

**ROCKY POINT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
November 28, 2005**

Mrs. Thalen called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Geraldine Thalen, President
 Joseph Sanseverino, Vice-President
 Jane Bonner, Trustee
 Howard Gimple, Trustee
 Michael Matera, Trustee
 Carla L. D'Ambrosio Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools
 Sherry J. Alessandro, Asst. Supt. for Human Resources/Administration
 Michael W. Ivanoff, Director of Finance and Operations
 Irene Pedota, District Clerk

Absent: None

Mrs. Thalen announced that the school district's attorneys were present to explain the need for the adoption of an Indemnification Resolution and asked for a motion to change the order of this item in order to discuss it at the beginning of the meeting.

**RESOLUTION TO CHANGE ORDER OF ITEM XII – INDEMNIFICATION
RESOLUTION**

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

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education change the order of Item XII – Indemnification Resolution to the beginning of the meeting. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

INDEMNIFICATION RESOLUTION

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

BE IT RESOLVED, that supplemental hereto and as an additional perquisite to public office and employment, the Board hereby further extends the right to representation or reimbursement of legal fees as authorized by Public Officers Law §18 to board members, school officers, agents and employees who are requested or are called to testify as a witness or to answer questions concerning their acts or omissions within the scope of their office, agency or employment before a grand jury, the Office of the District Attorney or other law enforcement official. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to authorize or require defense or indemnification to a board member, school officer, agent or employee who has been identified as a defendant in a pending criminal prosecution, or where such individual, or the school district, has reason to believe that such individual is a target in a criminal investigation or prosecution by the Office of the District Attorney or other law enforcement.

In lieu of a discussion, Mrs. Thalen introduced Mr. Richard Hamburger of Hamburger, Maxson, Yaffe, Wishod, Knauer, & Rothberg LLP, who explained that in the wake of what happened in Roslyn, Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas Spota has issued identical subpoenas to every school district in Suffolk County asking for records. He further explained that Mr. Spota is looking to see if there are any anomalies between expenses in these districts and that the subpoenas are not based on any indication of wrong doing and that each of the other 71 districts in Suffolk County received identical subpoenas. The subpoenas have requested various financial information including financial statements, salaries, budgets, state education reports, district enrollment figures, and administrative salary perks. Mr. Hamburger announced that the district is complying with these requests and that there are an enormous number of documents that will be

delivered to Mr. Spota's office, where auditors will review them. He further explained that the district would most likely not hear from them as a result of their review.

In the event that a district employee is called to testify by the grand jury, this resolution provides that the district will reimburse all usual and customary legal fees for the employee to go before the grand jury since the school district's attorneys cannot represent individual employees. Mr. Hamburger explained that this does not pertain to anyone who is determined to be a defendant or a target of the district attorney.

- A member of the audience asked what happened to innocent until proven guilty. Mr. Hamburger replied that the school district is not legally required to provide defense for anyone who is suspected of wrongdoing.
- Mrs. Johannesen explained that she had a problem with some of the wording in the resolution. She wanted to know how the district would determine when an employee goes from merely having to speak to the grand jury to becoming a target of an investigation and how the district would know when to stop paying for legal representation.
- Mr. Hamburger explained that if any school district employees are called to testify, he does not believe it would go on very long before the district is made aware that an employee has become targeted for wrong doing.
- Mrs. Johannesen said that she would have liked to be able to see the wording of the resolution. Mrs. Thalen replied that Mr. Hamburger was here to explain it.

Mrs. Thalen asked if there were any other questions. There were none.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

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

- Mr. Read hoped that everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday.
- He congratulated Cecilia Doolittle, Maria Dorr, David Falcone, Barbara Kjaerbye, Maria Liantonio and Bettina Tripp; teachers from the Frank J. Carasiti School who were each awarded \$1000.00 MESTRACT grants for the 2005-2006 school year to support classroom instruction and education.
- Mr. Read thanked parents and staff for their generous donations and school nurses Karen Lukasz, Joan Noonan and Judy Stringer for coordinating the holiday food drive for families in need.
- Congratulations to Jennifer Meschi, technology integration specialist, who is a semi-finalist in the Technology and Learning's 2005 Leader of the Year Program.
- Congratulations also to kindergarten teacher, Jan Pilkington-Kaler, who is a nominee for the prestigious 2006 Disney Teacher Award.
- Mr. Read reminded everyone that the next meeting of the "Morning Tea at FJC and JAE" was scheduled for tomorrow, November 29, 2005, at 8:45 a.m. in the FJC library. Topics to be discussed include the Literacy Collaborative and Wilson Reading Programs. All are welcome to attend.

Joseph A. Edgar School Principal, Carol Tvelia announced:

- Ms. Tvelia also expressed her hope that everyone had a good Thanksgiving.
- Veterans' Day celebrations included invitations to approximately 100 veterans who were invited to the school to be honored by students and staff.
- The annual winter concert will be held on December 13, 2005 at 7:00 PM in the high school auditorium and the holiday musical is scheduled for December 20, 2005.
- Parent-teacher conferences were held last week.
- JAE is in the process of conducting practice ELA tests.
- Students are currently collecting gloves, mittens and socks and will participate in the annual toy drive this holiday season for children in need.

Rocky Point Middle School Principal, Joseph Centamore announced:

- Dr. Centamore congratulated Ms. Tvelia for her outstanding Veterans' Day program.
- They have been busy preparing for ELA and math tests.
- The middle school recently hosted the first dance of the school year. Approximately 220 – 240 sixth graders attended a dance after school, which was followed shortly by a dance for seventh and eighth grade students.
- A combined middle school and high school community astronomy night that occurred recently was a huge success and a great bonding experience for families who came to view Mars, Venus and the moon.
- Dr. Centamore thanked the PTA for coordinating school pictures.
- Fall sports awards night is scheduled for December 1, 2005.
- The National Junior Honor Society induction will be held on December 5, 2005.
- The PTA book fair is scheduled for December 7 – 8, 2005.
- Holiday Concerts will be on December 14 and 15, 2005.

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

- This year, Thespian Troupe #697 will present Tennessee William's *The Glass Menagerie* on December 8, 9, and 10, 2005 at 7:00 PM in the high school Pocket Theater. Tickets are \$5 each and can be purchased in advance at the box office before or after school, or at the door if seats remain available.
- The annual blood drive that was held three weeks ago was a huge success with a record-breaking 174 pints of blood being collected.
- Mr. Caulfield thanked the high school nurses for doing a terrific job in organizing this event.
- Mr. Caulfield also announced that Singing Santas concerts would begin on December 17, 2005.

Leonard Kies, Athletic Director announced:

- Mr. Kies announced that the district had an incredible fall season.
- Boys' Varsity Soccer finished 12-4-2 and made it to the County semi-finals.
- The field hockey and girls' tennis both experienced improved seasons and a new kick-line at the high school has been a huge success.
- Nine of our athletes received All-County honors and Ashley Goldbach and Zach Williamson were qualifiers in Cross Country for New York State. Zach Williamson ran in the New York State Federation Race and was one of only two students from Suffolk County.
- The cheerleaders raised over \$5000 for breast cancer.
- The varsity football team had an outstanding season, ending at 7-1 and made it to the county playoffs.

Mr. William Madsen, Head Varsity Football Coach:

- Mr. Madsen introduced the members of the Varsity Football Team. He said that they were a group of young men who helped to bring a community together this season and proved that it was possible to have a successful program in a small school setting.
- He announced that nine of these players played in the Suffolk County All Stars Game, which was the largest number of students of any Long Island schools.
- Mr. Madsen thanked the members of the Board of Education and the administration for recognizing these fine young men at tonight's meeting.
- Mrs. Thalen, on behalf of the Board of Education and the rest of the community, thanked Mr. Madsen for providing his leadership.
- Mr. Madsen also thanked his assistant coaches and team manager for all of their hard work.

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

- Mr. DeRosa of the Marconi Order of Sons of Italy, referring to the Marconi Shack that is situated on the Frank J. Carasiti School grounds, stated that his organization has been attempting to relocate the shack to Babylon. Mr. DeRosa

- alleged that the shack is in need of renovation and that maintenance is being neglected.
- Mrs. Thalen replied that the Board of Education would not be badgered and that the Board had nothing to say since Mr. DeRosa brought legal counsel and the district's counsel was not present.
 - Mr. DeRosa threatened to bring the matter to the New York State Historical Society.
 - Mrs. Thalen asked if there were any other questions.
 - Mr. Niccio said that their concern is that this building is deteriorating and proper care is not being taken to maintain it. He explained that he resides in Islip and his concern is as a historian.
 - Mr. DeRosa added that money has not been allotted for proper maintenance.
 - Mrs. Thalen explained that the Board of Education has repeatedly received letters from the Sons of Italy in Babylon requesting to have the building returned to the Town of Babylon.
 - Mr. Matera explained that the district has a legal document transferring ownership of the building to the school district, which proves that the district owns the building. He also explained that the Rocky Point Historical Society and the Rocky Point Sons of Italy are adamant that the building should not leave Rocky Point. The wireless organization comes once a year to send messages from the building. He reiterated that the building belongs to the school district, not the Marconi Lodge in the Town of Babylon.
 - Dr. D'Ambrosio congratulated the following teachers on being awarded MESTRACT grants: Maria Liantonio, Cecilia Doolittle, Barbara Kjaerbye, Bettina Tripp, Joyce Connolly, Susan Wilson, Nancy Hunter, and John Gallagher.
 - Daniel Vedder also congratulated these teachers and said that they work very hard to write these grants, which make it possible to bring materials and curriculum to the classroom for the children of the district. He believes that we are getting more from the teachers' center than any other district.

There were no further questions or comments.

Dr. D'Ambrosio introduced Ms. Anja Groth, Director of Instruction, who presented an overview of the New York State Testing Program in English Language Arts and Mathematics for grades three through eight. Topics that were discussed included:

1. Why test in grades 3 through 8 every year?
 2. What will these tests look like?
 3. How will these tests be scored?
 4. How will test results be used?
 5. Information to help us prepare
 6. Issues
 7. What are we doing to address these situations?
- Mrs. Thalen said she was happy to see all the work that is being done to help students improve their performance on these tests. She had a question with regard to students in ninth and tenth grades and whether or not tests are constructed to follow regents exams. Mrs. Groth replied that teachers continually work to review and update final exams.
 - Mrs. Thalen asked if students in ninth and tenth grades take final exams in special classrooms or in one large room. Ms. Groth replied that she believes they are taken in special classrooms.
 - Mr. Gimple asked what the difference is between ESL, ELL, and ELP.
 - Jennifer Burke, a teacher who was present in the audience, explained that ESL refers to the English as a Second Language Program while LEP and ELL refer to the students.
 - Ms. Groth explained that during the registration process, if a parent indicates that a second language is spoken at home, the information is used as a trigger that the student should be placed in ESL.
 - Mr. Gimple asked how long it takes for the average ESL student to move from taking the NYSESLAT test to taking the regular ELAs.

- Ms. Burke explained that usually within three years at the lower levels. However, students who come to us without any language skills in their own language may take longer.
- Ms. Bonner asked how many ESL students were included. Ms. Burke replied that there are about 60 in all of the buildings and that this figure has doubled within the last five years.
- A member of the audience asked what happens if after two years we don't get off the list of schools in need of improvement.
- Ms. Groth replied that it is possible to become a school in review and there is still not any improvement, the state can come in and take over the school.
- Dr. D'Ambrosio explained that we became a school in need of improvement based on scores of children who are placed outside of the district.
- Mr. Sanseverino asked if results were based on groups instead of individual students.
- Dr. D'Ambrosio replied that they are always based on groups. The year before last was the first year that special sub-groups came in as part of the accountability.
- A member of the audience asked if we score our own tests.
- Ms. Groth explained that we do ours and those of two other small schools.
- Mr. Vedder asked if cluster scoring applied to math tests as well as ELAs.
- Ms. Groth replied that it only applied to the ELAs.
- Mr. Vedder had a question with regard to the timeframe for scoring.
- Ms. Groth explained that while the window for administration of the exams is extremely tight, the time for scoring is not.
- Mrs. Gilbert had a question with regard to how long it takes parents to receive results.
- Ms. Groth explained that results are not usually available until the following September or October.
- Mrs. Gilbert said that there is a possibility that third graders will not be getting any help until nine months after they have taken the tests.
- Ms. Groth explained that Mrs. Tvelia provides extra help to students in grades three, four, and five with a before-school program before the students actually take the tests.
- Mrs. Thalen thanked Ms. Groth for providing this fabulous presentation and for doing a terrific job. Mrs. Thalen also said that if the program is doing what Ms. Groth talked about, she is sure the children will do well.

There was no further discussion regarding the presentation.

MINUTES

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

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Minutes of the following Board of Education Meeting be accepted as presented: **Regular Meeting, October 24, 2005**. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

TREASURER'S REPORTS

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera 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 months of **August and September 2005** as presented. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITY ACCOUNT TREASURER REPORT

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 months of **August and September 2005** as presented. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

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

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

DONATION OF MONIES FOR AMERICAN RED CROSS AND UNICEF

Upon a motion made by Joseph Sanseverino 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 approve monies donated in the amount of \$4,747.45 for the American Red Cross and \$600 for UNICEF.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Thalen asked Mr. Ivanoff if this amount was the result of the Hurricane Katrina Benefit Concert. Mr. Ivanoff replied that the donation to the American Red Cross was the result of the concert. Ms. Tvelia added that the donation to UNICEF was the result of a scarecrow fundraiser that the children at JAE participated in. There was no further discussion.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

DONATION OF A CLARINET FOR THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Upon a motion made 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 the donation of a clarinet for the Music Department from Mr. & Mrs. Robert deZorzi and their daughter, residents of the district, with fond memories of wonderful concerts and parades.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Thalen asked if there was a possibility of replacing an old sousaphone that she one of our students playing during the football game. Mr. Caulfield assured Mrs. Thalen that he would look into it tomorrow. There was no further discussion.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

RESOLUTION FOR HEALTH SERVICES CONTRACT

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 authorizes the Board President to enter into an agreement for health services for the 2004-05 school year with the following districts:

Patchogue – Medford Schools

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

2004-2005 AUDITOR'S REPORT

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

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education accept the Independent Auditors Report with accompanying statements and schedules dated June 30, 2005, which has been submitted by our external auditors, Coughlin Foundotos Cullen & Danowski, LLP.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Thalen explained that the report was presented in detail at last month's meeting. There was no further discussion.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

DONATION FROM ROCKY POINT BOOSTER CLUB

Upon a motion made by Joseph Sanseverino 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 donation of two dugouts with great appreciation from the Rocky Point Athletic Booster Club.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Thalen asked where the dugouts are. Mr. Kies explained that they would be installed at the varsity baseball field. There was no further discussion. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

ACCEPTING NON-RESIDENT TUITION STUDENTS

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, in accordance with Board policy 7130, two students made known to the Board of Education are hereby accepted as future residents and allowed to attend Rocky Point Schools upon payment of non-resident tuition in accordance with Part 174 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

Discussion ensued. Dr. D'Ambrosio explained that the parents are in contract to buy a home in the district but would not be going to closing until January. The parents would like their children to start school as soon as possible. There was no further discussion.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS: SPECIAL EDUCATION/PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT MEMBERS

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 approve the appointment of Sandra Anthony-McGee, Janine, Fischer, Patricia Noto and Michelle Swensen as Parent Members to the Committee on Special Education/Preschool Special Education. (In accordance with the Commissioner's Regulations, Part 200 and the provisions of the Education Law, Section 4402.) All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

COMMITTEES ON SPECIAL EDUCATION/PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon a motion made by Jane Bonner and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino, 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 11-28-05-A and 11-28-05-B. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

PERSONNEL

Upon a motion made by Joseph Sanseverino 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 Personnel changes. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

Mrs. Thalen asked if there were any questions or comments before moving to executive session:

- Ms. Carolyn Reynen said that she went to school in the district and doesn't want to lose the Marconi Shack. However, expressed her concern that it might be falling into disrepair.
- Mrs. Thalen explained that it is her understanding that the building is being maintained. However, the gentlemen who spoke earlier would like to see it returned to Babylon. Mrs. Thalen assured Ms. Reynen that if there were some lack of maintenance, the district would address it.
- Ms. Reynen asked if the people who use the building every year had any input.
- Mr. Matera replied that the wireless club members use it every year to send messages. He added that he is sure that the district could get the local historical society and the Sons of Italy in Rocky Point to make repairs. He further explained that the building was at a site in Babylon at the turn of the century and that in the 1930's it was purchased from them by the RCA people and was taken to Radio Central. When the land was given to the state, former Superintendent Frank Carasiti asked RCA to give it to the school district. After two years of correspondence, they turned ownership of it to the school district and has been in our possession since 1962.
- Paul Read added that it was a last ditch effort by the Marconi Order of the Sons of Italy to intimidate and threaten the Board into transferring the building to them.
- Mrs. Thalen said that she doesn't understand why they don't comprehend that we own the property.
- Dr. D'Ambrosio added that she would contact everyone who has anything to do with the building tomorrow, but the district would not be giving it away.

There were no further questions.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:43 PM a motion was made by Michael Matera and seconded by Howard Gimple for the Board of Education to go into executive session to discuss particular personnel matters. All in favor – Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Pedota
District Clerk

The Board returned to open session at 10:14 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:15 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,

Carla L. D'Ambrosio, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools