

**MINUTES  
ROCKY POINT PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
March 29, 2004**

**Meeting called to Order at 7:35 PM.**

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Absent: None

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

- Mrs. Pat Sparks read from a prepared statement in which she thanked three of the district's teachers who are planning to retire at the end of this school year, specifically Sal Lentini, Al Ellis, and Bruce Teixeira, for their dedication to teaching and their influence on students. She spoke about how each of them touched her children's lives, fostered their love of reading, music and sports, and even influenced their career choices.
- Mrs. Thalen said that she appreciated the article in the *North Shore Sun* about our retiring teachers.
- Mrs. Johansen thanked the administrators at the Frank J. Carasiti School for inviting parents to attend St. Patrick's Day festivities in that building. She commended the administrators and teachers for their efforts and wanted them to know how much she enjoyed it.
- Ms. Dawn Kruse said that back in November she addressed the Board regarding the scheduling of parent-teacher conferences. She said that some districts do not have spring conferences and wondered if they were really necessary since she feels it is difficult for working parents that have children in both the FJC and JAE to take separate days off for conferences. She also believes that if she learns about a problem that her children are having next month that she doesn't already know about, it is too late. She asked the district to consider taking a survey to ask the community about the scheduling of conferences.
- Mrs. Thalen asked if one of the administrators from those buildings would respond.
- Mr. Read explained that he spoke to Mrs. Tvelia and they are considering going back to last year's schedule where both buildings had conferences on the same days. He added that administrators feel spring conferences are necessary in order to have closure for teachers and parents, and it is their responsibility to keep teachers in contact with parents.

There were no further questions or comments. Mrs. Thalen reminded everyone that there would be another opportunity to address the Board at the end of the regular meeting before they moved to Executive Session.

**MINUTES**

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino, the following resolution was offered: **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Minutes of the following Board of Education Meetings be accepted as presented: **Regular Meeting, March 1, 2004 and Special Meetings, March 8, 2004 and March 15, 2004.** All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

**TREASURER'S REPORTS**

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 Treasurer's Reports for the month of **January and February 2004** as presented.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Bonner asked what would happen to the \$4900.00 allocated in the Frost Valley account since we no longer participate in that field trip. Mr. Bilyk explained that it was money left over in the account and would be closed out at the end of the year. There was no further discussion.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

**EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITY ACCOUNT TREASURER 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 Extra Classroom Activity Treasurer Report for the month of **January and February 2004** as presented. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Upon a motion made by Jane Bonner and seconded by Michael Matera, the following resolution was offered: **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accept the Financial Reports for the month of **January and February 2004** as presented. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

**BOND ISSUE PROJECT CHANGE ORDERS**

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera 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 accept and approve the attached change orders with reference to bond issue related projects.

Mrs. Thalen asked Mr. Gerardi for clarification. Mr. Gerardi explained that when we go out to bid on a project, changes occur during the course of the project, and in this instance, changes resulted in a \$1,500.00 deduction from the contract.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE 2004-2005 SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET**

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, upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, approve the Rocky Point Union Free School District Budget for the 2004-2005 fiscal year pursuant to Education Law Section 1716 in the amount of \$49,216,489.

Mr. Bilyk explained that the proposed budget includes a 4.8% increase over the current budget and a 6.59% increase over the current tax rate. He added that according to a recent report in *Newsday*, this is one of the lowest increases on Long Island.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

**RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT THE PROPERTY TAX REPORT CARD**

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 accept the attached Property Tax Report Card associated with the adopted 2004-2005 fiscal year budget.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Bonner asked Mr. Bilyk to explain the purpose of the Property Tax Report Card. Mr. Bilyk explained that this document, which is required by the state, must include the following information: total spending, the percentage of increase or decrease over the current budget, projected enrollment growth and percentage change in enrollment, and the percentage of increase or decrease in the consumer price index (CPI), which is set at 2.3% for this budget.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

**APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON AND VOTE WORKERS FOR BUDGET HEARING/VOTE/ELECTION (BUDGET HEARING - MAY 11, 2004/BUDGET VOTE-ELECTION – MAY 18, 2004); 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.

- Richard Salerno                      Chairperson, Budget Hearing/Budget Vote/Election
- Douglas Haeffner                    Chief Inspector
- Maureen Strauss                    Teller/Substitute Chief Inspector
- Dorothy Tis                            Board of Registration
- Peggy Staudermann                 Board of Registration/Teller
- Lucy Bello                             Board of Registration/Teller
- Loretta Reiter                        Poll Clerk Machine #1
- Betty Voboril                         Poll Clerk Machine #1
- Debbie O'Neill                        Poll Clerk Machine #2
- Maria Kurz                            Poll Clerk Machine #2
- Mildred DiSpigno                    Poll Clerk Machine #3
- Mary Vecchio                        Poll Clerk Machine #3
- Ann Reynen                          Poll Clerk Machine #4
- Pat Jones                              Poll Clerk Machine #4

Rose Sanchez	Teller/Poll Clerk
Marjorie Sokolski	Teller/Pole Clerk
Mary Ann Murphy	Teller/Pole Clerk
Patricia Sparks	Teller/Pole Clerk
Laurie Savage	Teller/Pole Clerk
Maureen Strauch	Teller/Pole Clerk
Lisa Salerno	Teller/Pole Clerk
Virginia Sanseverino	Teller
Karen Audette	Teller
Margaret Smith	Teller
Patricia Gangi	Teller
Dorothy Wennerod	Teller
Melissa Gonzalez	Teller
Joanne Osmanski	Teller
Colleen Trainor	Teller
Raffaella Nash	Teller
Arlene Heck	Teller
Rosalia Rink	Teller
Linda Apicella	Teller
Evelyn Gallino	Teller
Joyce Butler	Teller
Mary Caccavale	Teller
Patricia Carr	Teller
Angela Greco	Teller
Joanne Hegeman	Teller
Maria Messinetti	Teller
Gloria Meyer	Teller
Karen Wade	Teller
Theresa Collins	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 3-29-04-A and 3-29-04-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 asked if there were any additional questions or comments before the Board moved to Executive Session:**

- Mrs. Beth Dimino thanked Board members for accepting her phone calls at home. However, she expressed her feeling that administrators were not responsive to members of the community.
- Mrs. Thalen asked if she had specific concerns.
- Mrs. Dimino said that she was concerned about falling test scores.
- Mrs. Thalen asked which test scores she was referring to.
- Mrs. Dimino said she was concerned about fourth grade ELA scores and asked what happened to the small reading groups that were in place when she was a reading volunteer. She also expressed her concerns regarding the elimination of honor rolls, the gifted and talented program, and the condition of the basketball courts at the Joseph A. Edgar School, and what she feels is the lack of response from administration regarding science schedules at the middle school and traffic in front of the schools in the mornings.
- Mrs. Thalen asked if Mrs. Dimino ever attempted to have a telephone conversation with any of the administrators.
- Mrs. Dimino said that her child lost 31 hours of science lab time while at the middle school and nothing has changed.
- Mrs. Thalen reiterated that Mrs. Dimino should contact specific administrators with regard to specific concerns. Mrs. Thalen added that she believes the basketball courts were done two years ago and suggested that perhaps Buildings and Grounds needs to check them out.
- Mrs. Bonner said that her son plays basketball on those courts every weekend and has never mentioned a problem with them, and science schedules were fixed last year.
- Mr. Gerardi said that he has never received a call in his office from Mrs. Dimino, and that he personally answers every phone call.
- Mrs. Christine Edmonds spoke from the perspective as both a parent in the district and a teacher at the FJC. Mrs. Edmonds explained that a variety of reading programs are in place and that they embrace small reading

groups. She added at the coordinator of the Literacy Collaborative spends countless hours on these programs to help students, and she felt that Mrs. Dimino's comments were a "slap in the face."

- Mrs. Audette suggested that anyone in the community who wishes to have an open discussion with administrators are free to attend any of the Shared Decision Team meetings that are held in each school building. She explained that these meetings are attended by various representatives including administrators, teachers, SRPs and parents from each building. The meetings are held once a month, anyone may attend, and discussions are held on various ways to improve student performance. She also suggested that she should bring specific concerns to the appropriate building.
- Mrs. Thalen added that meeting dates and times are listed on the district's website.
- Mrs. Kruse congratulated the fourth grade students who attended the SCMEA recorder festival recently at Brentwood High School under the direction of Mr. Knapp. She said they did a great job and were the best dressed. She thanked Mr. Knapp and added that he does a wonderful job with the students.
- Mr. Johann wanted to follow-up on a previous discussion regarding a new fundraising policy.
- Mrs. Thalen replied that it has been agreed that all fundraising would be overseen by the Student Council.
- He asked if he could obtain a copy of the policy outlining specific details.
- Ms. Armet explained that details were still being worked out, and as soon as they were finalized, she would be happy to provide him with a copy.
- Mr. Johann asked if there could be an open forum where parents could address the administrators about their concerns.
- Mrs. Audette replied that the Shared Decision Team meetings are an ideal forum for this type of discussion.
- Mr. Johann was concerned that most parents wouldn't be able to attend if they are held during school hours.
- Mrs. Audette replied that they are held before school in some buildings and in the evenings at others. She added that the high school Shared Decision Team meets at 6:30 PM before each board meeting.
- Mr. Caulfield added that he doesn't know of any administrator who wouldn't agree to meet with a parent.
- Mr. Johann asked if there could be a public question and answer session.
- Mrs. Thalen said that administrators are represented at every PTA meeting and parents are able to speak to them at those meetings as well.
- Mrs. Johansen commended JAE teachers and Mrs. Tvelia for a nice job on the well-attended and informative presentation that was offered recently about children with disabilities.

There were no further questions or comments.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 8:25 PM a motion was made by Howard Gimple and seconded by Jane Bonner for the Board of Education to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Pedota  
District Clerk

The Board returned to open session at 10:30 PM.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

At 10:31 PM a motion was made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Michael Matera for the Board of Education adjourn the meeting at. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

James J. Gerardi  
Superintendent of Schools