

Board of Education  
Minutes  
Town Meeting  
October 27, 2011

The meeting was called to order by President Genovesi at 7:15 pm in the High School Alumni Room. Present were Trustees Berliner, Beyer, Knierim, Pombar. Trustees Sharkey and Webb were absent for executive session. Also present was Dr. Melnick, Ms. Buatsi and Mr. Chlebicki.

**Executive Session**

At 7:15 pm, on motion of Trustee Berliner seconded by Trustee Pombar and all in favor, the Board went into executive session in the High School Faculty room for discussions regarding proposed, pending or current litigation and collective negotiations.

At 8:00 pm, on motion of Trustee Knierim and seconded by Trustee Beyer and all in favor, the Board resumed the regular meeting in the alumni room. There were approximately 100 people in the audience.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

President Genovesi led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Superintendent's Report on Student Achievement**

Dr. Melnick presented his report on student achievement. Overall, standardized test scores increased over the past year. Students are participating in record numbers in both athletics and the arts/music program. He addressed the fact that a high percentage of students failed the physics regents last year and explained steps that have been taken to help students this year including the option of a taking a local exam instead of the Regents in June. Dr. Melnick explained that there may have been some panic over the low test scores last year which resulted in a change in the way test prep was handled. The direction this year is a balanced approach which will prepare students with test taking skills while providing a enriched curriculum.

**Board Recognition**

The Coordinating Council recognized and thanked the Board for their hard work and dedication to the students and residents of the district. They presented each Trustee with a gift and The Madrigals performed two selections.

**Discussion - Report on Student Achievement**

The Board discussed the Superintendent's report.

Trustee Genovesi thanked Dr. Melnick, members of the administration, and the faculty for the work that went into putting the report together and for attending the meeting. She opened up the floor to questions from the board.

The Board congratulated the administration and teachers for their dedication and hard work which resulted in an increase in standardized test scores. They had a lengthy discussion. Some areas of concern raised were , if there is a plan in place for implementing the balanced approach to learning; the culture of non-standardized testing within the schools; whether tests are used to address learning; moving in a direction of educating children like a business; the amount and scheduling of school testing; whether scores will drop if test prep is cut back; the dip in scores from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to 6<sup>th</sup> grade in ELA; and pressures on students and teacher in

regard to test prep. Suggestions made were for there to be evidence from the assessments to identify what to aim for; having teachers chart the percentage of mastery on their own assessments as an indication of student understanding and learning; and that there be measurable goals and yearly reports on progress.

Dr. Melnick explained that each of the elementary principals as well as the middle school principal met with their faculty to review all of the test prep material used last year and settled on what material worked for all students as well as students at risk. He believes the blip in the test scores came because of the change in cut scores and according to board policy, test prep was not part of the curriculum.

Bridget Finder, Glenwood Landing Principal added now that all the test prep materials available have been used, they have identified what works and how best to use the material for the individual needs of all students.

In response to the question about the dip in 6<sup>th</sup> grade scores on the ELA, Andrea Davis, Director of ELA explained that the test is different in each of the grades so it is difficult to see a trend. She explained that last year's sixth grade struggled with reading and that has now become an area of focus.

Dr. Melnick shared that this year he is heading the Nassau County Council of School Superintendents Curriculum & Instruction Committee. He explained that one of their areas of focus is what it means to become a high performing district. They are also investigating a way to loosen some of the regulations by looking at best practices across districts rather than focusing on tests scores. He said Nassau County has some of the highest performing districts in the nation.

Trustee Genovesi thanked the administrators and teachers and expressed the Board's support.

### **Town Meeting**

Lisa Albanese, Glen Head asked what the Board's philosophy is in regard to test preparation. She said the elementary students were very stressed about testing. She went on to say that in September the district showed a viewing of "Race to Nowhere", in her opinion a very controversial movie. She asked what their reason was for showing it their stance in regard to that movie.

Dr. Melnick responded he feels there needs to be a balanced approach and parents need to gauge stress for their own child. He said many students put stress on themselves by taking a heavy class load in addition to after school activities. He said he believes there should be more face-to-face meeting time with parents-students-guidance counselors during the scheduling process.

Trustee Genovesi responded the Board was aware "Race to Nowhere" was a controversial film, however many parents wanted the district to show it as a result of the test scores last year and the implementation of test preparation. She said showing the film was a way to open the conversation within the community.

Trustee Berliner added the real issue is stress. He said "Race to Nowhere" over simplified the issue and it is a matter of finding the right balance and not overstressing our kids.

Trustee Webb added, this is an issue that we visit often. Everyone wants depth and breadth of choice and it would be extremely unlikely to get the community to come to consensus of what to cut back on.

Trustee Beyer added it is the district's obligation to offer many opportunities and it is up to each family to make the decision for their child. She added "Race to Nowhere" was shown to help parents be aware of the impact of testing on our children.

Trustee Pombar responded it might be beneficial to get feedback from former students who are now in the workforce.

Trustee Genovesi thanked the residents for opening up the conversation. She said it is essential for every household to have the conversation to get the right balance for their child.

Denise Reiner, Glen Head, suggested next time the Board shows a film that is not scientifically based, they should have time after the showing for a panel discussion.

Dr. Melnick responded, in reaction to the test scores and response from the community the district may have gone too far last year with test preparation. He said it is important to look at test scores but there needs to be a balance. He believes there needs to be some focus on preparing students to take tests but again would like to take a balanced approach. He encouraged parents and students to let him know what their experience has been and their level of anxiety in regard to tests and test preparation.

Grace Rubertone, Glen Head asked if it would be possible to swap school start times having the elementary schools start earlier and the secondary schools start later in the morning.

Dr. Melnick responded this has been investigated and it would be impossible unless all districts in Nassau County changed their start times as well to allow students to participate in interscholastic athletics.

Albert Cousins told the audience, there will be a Curriculum Night sponsored by the PTSA on November 15<sup>th</sup> where parents and students can learn about what each academic department offers to help in planning their schedules.

Trusted Beyer added each year the PTSA sponsors a graduate roundtable when North Shore graduates share their college experiences with parents and students. The information obtained helps both the school and parents in choosing the correct courses for college preparation.

Eugene Alletto, said he feels this district offers too many programs and he would like a more narrow curriculum. He said the district should help students focus on one thing that they may be good at. He said there is a lot of stress on the parents and there needs to be more communication between the district and parents. He also feels there should be limited offerings for athletics and the arts. He added many of the surrounding districts have much less course offerings.

Dr. Melnick disagreed and explained that many residents want more course offerings. He also noted many of the surrounding districts have many more course offerings than North Shore. He believes that students in public school should be able to experience many different areas of study and although we may need to narrow the curriculum in the future due to the tax situation, he would like to keep as rich a curriculum as possible. He agreed we need to do a better job of communicating to parents to help students make informed choices. Currently the counselors sit with the student to prepare a schedule and he suggested bringing the parent into that conversation.

Liz Falcone, Glen Head, asked Dr. Melnick to name some of the school districts and specific areas that we compare ourselves to.

Dr. Melnick shared some examples of the policies and practices of some of our surrounding districts in regard to test preparation and at risk students.

Trustee Pombar left the meeting at 10:30 pm

Trustee Genovesi said she is happy to see people come out to share their thoughts. She said the Board always asks for feedback and suggestions on how to get information out to the community but feels we are successful in communicating with parents evidenced by the fact that we pass our school budget by one of the highest percentages in the State. She went on to explain that school board members attend informal meetings in residents' homes beginning in March to explain what goes into producing a budget. She assured everyone that tax dollars are spent wisely and with much thought. She also said we have received exemplary reports from our three auditors who use us as a model district.

Dr. Melnick explained that as the Board goes through the fiscal process this year it will be done a little differently because of the tax cap on the levy. On November 17 the budget

discussion will begin and he encouraged residents to share their thoughts with the Board as they consider the key issues. He went on to say these will be the most difficult decisions and they should reflect the values of the community.

Amanda Notaris, Glen Head, asked if parents need to sign off on whether a student takes an AP class. She feels the district should continue to offer many opportunities and the parents and students need to decide when it is too much.

Dr. Melnick responded parents do sign off on the students' schedule but he believes parents should be part of the schedule planning conversation. He went on to say that every parent values something different and it is the school's obligation to provide all we can.

Eugene Allteto, Glen Head, said offering 4 different languages is too much and many of the upper level classes are half empty. He also feels there are too many students on athletic teams and thinks there should be more cuts.

Trustee Webb responded the district wants to make available the opportunity for every child. He went on to say the district will need to cut down on the number of opportunities due to financial pressures and this may result in less athletic teams.

James Notaris, GlenHead, said he does not want the options to be limited by the school. He said it should be up to the parent to help their child choose the best options for them.

Trustee Beyer added if the district has to narrow what is offered it will be due to funding and not because we are offering too much.

With no further questions from the audience, the town meeting ended at 10:45 pm.

On motion of Herman Berliner and seconded by Trustee Knierim and all in favor, the discussion in regard to funding the field house was tabled for a later date.

### **Regular Business**

#### **Approval of Minutes**

On motion of Trustee Knierim and seconded by Trustee Beyer and all in favor, the minutes of October 13, 2011 were approved.

The Board decided to act simultaneously on action items C-L

On motion of Trustee Sharkey and seconded by Trustee Knierim and all in favor, it was:

#### **Personnel**

##### **Appointment - Administration**

Resolved: To approve the appointment of Carmine Matina, Interim High School Assistant Principal, effective October 24, 2011 through June 30, 2012

##### **Resignation – Certified**

Resolved: To accept the resignation of Jill Schwarz, Elementary, effective January 30, 2012

##### **Leave of Absence for Child Rearing Purposes – Certified**

Resolved: To approve a leave of absence for child rearing purposes for Kelly Gorman, Elementary, effective January 30, 2012 through June 30, 2012

Resolved: To approve a leave of absence for child rearing purposes for Anna DeNatale, Science, effective January 30, 2012 through June 30, 2012

Increment for Advanced Study - Certified

Resolved: To approve an increment for advanced study for Jessica Scibilia, Physical Science from Step 3 of the BA+15 salary schedule, to Step 3 of the BA+30 salary schedule, effective September 1, 2011

Resolved: To approve an increment for advancement to Susan Viola, Teaching Assistant from Level I of the Teaching Assistant salary schedule, to Level II of the Teacher Assistant salary schedule, effective September 1, 2011

Change of Status – Certified

Resolved: To approve a change of status for Linda Magnani, Elementary, from a Regular Substitute (Leave Replacement) appointment to a Probationary Appointment, effective January 30, 2012 through November 1, 2013

Regular Substitute (Leave Replacement) Appointments – Certified

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Dana Bathie, Elementary, on Step 2 of the BA salary schedule effective November 5, 2011 through December 5, 2011

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Nicole Cattabiani, Elementary, on Step 9 of the MA salary schedule effective January 30, 2012 through June 30, 2012

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Shannon Felici, Elementary, on Step 5 of the MA salary schedule effective January 30, 2012 through June 30, 2012

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Bryce Larsen, Music, on Step 1 of the BA salary schedule at an annual salary of \$57,511, effective November 5, 2011 through December 5, 2011

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Lauren Mistretta, Elementary, on Step 1 of the MA salary schedule effective January 30, 2012 through June 30, 2012

Approval of Teacher Overage

Resolved: To approve a .1 overage for Jennifer Horton, Mathematics, effective September 1, 2011 through January 27, 2012

Appointment of Director of Community Education 2011-2012

Resolved: To approve the appointment of Dean Miller, Director of Continuing Education for the 2011-12 school year

Approval of Additions to the Per Diem Substitute List

Jenna Arcati	Elementary
Thomas Boehm	Secondary
Jennifer Curci	Elementary
James Hambel	Physical Education

Approval of Extra Curricular Activity Advisors and Coaches

Resolved: To approve the following extra-curricular activity advisors and coaches:

Advisors

Middle School

Organic Gardening Club	Bob McKee
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Morning Chorus	Brian Messemer
7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Morning Chorus	Brian Messemer
Robotics Club #2	Keith Slack
Ukulele Club	Derek Leif
Chess Club	Jennifer Horton

Coaches

Basketball

Men's Varsity	Paul Girolamo
Men's Junior Varsity	Kevin Carpenter
Boys' 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Ryan Berglin
Women's Varsity	Keith Freund
Women's Junior Varsity	Megan McCormack
Girls' 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Jackie Muscarella
Girls' 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Jean Hodermarsky

Gymnastics

Varsity	Melissa Vassallo
Varsity Asst.	Cassandra McNamara

Bowling

Men's Varsity/JV	Andrew Richter
Women's Varsity/JV	Tom Granieri
Girls & Boys 7&8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Christine Hickey

Winter Track

Men's Varsity/JV	Ed Corona
Women's Varsity/JV	Neal Leavy
Women's Varsity/JV Ast.	Clifton Shultz
Girls/Boys 7/8 Grade	John Jackson
	Donna Jean Welsch
	Jackie Muscarella

Wrestling

Varsity	Mike Emmert
Varsity Asst.	Alex Hojonowski
Junior Varsity	Craig DeNicola
Middle School	Jeff Butt
Middle School	John Jackson

Volleyball

Boys-Middle School	Frank Mauro
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Cheerleading

Varsity	Heather Martin
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Men's Swimming  
Varsity

Samara Weitz

Award of Bids for Auditorium Rigging

Resolved: To award bids for auditorium rigging safety improvements to the lowest bidder, Theatrical Services and Supplies, Inc., in the amount of \$370,249 as per the recommendation of Burton Behrendt, & Smith, LLC

Approval of Agreement with Web Cola Media

Resolved: To approve an agreement with Web-Cola for web-design services for the 2011-2012 school year in the amount of \$995/month

Approval of Agreements with CSD Net

1) Resolved: To approve an agreement with CSD Net for Senior Support in the amount of \$123,858, effective July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012

2) Resolved: To approve an agreement with CSD Net for Junior Tech #2 (4 day) in the amount of \$75,000, effective July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012

3) Resolved: To approve an agreement with CSD Net for Junior Tech #1 in the amount of \$96,645, effective July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012

4) Resolved: To approve an agreement with CSD Net for Data Hardware Maintenance in the amount of \$40,550.92, effective July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012

5) Resolved: To approve an agreement with CSD Net for Voice Maintenance in the amount of \$26,628.07 effective July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012

Acceptance of Grant & Approval of Grant Disbursement Agreement for the Architect Fees associated with the Renovation of the Track & Field

Resolved: To accept a grant in the amount of \$50,000 from the New York State Dormitory Authority and to approve the grant disbursement agreement for the architectural fees associated with the renovation of the high school track and field

Approval of a Disclosure and Consent Agreement between Ingerman Smith, LLP, Roslyn Public Schools and the North Shore Central School District

Resolved: To approve a disclosure and consent agreement between Ingerman Smith, LLP, Roslyn UFSD and the North Shore Central School District in connection with cooperative transportation services

Approval of Agreement with Jambo Productions/Mike Harrold

Resolved: To approve an agreement with Jambo Productions/ Mike Harrold, to provide workshops for Sea Cliff School third and fifth graders on May 7, 2012 at a fee of \$1,400

Approval of Special Education Tuition Agreement

Resolved: To approve a tuition agreement with Eden II School for Autistic Children, Inc., effective July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 at a rate set by the State Education Department

Approval of Special Education Services (IEP)

Resolved: To approve special education services (IEP) as per attached:

Approval of Agreement with Science Museum of Long Island

Resolved: To approve an agreement with Science Museum of Long Island to provide 3 program sessions for 2nd graders at Sea Cliff Elementary School on November 3, 2011 at a cost of \$400

**Old Business**

It was reported that the Board held their annual retreat on October 20, 2011.

**New Business**

Dr. Melnick reported that the Robotics First Program has obtained corporate sponsorship in J.C. Penney. Dr. Melnick will sign the M.O.U. for funding of \$7,000.

**Adjournment**

At 10:55 pm on motion of Trustee Berliner and seconded by Trustee Webb and all in favor, the meeting was adjourned.

Elizabeth Ciampi  
District Clerk