

MINUTES
ROCKY POINT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
January 12, 2015

Mrs. Sullivan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the Rocky Point High School.

Present: Susan Sullivan, President
Scott Reh, Vice President
John Lessler, Trustee
Sean Callahan, Trustee
Melissa Brown, Trustee
Michael F. Ring, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Deborah De Luca, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent
Gregory Hilton, School Business Official
Susan Wilson, Executive Director for Educational Services
Patricia Jones, District Clerk

Absent: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Sullivan invited Dr. Ring to begin the meeting with the Superintendent's Report.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Ring announced he wished to follow-up on the late bus overcrowding situation that was brought to the board's attention at the December 15th meeting by Miss Skylar Intravaia. Dr. Ring advised that the bus company was contacted and that the bus stops had been re-routed resulting in a "balancing out" of ridership. Dr. Ring indicated that the district would continue to monitor the ridership on the 3:20 p.m. late buses in order to determine if the rerouting has successfully balanced the ridership among the three buses. Dr. Ring thanked Miss Intravaia for coming forward and bringing her concerns regarding this issue to the attention of the district so that the district could get the issue resolved.

Noting there would be a Facilities Sub-Committee Presentation on Capital Projects presentation during this meeting, Dr. Ring invited the building principals to present their building reports.

Mr. John DeBenedetto, Principal, Rocky Point High School

- The Guidance Department hosted a financial aid night on January 8th. Guest speaker, Mr. Michael Turner of the NY State Higher Education Services Corporation, spoke at the meeting regarding the many aspects of the financial aid process.
- Mr. DeBenedetto reported that Rocky Point finished first, for the second year in a row, in the conference for sportsmanship for all fall sports.

- During winter recess wrestling teams participated in a highly competitive tournament upstate New York during which Tommy Dutton broke the Long Island record of two hundred and twenty seven varsity wins, a record formerly held by his brother, Steve Dutton, in 2010. Mr. DeBenedetto announced that Tommy has committed to wrestling for Harvard University. Mr. DeBenedetto extended his congratulations to both Tommy and his coach, Darren Goldstein.
- The first semester will end on Friday, January 30th. Second quarter report card grades will be posted to the portal on February 6th.

Dr. Scott O'Brien, Principal, Rocky Point Middle School

- Dr. O'Brien advised the middle school was looking forward to students changing elective classes as the new semester begins on Monday, February 2nd.
- Members of the middle school's select chorus coordinated and participated in a spirited sing-a-long at the Rocky Point VFW during the month of December.
- Local artist, Steven Sandberg, recently honored four middle school students for their creativity and help in naming his newest piece of artwork. The students entered their ideas for the piece's title and description during an artist-in-residence gallery walk at the school in late November. Nadia Casimir, Jack Hamilton, Gabrielle Pagano and Madison Egerter were selected as winners and were awarded original pictures by Mr. Sandberg.
- The induction ceremony for eighth grade students into the National Junior Honor Society will take place on January 15th at 7 p.m. at the high school. Dr. O'Brien congratulated all of the NJHS inductees.
- Late winter sports begin on January 20th.
- Report cards will be posted to the parent portal on Friday, February 6th.

Ms. Linda Towlen, Principal, Joseph A. Edgar School

- Ms. Towlen thanked teachers and parents for their hard work and support during the first part of the school year to ensure the success of the students.
- W.A.R.M. (We Are Reading More) activities are continuing during the first two weeks of January. The students are continuing to record their reading minutes each day at home on log sheets and they are completing a few fun activities both in the classroom and at home. Teacher Switch Day was held on January 9th. Staff went to different classrooms to share one of their favorite books with the students. Guest author, Darren Sardelli, will visit on January 15th and conduct grade-level assemblies. Ms. Towlen thanked the PTA for sponsoring this event. During closing ceremonies on Friday, January 16th, teacher races will take place and raffle winners will be announced. Ms. Towlen thanked the faculty, staff, PTA and Mrs. DiGiovanni for their support and work in making the W.A.R.M/PARP celebration a success.
- Heart health assemblies are scheduled to take place on January 22nd and will link into the Jump Rope for Heart event on February 5th. Ms. Towlen thanked Ms. Maria Amoscato for her work during this annual event.
- The Science Fair is scheduled for February 3rd, the Patriotic Concert on February 5th, and the Fourth Grade Read-A-Thon is scheduled for the end of February.

Mrs. Virginia Kelly-Gibbons, Principal, Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School

- Picture Retake Day was held on January 9th.

- The Science Club and the Garden Club are on a winter hiatus but will be starting up once again in a few weeks.
- Students will learn about Martin Luther King, Jr. in conjunction with and recognition of the federal holiday.
- FJC PARP plans are currently in the finalization stages of planning.

Dr. Ring thanked the building principals for their reports.

Dr. Ring provided a comprehensive overview of the Facilities Sub-Committee Capital Projects PowerPoint presentation prior to inviting Mr. Chris Malone, Director of Facilities, to join him at the podium for the purpose of presenting the full PowerPoint program to meeting attendees. Mr. Malone acknowledged each of the sub-committee members and introduced Mr. Larry Galante, one of the committee members, to the audience. Mr. Galante thanked Mr. Malone for the opportunity to present the report. Mr. Galante spoke in great detail about the history of each of the four school buildings. Mr. Galante explained that each of the buildings had both Priority I- and Priority II-classified improvements. Addressing each school building separately, Mr. Galante spoke in detail about the conditions that fell under each of the priority classifications, and their estimated costs for repair and/or replacement. Mr. Galante also provided detailed information regarding district-wide building projects, including emergency generators, grounds projects, including parking lot paving, playground surfacing at FJC, outside toilet facilities at the high school, tennis court reconstruction, a new playground at JAE to be located in front of the cafeteria off of Rocky Point Landing Road, and improvements to be made to the varsity baseball/softball fields and the lower back fields.

Mr. Galante provided both a summary of the costs of the Priority I level items and the Priority II level items both separately and combined. Mr. Galante also presented the estimated tax impact(s) based upon an average residential assessed value of \$2,600.

Following the PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Ring thanked Mr. Malone and Mr. Galante for their contributions to the program. Dr. Ring further reviewed the tax impact of the different levels of the projects and opened the floor to questions and/or comments related to the capital projects presentation.

- Mrs. Sullivan inquired if the proposed renovations of the bathrooms consisted of re-patching only or if they would be completely gutted.
- Mrs. Brown inquired about the possibility of restructuring the JAE kitchen during upgrades.
- Ms. Amoscato asked for the contact information of the individual residents could speak with if they had additional suggestions or concerns that were not currently included in the presentation. Ms. Amoscato expressed her concerns regarding the lack of an exhaust system in the new JAE gymnasium and peeling paint from the ceiling. Mr. John Grillo of JAG, the architectural firm involved in the renovations, addressed Ms. Amoscato's questions. Ms. Amoscato also noted that there is a lack of heat in the new JAE gym office and space heaters are being utilized to relieve the situation. Ms. Amoscato voiced her concerns for frozen pipes if the situation isn't remedied. Mr. Grillo advised that he would review the conditions on Tuesday, January 13th.

- Dr. Pinkenburg inquired if the district would be able to maintain the renovations upon their completion. Dr. Ring responded that both service agreements and the maintenance staff will provide the necessary maintenance of the renovations, as required. Mr. Galante also provided additional information to Dr. Pinkenburg's concerns.
- Referencing the proposed renovations to the middle school's monitor station, Ms. Melanie Connelly expressed her concerns that the plans for egress at the monitor station would result in the loss of office space.
- Ms. Andersson inquired about the possible timeline being considered for the capital projects. Dr. Ring explained that if the board trustees approve the project the proposed final capital projects would go to the voters for voter approval. If the voters approve the referendum, Dr. Ring said the district was anticipating a timeline of approximately two-years.
- Mrs. Heggens inquired about the proposed reconstruction of the tennis courts and the current problems with drainage. Mrs. Heggens also addressed the lack of time students have to eat lunch at the cafeteria in the JAE building. Dr. Ring referenced the proposal to move the JAE playground closer to the cafeteria which would assist in shortening the transit time from the cafeteria to the playground. Dr. Ring further advised that the Wellness Committee is still in the process of considering the issues surrounding this matter.
- Mr. Callahan asked about the payback status of current school bonds and inquired as to when the repayment of said bonds would be completed. Dr. Ring responded that the debts associated with current bonds would be extinguished by 2024. Mr. Callahan asked Dr. Ring if the district could provide the board trustees with the payment schedules.
- Mr. Lessler inquired if the district had looked into HVAC/geothermal systems and the cost-effectiveness of such systems. Discussion ensued as Mr. Grillo addressed Mr. Lessler's questions.
- Mrs. Anzaldi asked if the new location for the playground at JAE would result in a larger playground.
- Mr. Nobre noted room 116 in the high school did not have proper ventilation and suggested the district tie-in the duct work to the smaller chemistry classroom.

Mrs. Sullivan and Dr. Ring thanked all for their comments and questions. Dr. Ring offered that the entire Facilities Sub-Committee Capital Projects PowerPoint presentation would be available for review on the district's website the next day.

Mrs. Sullivan opened the floor to questions and/or comments from meeting attendees.

- Referencing the discussion the board trustees had during the New Business portion of the October 27, 2014 meeting pertaining to Green Homes Tax Exemption/LEED Certification Exemption, Mrs. Franco expressed her disappointment that there was no further discussion or information provided to residents concerning this issue until the board adopted a resolution authorizing the tax assessor to grant a real property tax exemption for Green Building. Mrs. Franco asked the board trustees what process they went through resulting in the motion carrying 3-2 in favor of the resolution at the December 15th meeting. Mrs.

Franco also inquired if there was a board policy in place addressing the issue. Mrs. Sullivan responded that the board trustees voted based upon the information they had at the time the vote was cast. Mrs. Sullivan stated there is no board policy addressing this subject. Dr. Ring explained that the law provides the board of education the power to make such a decision.

- Ms. Connelly expressed safety concerns in reference to the traffic situation on Rocky Point-Yaphank Road in the vicinity of the high school, middle school and FJC. Ms. Connelly recommended that additional personnel be hired to help with the flow of morning traffic to assist with what she deemed to be a dangerous situation. Extensive discussion ensued. Dr. Ring, Mrs. Sullivan, Mr. Reh and meeting attendees Mrs. Heggens and Mr. Galante, offered their perspectives. Mr. Galante asked if a traffic study had been done by the district. Mr. Reh responded that a traffic study was conducted a few years ago and that it was determined at that time the proposals made to ease the situation could not be done. Mrs. Heggens suggested the district look into a “buses only” lane as the students are bused onto the grounds. Dr. Ring responded that the idea of a “buses only” lane had merit and that he would ask Mr. Grillo to research the idea to see if it is a feasible option.

There were no further questions or comments.

Mrs. Sullivan announced the board was reverting back to reading the agenda items aloud while the agenda would continue to be shown on the overhead projector to be read simultaneously by those meeting attendees who wished to do so.

CONSENT AGENDA

The items listed below are presented as part of the Consent Agenda which can be adopted by the Board of Education under a single motion followed by a second and then a formal vote. On the following pages the Consent Agenda items are listed in their regular order and preceded by an asterisk (*). Before an actual vote is taken, any Consent Agenda item may be removed by a Board member without a formal motion or second. If this occurs, the indicated resolution will be discussed during its regular order on the agenda and voted on individually.

Upon a motion made by Scott Reh and seconded by Melissa Brown, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that agenda items II through IV be approved as one item.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

II (*) MINUTES

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Minutes of the following Board of Education meetings be accepted as presented: **Regular Meeting, December 15, 2014 and Special Meeting, January 5, 2015.**

III (*) BUDGET TRANSFER SUMMARY – DECEMBER 2014

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the December 2014 Budget Transfer Summary.

**IV (*) COMMITTEES ON SPECIAL EDUCATION/PRESCHOOL
SPECIAL EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education votes to arrange for appropriate services pursuant to the recommendations of Schedule 1-12-15-A and Schedule 1-12-15-B.

**V SPECIAL EDUCATION CONTRACT FOR APPLIED
BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS (ABA) SERVICES – NY THERAPY
PLACEMENT SERVICES, INC.**

Upon a motion made by Melissa Brown and seconded by Sean Callahan, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education authorizes the President of the Board of Education to enter into a contract with New York Therapy Placement Services, Inc. as an additional approved provider of Autism/ABA services for the 2014-2015 school year as required under applicable individual educational programs, applicable law, and or district policy.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

VI SPECIAL EDUCATION 2014-2015 CONTRACT – DEVEREUX

Upon a motion made by Sean Callahan and seconded by John Lessler, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education authorizes the President of the Board of Education to enter into a contract with Devereux New York for special education students instructional services for the 2014-2015 school year as required under applicable individual educational programs, applicable law, and or district policy.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**VII REVIEW, REVISION AND ADOPTION OF BOARD OF
EDUCATION POLICIES**

Upon a motion made by John Lessler and seconded by Scott Reh, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education adopts Policy Number 6152 and re-adopts Policy Number 7330 (*second reading*).

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

VIII RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO FIELD-TESTING

Upon a motion made by Scott Reh and seconded by Melissa Brown, the following resolution was offered:

WHEREAS, the quality of instruction of all students is lowered by mandatory field-testing practices of the State Education Department, teachers' time is used unwisely and students learning opportunities are reduced as a consequence, and

WHEREAS, for-profit testing companies, such as Pearson, make a commercial profit by using children and taxpayer resources to advance their business plans, at no cost to the private corporation, and

WHEREAS, in the past, districts have been asked to participate in these "field tests" on a voluntary basis, and

WHEREAS, the New York State Board of Regents just adopted a proposal of the State Education Department to make the administration of these field-tests mandatory, and

WHEREAS, as an additional result, this new additional mandatory field-testing would force children and districts, in effect, to subsidize the profit-making work of private corporations, thus using public resources and private families for the purpose of advancing a private business plan, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rocky Point Union Free School District Board of Education disagrees strongly with any mandatory field-testing and urges the Regents to reject the State Education Department's proposal to make field-tests mandatory and to reconsider its approach to assessing student learning and teacher and/or principal effectiveness. The Board of Education believes that a decision to increase mandatory testing would hurt children and abuse the public trust by subsidizing private enterprise without public discussion.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

IX DONATION OF BINDING MACHINE

Upon a motion made by Melissa Brown and seconded by Sean Callahan, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the donation of a binding machine, Model GBC CombBind C110E, from Rocky Point resident Sarah Eisenstein valued at approximately \$280.00.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

X THE KENNETH J. EDWARDS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP DONATION

Upon a motion made by Sean Callahan and seconded by John Lessler, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves and accepts the donation on behalf of the Kenneth J. Edwards Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$200.00.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

XI MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ROCKY POINT SCHOOL-RELATED PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION AND THE ROCKY POINT UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Upon a motion made by John Lessler and seconded by Scott Reh, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education authorizes the President of the Board of Education to execute a Memorandum of Agreement between the School-Related Professional Association and the Rocky Point Union Free School District for the purpose of resolving the Improper Practice Charge in Case No. U-32598 with the Public Employment Relations Board, as per the attached.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

XII PERSONNEL

Upon a motion made by Scott Reh and seconded by Melissa Brown, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the attached Personnel changes.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

XIII NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Sullivan inquired of the board trustees if there was any new business they wished to discuss.

- Mr. Reh thanked the members of the Facilities Sub-Committee for their presentation on 2015-2016 Capital Projects. Stating that the board of education was very interested in receiving feedback and ideas from residents regarding the traffic issue and any of the items discussed and addressed in the Capital Projects presentation, Mr. Reh encouraged comments and suggestions be e-mailed directly to Mr. Chris Malone, Director of Facilities.

Mrs. Sullivan opened the floor to questions and/or comments from meeting attendees.

- Referencing the Code of Conduct and the Student Handbook as they pertained to students and cell phones, Mrs. Hegggers shared her opinion that what was deemed to be acceptable use in each of these venues was ambiguous and unclear and, as such, might result in the disciplining of students. Mrs. Hegggers asked if the board

could revisit the verbiage currently in the handbook with an eye toward clarification. Following his interpretation of the district's current standpoint on students and cell phones, Mr. Reh said that the board would review the wording contained in the handbook.

Mrs. Sullivan thanked everyone for their comments.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Lessler expressed his desire to introduce a motion to rescind the affirmative outcome of the vote taken by the board at the December 15th, 2014 meeting on the Tax Exemption for Green Building agenda item in order for the board to further review and reconsider the financial ramifications the LEEDS tax exemption would have on district taxpayers. Discussion ensued among the trustees. Following the discussion, Mrs. Sullivan approved Mr. Lessler's request to introduce the motion.

MOTION TO RESCIND PREVIOUS VOTE ON THE TAX EXEMPTION FOR GREEN BUILDING VOTE FOR THE PURPOSE OF FURTHER REVIEW AND RECONSIDERATION

Upon a motion made by John Lesser and seconded by Sean Callahan, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education rescind the previous affirmative vote on the Tax Exemption for Green Building resolution for the purpose of further review and reconsideration.

Motion defeated – 3-2

John Lessler and Sean Callahan voted in favor of the resolution; Susan Sullivan, Melissa Brown and Scott Reh voted in opposition to the resolution.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 8:43 p.m. Sean Callahan made a motion and Scott Reh seconded to go into Executive Session to discuss the prospective appointment of a legal counsel firm to represent the district in legal matters.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Jones
District Clerk

The Board returned to Open Session at 9:42 p.m.

No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:43 p.m. a motion was made by Scott Reh and seconded by John Lessler to adjourn the meeting.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Michael F. Ring, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools