

**MINUTES  
ROCKY POINT PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
March 21, 2005**

**Meeting called to Order at 7:32 PM**

Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Geraldine Thalen, President  
Howard Gimple, Vice-President  
Jane Bonner, Trustee  
Michael Matera, Trustee  
Joseph Sanseverino, Trustee  
James J. Gerardi, Superintendent of Schools  
Carla D'Ambrosio, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction  
Michael Ivanoff, School Business Official  
Mary Berretta, Acting District Clerk

Absent: Irene Pedota, District Clerk

**Mrs. Thalen opened the meeting to questions or comments from the audience.**

- Mr. Bob Golden – lives in Brookhaven Township gave the Board members a handout from the Longwood Alliance and proceed to explain to the audience why he was here and that it would impact residents in this area.
- Mrs. Thalen interrupted him and explained that there was a two-minute limit for speakers and the purpose was for questions and comments about the Board meeting or issues in the District. Mrs. Thalen let him continue to speak.
- Mr. Golden told the audience that Roanoke Sand and Gravel Company wanted to put an asphalt plant were they are now located. Major source of toxic chemicals. He came to the meeting to make everyone aware of this situation. DEC has no control over this. The lead agency in the Town of Brookhaven. After they have contaminated the land, in 15 years they will give it over to the State for a playground and park.
- Mrs. Thalen – where is this exactly?
- Mr. Golden – right past Whiskey Road before 25.
- Mrs. Thalen – Who is the principal operator/owner?
- Mr. Golden – Mr. Barker – owns Roanoke Sand and Gravel. He then thanked the Board and audience for their time and urged them to take an active role in this development.
- Mrs. Thalen thanked him for taking the time to informing the Board about this.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**William B. Caulfield, Principal – Rocky Point High School announced:**

- *Bye-Bye Birdie* – High school students and the Drama Department along with Mary Donovan did a terrific job.
- Marching Band has been busy. They marched here at Rocky Point on March 12<sup>th</sup> and marched in the New York City St. Patrick's Day parade on March 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Congratulations Josh Faeger, a senior, who ran at the State Championship Track Meet in Syracuse for Winter Track. Josh was selected by his peers to receive the sportsmanship award for Section XI.
- The Town of Brookhaven is sponsoring a Youth Forum for High School students on Friday, April 1, 2005, to discuss the issues of gangs and gang prevention. Ten students in grade 9 through 11 will represent the High School at the conference along with Ms. Sullivan and Mr. Lagnena.
- Congratulations to Jillian Meehan who took 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Junior Cosmetology Regional Conference at Farmingdale College on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

- Congratulations to Girls' and Boys' Winter Track and Wrestling who were Scholar Athlete Teams.

**Dr. Joseph Tanen Centamore, Principal – Rocky Point Middle School announced:**

- Dr. Centamore wished everyone a Happy Easter.
- Third quarter progress reports were mailed out.
- First astronomy night was a big hit. Another is being planned for next week. It will be announced – depending on the weather.
- Thanks to the PTA for purchasing the remainder of our Second Step violence prevention materials as well as our game closet and board games that our students use in the dining room and for collaborating with the 3/30 Holocaust assembly with survivor, Marion Lazon. Ms. Perrecca wrote a grant and the PTA is supplementing it.
- March 14<sup>th</sup> was Math Department – Pi Day – thanks to Rob Hill and his department – all had a fun time.
- Mock Trail tournament at Dowling College on April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Mr. Gerardi asked Dr. Centamore to please put on the sign in the front on the school when the next astronomy night will be.

**Carol Tvelia, Principal – Joseph A. Edgar School was absent.**

**Paul Read, Principal – Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School announced:**

- Second grade chorus performed on March 16<sup>th</sup> in the high school auditorium. Over 80 second graders participated and sang and danced to the packed audience. A special thanks to Fred Lipinsky. The next scheduled performance is June 8<sup>th</sup>.
- March 17<sup>th</sup> was our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. This was held as part of our assembly program. Students in Mrs. Fasano's, Mrs. Lacey's, Mrs. Ladani's class made floats and paraded them around the gym for all to see. The second grade chorus sang "Danny Boy" and the children in Ms. Monte's and Mrs. Young's class did the Irish Jig.
- Students in Ms. Vitale's class are preparing to go the high school March 23<sup>rd</sup> to participate in a video conferencing lesson. The students are studying spiders and will compete an online lesson that connects Rocky Point to California. This is an exciting way to learn and children enjoy speaking directly to someone on TV. Other classes participating in video conferencing are Mrs. Pagnotta, Ms. Sarlo and Mrs. Youngs.
- FJC Shared Decision Making Team is looking for ways to purchase a Speed Display Sign. A speed display sign is designed to let drivers know their actual speed in areas where caution is needed. There is a danger in front of our schools especially along Rocky Point Road. This road is a main artery for commuting traffic as well as for buses and cars transporting students. A large number of vehicles from our schools pull out on a daily basis increasing the danger of accidents and the Shared Decision Making Team believes that the sign would reduce speeding traffic and make drivers more aware of safety. One team member contacted Board Trustee, Ms. Bonner, who in turn spoke to 6<sup>th</sup> District Legislator, Mr. Losquadro. Mr. Losquadro helped secure a portable speed sign that was displayed last Friday. Tomorrow the speed sign will be returned and hopefully remind drivers of the need for safety. The team hopes to write a grant and raise the \$4,000 needed to purchase a display sign for district use.

**TREASURER'S REPORTS**

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accept the Treasurer's Reports for the month of **January 2005** as presented. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

**EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITY ACCOUNT TREASURER REPORT**

Upon a motion made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Howard Gimple, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accept the Extra Classroom Activity Treasurer Report for the month of **January 2005** as presented. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Upon a motion made by Howard Gimple and seconded by Jane Bonner, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accept the Financial Reports for the month of **January 2005** as presented. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

#### **SECOND READING AND ADOPTION OF POLICY RE-REVISION – #7130 – SCHOOL ADMISSIONS AND RESIDENCY**

Upon a motion made by Jane Bonner and seconded by Michael Matera, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education votes to adopt the amended policy # 7130 – School Admissions and Residency. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON AND VOTE WORKERS FOR BUDGET HEARING/VOTE/ELECTION (BUDGET HEARING - MAY 10, 2005/BUDGET VOTE-ELECTION – MAY 17, 2005); BOARD OF REGISTRATION; CHIEF INSPECTOR; POLL CLERKS; TELLERS; AND SUBSTITUTE TELLERS AND POLL CLERKS**

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education appoint the following persons as Chairperson of the Budget Hearing/Budget Vote/Election; Board of Registration; Chief Inspector; Poll Clerks; Tellers and Substitute Tellers and Poll Clerks. The hourly rate for the Board of Registration and vote workers will be \$9.00.

Douglas Haeffner	Chief Inspector
Richard Salerno	Chairperson, Budget Hearing/Budget Vote/Election
Maureen Strauss	Teller/Substitute Chief Inspector
Dorothy Tis	Board of Registration
Peggy Staudermann	Board of Registration/Teller
Lucy Bello	Board of Registration/Teller
Ann Reynen	Poll Clerk Machine #4
Arlene Heck	Teller
Betty Voboril	Poll Clerk Machine #1
Connie DiMaria	Teller
Debbie O'Neill	Poll Clerk Machine #2
Debra McCarville	Teller
Dorothy Wennerod	Teller
Evelyn Gallino	Teller
Jean Poveromo	Teller
Joanne Hegeman	Teller
Joanne Osmanski	Teller
Joyce Butler	Teller
Karen Audette	Teller
Karen Wade	Teller
Laurie Savage	Teller/Poll Clerk
Lia Rink	Teller
Linda Apicella	Teller
Lisa Salerno	Teller/Poll Clerk
Loretta Reitter	Poll Clerk Machine #1
Margaret DiPalo	Teller
Margaret Smith	Teller
Maria Kurz	Poll Clerk Machine #2
Maria Messinetti	Teller

Marjorie Sokolski	Teller/Poll Clerk
Mary Caccavale	Teller
Mary Vecchio	Poll Clerk Machine #3
Maureen Strauch	Teller/Poll Clerk
Melissa Gonzalez	Teller
Mildred DiSpigno	Poll Clerk Machine #3
Pat Carr	Teller
Patricia Gangi	Teller
Patricia Jones	Poll Clerk Machine #4
Patricia Sparks	Teller/Poll Clerk
Rose Sanchez	Teller/Poll Clerk
Susan Blake	Teller
Susan Mulligan	Teller
Virginia Sanseverino	Teller
Walter Depken	Teller

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

### **COMMITTEES ON SPECIAL EDUCATION/PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Upon a motion made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Howard Gimple, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education votes to arrange for appropriate services pursuant to the recommendations of Schedule 3-21-05-A and 3-21-05-B. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

### **PERSONNEL**

Upon a motion made by Howard Gimple and seconded by Jane Bonner, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept the attached Personnel changes. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

### **Mrs. Thalen read the following statement with reference to the upcoming retirement of three Rocky Point teachers:**

- Vincent Basileo – Mr. Basileo has a total of 32 years in education. He began his career in 1973 as a per diem teacher in the Middle Country School District. Mr. Basileo started his career with Rocky Point Schools in 1977 for a total of 28 years of dedicated service to the students of Rocky Point.
- Christa Groh-McElroy – Mrs. Groh-McElroy has a total of 32 years in education. She began her career in 1973 as a teacher of French and German in the Commack and Shoreham-Wading River school districts. Mrs. Groh-McElroy started her career with Rocky Point Schools in 1989 for a total of 16 years of dedicated service to the students of Rocky Point.
- Barbara Wekerle – Mrs. Wekerle has a total of 33 years in education. She began her career with Rocky Point Schools immediately upon graduation from college. Mrs. Wekerle has devoted entire career in teaching to the students of Rocky Point Schools for a total of 33 years of dedicated service to the students of Rocky Point.
- Combined, Mr. Basileo, Mrs. Groh-McElroy and Mrs. Wekerle have 97 years of teaching. We wish you success as you start you new life.

### **PRESENTATION OF THE BUDGET**

#### **Mrs. Thalen introduced Mr. Michael Ivanoff who gave an overview of the total budget.**

Mr. Ivanoff reviewed the entire expenditures portion of the budget. He pointed out areas that included significant changes and provided explanations.

- Mrs. Thalen – Please explain what GASB stands for.
- Mr. Ivanoff – Government Accounting Standards Board.
- Ms. Bonner – On the Mandates Screen – Please explain what some of those abbreviations or terms mean.
- Mr. Ivanoff – NCLB - No Child Left Behind; LEP- Limited English Proficiency; McKinney-Vento Act –for the education of homeless children.
- Mrs. Thalen – Please make it clear that there is no stipend for Board members.
- Mr. Ivanoff – Board members are not paid.
- Mrs. Thalen – Have we exceeded legal fees this year?
- Mr. Ivanoff - Yes, we have exceeded our fees.
- Mrs. Thalen – Why haven't we budgeted more?
- Mr. Ivanoff – We are trying to hold the line.
- Mrs. Thalen – Under Building – what is included in the building budget?
- Mr. Ivanoff – Supplies, textbooks, new computers.
- An unidentified member of the audience – Why so much money in the Special Education budget.
- Mr. Gerardi – Mostly for Special Education students – we overspent this year by almost \$900,000.
- Carolyn Reynen-Hembury –Transportation – How many kids actually use the buses and after school transportation and do we own buses?
- Mr. Ivanoff – We do not own buses. It varies all the time as to how many kids use the after-school transportation. We must provide transportation for everyone. We are a full transportation district. We looked into our own fleet. It is too expensive to train drivers. Last year we sent out RFP (requests for proposals) to Atlantic, Montauk, etc. and we only got one bidder back - Laidlaw.
- Mrs. Thalen – Mr. Ivanoff, am I correct in saying that this is not the correct percentage or tax rate.
- Mr. Ivanoff - Yes, this is just a guesstimate.
- Mrs. Thalen explained that the next meeting would be April 20<sup>th</sup>, at which time the revenue portion of the budget would be reviewed.

**Mrs. Thalen asked if there were any additional questions or comments before the Board moved to go into Executive Session:**

- Mrs. Sparks read from a prepared statement:

“Throughout the past decade or so, during which I have regularly attended these meetings, with few exceptions, I have considered myself to be in agreement with, and a strong supporter of the district’s Board of Education. I have also been sensitive to and grateful for the careful consideration that this Board exercises when making decisions affecting the education of our children and the financial stability of our community. On a number of occasions I have graciously been permitted the privilege to address my comments, suggestions and concerns, and have always attempted to do so in a respectful manner.

At the March 14th meeting, an individual spoke out about an issue of concern to everyone in the community, and while I may have disagreed with her tone and approach, and some of the comments she made to support her position, I applauded the effort and sheer determination she displayed by coming out on a cold night under what appeared to be very difficult physical circumstances, in order to express her position regarding this matter. I know myself how hard it is to speak publicly and yet I believe it is important for people to be encouraged to participate in the process and to feel comfortable in doing so.

In an attempt to communicate my feelings of empathy both for the board of education, whose members have once again been placed in a very tough position by a state government which continues to burden school district residents with unfunded mandates, and for the members of our fire and emergency organizations, who are facing the sad reality of diminishing membership and a lack of new recruits, two vital organizations whose members are devoted in different ways to protecting the welfare of the district and the residents they serve and whom I *admire* and *appreciate* for their generous and selfless

voluntary service to our community, while making comments about my hopes for a resolution of the issue and assumptions regarding the feelings of others, without meaning to, I clearly upset individuals whom I hold in high regard.

My purpose tonight is not to re-ignite an obviously volatile discussion, but in the spirit of the season, I have come before you tonight to respectfully and sincerely apologize for any presumptuous statements I made, or any other words or actions by which I may have unintentionally offended or *provoked to anger* anyone who was present at last Monday's meeting, and to ask those so affected to please forgive my recognized inability to effectively express myself extemporaneously. Thank you.

- Mrs. Thalen – Mrs. Sparks, It was forgotten about right after it happened. Thank you.

There were no further questions or comments.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 8:45 PM a motion was made by Jane Bonner and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino for the Board of Education to go into Executive Session to discuss particular personnel matters. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Berretta  
Acting District Clerk

The Board returned to Open Session at 9:52 PM.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:53 PM a motion was made by Howard Gimple and seconded by Jane Bonner for the Board of Education to adjourn the meeting. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

James J. Gerardi  
Superintendent of Schools