expenses, including advertising fees, printing fees and travel expenses subject to the prior approval of the Board of Education, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education adopts the attached schedule and procedure for the recruitment and appointment of a new Superintendent of Schools.”

President Binger introduced Mr. Scordo, Dr. Ruck, Dr. Laimit and Mr. Dragone and thanked them for volunteering with the Superintendent search.

Unanimously carried.

Motion was made by Trustee McNaughton, seconded by Trustee McCue to approve the Personnel Actions Report, dated September 22, 2014.

Unanimously carried.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications to the Board.

President Binger reviewed the District's policy on anonymous letters stating that they are typically ignored and destroyed unless they identify students by name and then they are investigated. Ms. Binger stated that the Board does not discuss employees or students in public.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

<u>Name</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Mike Gozelski Parent	Asked what the District policy is on anonymous letters. Mr. Gozelski stated that he represented the high school football team, who were sitting in the audience, and asked the Board to look at the Booster Club's Facebook page and see what people think about the football program and coaches. Mr. Gozelski presented the Board with communications regarding the football program.
Mark Zaharis Parent	President Binger read Mr. Zaharis' concerns regarding hiring a public relations firm in which he asked the Board to refuse the request for funding.
Robin Carlson Parent	Stated that her bus concerns still remain unresolved. Ms. Carlson stated that she had requested a mileage report and still has not seen it.
Ms. Trish McGrane, Transportation Supervisor, stated that there are designated entrances at each school and Ms. Carlson's residence falls below the mileage requirement. Ms. McGrane stated that they are arranging for Ms. Carlson to ride on the bus route to the school.	
Joanne Cosgun Parent	Stated that her house is 1.04 miles from the entrance to East Northport Middle School and her son should not be denied transportation. Ms. Cosgun expressed her safety concerns with the designated back entrances to the school.
Mr. Pat DeStefano, East Northport Middle School Principal, stated that there is security staff in the back of the building during arrival and dismissal with a view of the property line. Ms. McGrane, Transportation Supervisor, stated that the District's transportation policy is within the guidelines of New York State Law.	
Joe Sabia	Asked why it is necessary for the District to hire a PR firm.
President Binger stated that Mr. Sabia can address his concerns when this item is brought up on the agenda.	
Carl Litt Resident	Asked what the status was regarding the ESCO and putting out an RFP. Mr. Litt also expressed concerns regarding the District's use of driver license scanners and what information is retrieved and stored. Mr. Litt suggested that legal look at the Driver Privacy Protection Act.
Ms. Kathleen Molander, Assistant Superintendent for Business, stated that Counsel made the recommendation to handle the ESCO as an energy performance contract noting that it is the only avenue that does not require voter approval.	
Kelly Clark Parent	Asked the Board to elaborate on the anticipated role of current parents, teachers and administrators in the new superintendent search.

President Binger stated that the superintendent search timeline included involving staff, parents, students and community members in the selection process.

Tammie Topel
Parent Asked what the criteria is for students being picked up during and after school, if there is consistency among schools, grade levels, and after school programs. Ms. Topel asked why there wasn't a ConnectEd call to parents regarding the new procedures to pick up and drop off students.

There was a discussion regarding the information that is stored from the driver's license and what period of time it will be stored, drafting a policy on storage of data, and procedures at each level regarding picking up and dropping off students. Ms. Irene McLaughlin, Northport High School Principal, stated that they are working on consistency with implementing the procedures.

Ellen Hatch
Parent Stated that it is important that information is sent out to parents and community members on what the current policies are so that they can be prepared for new procedures.

7. PUBLIC WORK SESSION

7.01 There was a discussion of the following Board of Education Policies:

SECTION 2000 – SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATION

7.01.1 #2200 – *“Annual Meeting and Election”*

SECTION 4000 – INSTRUCTIONAL

7.01.2 #4010 – *“Equivalence in Instructional Staff and Materials”*

7.01.3 #4321.7 – *“Special Education Personnel”*

7.01.4 #4321.10 – *“Public Report on Revisions to District Policies, Practices and Procedures Upon a Finding of Significant Disproportionality”*

7.01.5 #4321.20 – *“District-wide and Statewide Assessments of Students with Disabilities”*

7.01.6 #4321.30 – *“Availability of Alternative Format Instructional Materials for Students with Disabilities”*

7.01.7 #4326 – *“Limited English Proficiency Instruction”*

SECTION 8000 – SUPPORT SERVICES GOALS

7.01.8 #8415 – *“Alcohol and Drug Testing of Bus Drivers”*

SECTION 9000 – PERSONNEL AND NEGOTIATIONS

7.01.9 #9141 – *“Staff Complaints and Grievances”*

7.01.10 #9320 – *“Drug/Alcohol-Free Workplace”*

The Board discussed some minor revisions to the policies and requested Board Counsel review of them. The Board requested clarification on policy #8415 – *“Alcohol and Drug Testing of Bus Drivers”* with regards to contract buses, medical marijuana and prescription drugs, and adding language from policy #9320 – *“Drug/Alcohol-Free Workplace”* to it.

Motion was made by Trustee Waldenburg, seconded by Trustee Maloney, to receive all policies under 7.01 as a first reading, with the exception of item 7.01.8 Policy #8415 – *“Alcohol and Drug Testing of Bus Drivers”*

Unanimously carried.

President Binger reviewed the upcoming meetings of October 6th, October 20th, November 3rd, and November 17th.

8. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT, FINANCIAL – FOR BOARD ACTION

Motion was made by Trustee McCue, seconded by Trustee Waldenburg, to approve item 8.01

8.01 Approving a Proposal for Communication Services for the 2014-2015 School Year between Syntax and the Board of Education of the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District.

Trustee Badanes stated that he was still on the fence as to why the District should hire a public relations firm.

Several Board Trustees stated that there is not enough promotion of all the good things that go on in the District and the expectation that the Superintendent can do this job is not feasible with the size of the district. The District is in the midst of looking for a superintendent and it is important to get high quality candidates who want to work here. It was noted that this is a one year agreement and the Board could re-evaluate at the end of the contract.

There was discussion regarding BOCES aide, budgeting for the expense of the PR firm, challenges facing the District including LIPA, publishing of Our Schools, and communicating effectively to the community regarding budgets, etc.

Dr. Marylou McDermott, Superintendent of Schools, stated that the local newspapers should be heralding the accomplishments of staff and students in the District.

Mr. Joe Sabia stated that it is in the superintendent’s job description to write the Our Schools and handle public relations. Mr. Sabia stated that the money spent on the PR firm should be spent on students.

Mr. Carl Litt stated that hiring a PR firm denotes a connotation of somebody pleading the Fifth Amendment. Mr. Litt suggested the District hang out its dirty laundry and address it publicly.

Ms. Tammie Topel stated that public relations is in the superintendent’s job description and that the Superintendent is doing a tremendous job with Our Schools. Ms. Topel stated that the District needs to disseminate information properly and get communication up to par.

Ms. Susan Rizoli from the Times of Northport stated that there is more than one local newspaper and believes that her paper is factual, fair and accurate.

At 10:23 p.m., motion was made by Trustee Waldenburg, seconded by Trustee McCue to call the question.

Unanimously carried.

Vote on Trustee McCue’s motion to approve item 8.01 was as follows:

YES: Ms. Binger, Mrs. McCue, Mrs. McNaughton, Mrs. Pisacani, Mr. Rapiejko, Mrs. Thompson, Mr. Waldenburg

NO: Mr. Badanes, Mr. Maloney

Motion passed.

Dr. McDermott announced that Northport High School students Jake Miller and Adam Chang have been names semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program and noted the finalists will be selected in

February. Dr. McDermott also announced that Academy of Finance Coordinator Alison Schwabish has been named one of Hauppauge Industrial Associations “Those Who Make a Difference” and will be honored at a gala in November.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Trustee Rapiejko, seconded by Trustee Waldenburg, to adjourn the meeting.

Unanimously carried.

At 10:25 p.m., the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.

Beth M. Nystrom
District Clerk

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