

Special Meeting

A Special Meeting of the Board of Education of the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District was held on Monday evening, March 23, 2015, beginning at 6:03 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. Thomas Caramore, Interim 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 McCue, seconded by Trustee Maloney, to convene into Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to collective negotiations and matters pertaining to the employment history of particular persons.

Unanimously carried.

At 7:07 p.m. the Board reconvened in public session in the Cafeteria at the William J. Brosnan School.

Public attendance: There were approximately 80 persons present.

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

There were no minutes for approval.

Trustee Waldenburg stated that the Northport High School Robotics Team will be competing on Saturday at Hofstra University. The competition is from 9-1 and playoffs from 1-6.

5. DISCUSSION OF SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED 2014-2015 BUDGET

5.01 Discussion of Personnel Service Costs (salaries, benefits)

Dr. Caramore presented the proposed Revenue, Reserves & Capital Projects for 2015-2016. Dr. Caramore stated that at this point we do not know what revenues the District will be getting next year and the position taken is a conservative one using last year's numbers. The estimated revenue sources for 2015-2016 are 88% from the Tax Levy (\$140,868,862), 8% from State Aid (\$12,606,469 and \$575,000 for full day kindergarten conversion), 2% from Reserves and Fund Balance (\$2,896,603), and 2% from miscellaneous sources (\$2,716,750). Dr. Caramore noted that Northport receives less State Aid than any other district in Western Suffolk BOCES. Dr. Caramore recommended the following use of restricted reserves: \$316,603 from the Retirement Contribution Reserve, \$70,000 from the Unemployment Insurance Reserve, and \$120,000 from the Workers' Compensation Reserve, totaling \$506,603.

Dr. Caramore recommended the following Capital Projects included in the preliminary budget to consider for 2015-2016: Replacement of three (3) boilers and associated mechanical systems at Northport High School, estimated cost of \$1,125,000; Replacement of both exterior bleachers and press box at Northport High School, estimated cost of \$825,000. Dr. Caramore recommended the following Capital Projects that may be funded by Capital Reserves for 2015-2016: Pave gravel lot at Northport High School including drainage, lighting and curbing, estimated cost \$325,000; Auditorium theatrical lighting at East Northport Middle School, estimated cost \$100,000; Replacement of two (2) boilers and associated mechanical systems with gas conversion at Norwood Avenue Elementary School, estimated cost \$750,000. In summary, the total capital projects to consider for 2015-2016 total \$3,125,000 - \$1,950,000 included in the preliminary budget and \$1,175,000 that may be funded by capital reserves.

There was discussion of funding of capital reserves, use of capital reserves, State Aid for full day kindergarten conversion, approval of capital projects, tax levy cap and the unassigned fund balance.

6. BOARD AND COMMUNITY DISCUSSION OF SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED 2015-2016 BUDGET

6.01 Opportunity for public input regarding the school budget for 2015-2016

<u>Name</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Mary Makowski Parent	Stated her concern over the elimination of the chairperson of art and suggested that there be two chairpersons as opposed to having a director and a chairperson. Ms. Makowski also stated her concerns regarding the clerical position.
Damary Torres Parent	Asked the Board to consider a moratorium on combining the art and music positions so the impact could be more fully evaluated.
Diane Viale-Pomes Parent	Stated that she feels very strong that the art and music departments need to have separate leadership to keep the quality of the programs intact.
Anthony Pomes Parent	Stated that the art and music programs are separate academic entities and asked the Board to consider a moratorium on removing the art chairperson.
Joseph Sabia Former Trustee	Thanked Dr. Caramore for his impeccable work ethic and coming in with a budget under 2% which includes full day kindergarten and capital projects.
Kim Nertney Parent	Stated that she supports the art chairperson position and asked why Northport hasn't taken a stand against Governor Cuomo's agenda when many other schools have. Ms. Nertney stated that it is disappointing that she has not received information from the school district about the possibility of opting out.

Dr. Caramore stated that he is not comfortable in joining some of the renegade superintendents who feel that it's their role to make decisions that are counter to what the State of New York expects of the superintendents in the local school districts. Dr. Caramore stated that there are ways that individual students can opt out of the exams and that will be honored.

Liz Alexander Parent	Stated that she is opposed to cutting the chairperson of art position when the core of the community is the arts. Ms. Alexander presented a petition to the Board signed by District residents requesting that the art chairperson not be eliminated.
Eric Alexander Parent	Stated that Northport has always been known as an arts community and is concerned about the elimination of the art chairperson. Mr. Alexander stated that the art department requires expert leadership.

- David Stein Parent Thanked the Board and Dr. Caramore for presenting a fiscally responsible budget. Mr. Stein stated that Dr. Caramore has done great things for the District.
- Ainsley Bandrowski Student Stated that the art and music departments are very important and should have separate leadership.
- Stephanie Ferland Parent Stated that there are four superintendents because they have different expertise and recommended that those positions be combined. Ms. Ferland stated that cuts need to be looked at from the top.
- Shawne Albero Parent Stated that the quality of the art department does depend on the teachers but the chairperson has written over \$10,000 worth of grants, organizes visits from top schools, facilitated in over \$500,000 in scholarships. Ms. Albero stated that the art department needs strong leadership and requested that the Board take a second look.
- Pat Gardiner NHS PTSA Stated that the Northport High School PTSA supports the Art Chairperson position and requests that it not be eliminated.
- Allison Noonan Parent Read a letter to the Board concerning community concerns with opposition to education policies, Governor Cuomo's education reform, submitted a letter written by the Syosset School Board to Governor Cuomo, and urged a fair and reasonable contract settlement with the teachers.
- Ivy Van Wickler Parent Stated that Dr. Mergen personally helped her schedule six NYSSMA appointments and stated that she believes individual leadership is needed in both the art and music departments.

Motion was made by Trustee McNaughton, seconded by Trustee Badanes, to approve the following Capital Projects for the 2015-2016 school year: Replacement of three (3) boilers and associated mechanical systems at Northport High School; Replacement of both exterior bleachers and press box at Northport High School; Pave gravel lot at Northport High School including drainage, lighting and curbing; Auditorium theatrical lighting at East Northport Middle School; Replacement of two (2) boilers and associated mechanical systems with gas conversion at Norwood Avenue Elementary School.

There was discussion of the proposed capital projects including funding, depleting of capital reserves, bond referendum, and use of restricted reserves.

Vote on Trustee McNaughton's motion to approve the Capital Projects for the 2015-2016 school year was unanimously carried.

Motion was made by Trustee McCue, seconded by Trustee Thompson, to approve all items under 7.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, GENERAL – FOR BOARD ACTION

7.01 Approving a Side Letter of Agreement between the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District and United Teachers of Northport dated March 16, 2015

Unanimously carried.

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

9. NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Maloney stated that he would like the Board to consider forming a Budget and Finance Committee charging them with three specific tasks: School Lunch Program becoming self-sufficient, efficiency

within the warehouse, and reinvigorate conversation about gas conversion.

The Board discussed Trustee Maloney's request and suggested that Mr. Maloney layout the charge of the committee for Board consideration.

Trustee Thompson stated that she e-mailed the Board regarding letters to the State Legislation and requested that the Board discuss this at a future meeting.

10. ADJOURNMENT

President Binger announced the upcoming Board of Education meetings scheduled for Wednesday, April 1st, Tuesday, April 28th, and Monday, May 11th.

At 9:45 p.m., motion was made by Trustee Waldenburg, seconded by Trustee McNaughton, to convene into Executive Session to discuss contract negotiations.

Unanimously carried.

At 11:00 p.m. the Chair declared the meeting adjourned.

Beth M. Nystrom
District Clerk

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