

Board of Education  
Minutes  
Town Meeting  
May 6, 2010

The meeting was called to order by President Webb at 7:30 pm in the High School Alumni Room. Present were Trustees Beyer, Genovesi, Kolkhorst, Pombar and Sharkey. Trustee Berliner was absent. Also present were Dr. Melnick, Ms. Buatsi and Mr. Chlebicki.

**Executive Session**

At 7:30 pm, on motion of Trustee Pombar seconded by Trustee Sharkey and all in favor, the Board went into Executive Session in the high school faculty room for discussions regarding matters leading to the appointment of a particular person.

At 8:00 pm, on motion of Trustee Genovesi and seconded by Trustee Beyer, the Board moved to come out of Executive Session and resumed the regular meeting in the Alumni Room. There were approximately 15 people in the audience.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

President Webb led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Student Recognition**

President Webb and Dr. Melnick recognized Demi Cangemi, a 5<sup>th</sup> grader who was the winner of the 2010 Humane Society of New York Essay Contest, as well as Olivia Filipowicz and Danielle Prush for receiving Journalism Awards from *Newsday* for articles which appeared in the Viking View.

On motion of Trustee Kolkhorst and seconded by Trustee Beyer and all in favor the Board decided to add Committee and Conference Reports to the agenda and to move up the Approval of Minutes.

**Approval of Minutes**

On motion of Trustee Genovesi and seconded by Trustee Pombar and all in favor, the minutes of April 29, 2010 were approved as amended.

**Budget Reading**

Dr. Melnick read the following statement: the proposed budget for the 2010-11 school year is \$86,455,773 a total increase of 3.31% over the 2009-10 budget. We anticipate revenue of \$7,907,855. This will result in a tax levy of \$78,547,918. The proposed contingent budget is set at \$83,671,939 a .48% decrease over last year. The District Clerk will include a copy of the budget proposal as a record of the minutes of this meeting. Copies of the adopted budget proposal are available on the back table at this evening's meeting and at the Central Office, 112 Franklin Avenue, Sea Cliff. The election of Trustees and vote on the budget will take place on Tuesday, May 18 from 7:00 am – 10:00 pm in the North Shore High School gymnasium.

**Town Meeting**

John Guy, Sea Cliff, asked if North Shore teachers agreed to concessions similar to what teachers in surrounding districts agreed to.

Trustee Webb responded that although our teachers were approached in regard to concessions, the decision by the union was not to go in that direction. He went on to explain both the Roslyn and Port Washington School Districts were in the process of negotiating

contracts with their teachers which is why they were able to obtain concessions in their current contract. In the case of North Shore however, our teachers are in the second year of a four year contract and it is not legally possible to open the contract without the teachers agreeing.

Joseph O'Hara , Glen Head asked why there are 9 principals for 5 schools and whether the Board considered reducing this number.

Dr. Melnick clarified that there are actually 5 principals and 4 assistant principals; each having different roles and responsibilities and that the board decided this level of administration is currently needed. He explained the roles of the elementary assistant principal who is shared between the three elementary schools and provides support during state testing including coordinating the scoring and reporting, conducts supervision of staff, helps with observations as well as mid and end of year evaluations of teachers and fills in when one of the principals are out of the building. The middle school assistant principal primarily deals with issues of student discipline and safety. On the high school level there are 2 assistant principals, however one of these was previously a dean at the high school, by changing this position to an assistant principal the work day and year was extended for the same salary. He went on to say that with enrollment at the high school projected at over 900 next year this level of support for the principal is needed.

John Guy, Sea Cliff, asked what the role of the Director of Curriculum is and what he does that the rest of the team does not.

Dr. Melnick explained the role of the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. His duties include articulating curriculum for grades K-12, making sure each academic area meets state and local standards, overseeing all professional development & staff development in the district, and is an integral part of the hiring process as well as the observation and evaluation process of all faculty. He went on to explain the role of the Assistant Superintendent of Business & Personnel who oversees the business office and all clerical, custodial, cafeteria, and transportation staff.

Trustee Webb expressed that he understands people are concerned with the level of administrative staff in the district and explained that the Board looks at every aspect of the budget, spends several months going through it and asks these types of questions as well.

Dr. Melnick added there is an organizational chart in the policy section of the web site for clarification. He also stated that North Shore's administration to pupil ratio is the lowest in the County.

Trustee Genovesi added that in most schools in our area there is an assistant principal in every building. She also noted that our Superintendent and two Assistant Superintendents routinely work around the clock.

Mr. O'Hara said he recognizes the contributions of our administrators, but said he went to a high school that had 3,000 students and there was only 1 principal and 1 dean. He also asked if having so many administrators is a luxury we can do without during tough economic times and suggested utilizing some of our instructors to fill those roles.

Trustee Webb responded that the district does not have the flexibility to move around positions. The state has strict regulations and certifications are needed for each position. He also stated that the Board does not view these positions as a luxury and explained that during the budget process they tried to maintain as much as possible without cutting the program to the bone. Trustee Webb added if the administrative level was reduced it could also have a direct affect on health and safety issues.

Dr. Melnick stated that there is a major difference in education since this resident went to school. Once such change is the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) which required districts to take back the population of students who had previously been placed outside of the public setting. This has resulted in the need for significantly more support for teachers. This level of support is needed to maintain the quality of education we have. He further explained that there were no cuts in administration as they have agreed to a half year salary freeze. He also

explained that there were 12 teaching positions cut, some due to a decrease in enrollment and some due to budget constraints. He went on to say that in the last two contract negotiations there were major concessions including the move from the 90<sup>th</sup> to the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile in the county, health insurance contributions went from 10% to 20%, the teacher work year went up by 4 days and the teacher day lengthened. He also stated that when their contract comes due in 2 years future concessions will have to be made but in order to continue to attract the best teacher candidates we need to stay competitive.

Mr. Guy asked how New York State mandates are paid to the State.

Dr. Melnick explained that approximately \$3.5 million is sent directly to the state for pension contributions and the MTA Tax. The other mandated expenses are for programs and services we are required by the state to budget for, such as special education services and state administered assessments including a data coordinator. Even under a contingency budget these expenses need to be covered.

Trustee Pombar added almost \$13 million is for special education. The state had promised we would get back 40% in aide for special education and we actually get approximately 10%.

Trustee Webb explained that 20 years ago the district received approximately \$12 million in state aide on a \$36 million budget. We now get under \$4 million in state aide on an \$86 million budget. He went on to say that each year the state has taken a step back from helping to fund education. The district is in the process of getting a feasibility study to ascertain how we can raise funds in the future.

Trustee Beyer added that another costly state mandate is that we must provide a seat on the bus for every child eligible even if they don't actually take the bus. Trustee Genovesi went on to say that we may need to have larger class sizes due to budget constraints, however, we would be forced to continue to provide empty buses due to this mandate. She also noted that 20 years ago there were not as many mandates and that the state and federal government have put more on local districts including special education and assessments costs.

Mr. O'Hara asked who the authority was for seeing that these mandates are followed and what would happen if the district did not comply.

Dr. Melnick explained it is the New York State Education Department who monitors compliance and they would remove the Board of Education and have a State takeover of the district if we fail to comply.

Trustee Webb added that the Board did explore if we could opt out, or secede, from the State and our attorney informed us this is not an option. He also said we have been trying to get the transportation regulation changed and explained that a mandate relief bill, which did pass the state senate, is not likely to pass the assembly.

Dr. Melnick explained that North Shore withheld a state aide refund check due to the state as a result of their withholding of our state aide payment for this year. He went on to say that this Board has thought outside the box by building a transportation depot saving the district between \$700,000-\$800,000 per year; entering into an energy management contract is saving the district between \$250,000-\$300,000 this year; by renegotiating outstanding debts \$250,000 has been realized. Increases affecting the budget are \$800,000 for retirement contributions, \$200,000 for the MTA Tax or approximately 1.5% of the budget is for these costs. In addition, our bargaining units have increases of 3.5% next year, therefore bringing in a budget increase of 3.3% required deeper cuts to non-essential items and for the first time in teaching positions.

Karen Swett, Sea Cliff asked what some of the cost increases are next year that is causing an increase in the budget.

Dr. Melnick explained that there will be increases in retirement contributions, health insurance, social security, self insured workers compensation insurance, contractual obligations, and goods/supplies.

Trustee Webb explained that the only way to come in with a zero budget increase would be to seriously change the way our schools operate. This would affect the following year as well and the only way to maintain a steady level is with a prudent budget. He expressed the sympathy the Board has for people whose salaries are frozen and understands how difficult things are for some residents. He explained that meetings were held with community members prior to crafting the budget to explain the situation and get a sense of what the priorities were. From those meetings it became clear that the community wants the schools to remain the same; this was the edict given and what the Board tried to do while keeping in mind the tough economic climate.

Dr. Melnick added that the Board asked for a budget that was trim and the original proposition came in at a 5.8% increase. The Board felt this was more than residents could support so further cuts were made to trim it to a 3.3% increase while maintaining the current program.

Lisa Breen, Glenwood Landing asked what the contingency budget would be if the this budget fails. She also asked what the difference between the budget passing and failing would mean in dollar amounts. She went on to say that in previous years our budget increase came in below the contingency cap and the difference between passing and failing was minimal. She said it is important for residents to understand how the contingency cap is calculated and to make it clear what will be lost.

Dr. Melnick responded that if the budget fails the Board can decide to have a second vote and put forth the same budget or a reduced budget. If the budget fails a second time, the district must go on contingency. This would mean a .48% decrease in the current budget. He explained that the difference between the budget passing and failing would be \$23/month on a house valued at \$700,000. He also explained that the State sets the contingency cap, currently 120% X CPI (Consumer Price Index) or 4%, whichever is less. This year the CPI is less than zero which would result in a contingency budget of -.48% and resulting in the need to remove \$3.5 million from the current 2009-2010 budget. The state identifies the areas where we can make these cuts and they include new technology, interscholastic athletics, all after school programs, and security. In order to reach the amount needed to remove under contingency, approximately \$1.4 million cuts in teaching positions would need to be made as well. The state also dictates which teachers to cut and it must be the last person hired.

Trustee Webb explained that over the last ten years we have had the lowest increases since the district was established and this year it is the lowest in almost 20 years. He went on to say that if the budget were to fail this year we face a devastating impact because the CPI is negative.

Lisa Breen said it is important for residents to understand how the contingency cap is calculated and to make it clear what will be lost.

Trustee Webb responded that the Board tries to be explicit, however, some residents take this as threatening. He went on to say that last time the budget failed we were forced to cancel the summer program, this time it would be so much worse.

Mr. Guy asked if there was a sequence to follow for eliminating items under contingency.

Dr. Melnick explained that the first item that must be eliminated is new instructional technology but the other areas are not in any order. He added eliminating teacher positions would be the last item but in order to reach the amount needed to cut under contingency teaching positions would have to be eliminated.

Trustee Pombar noted that Dr. Melnick had an innovative idea to reduce the amount of cuts needed in staff by offering a retirement incentive to teachers. 15 teachers took advantage of that incentive which resulted in retaining some of the teachers who would have been let go.

Mr. O'Hara asked what areas the proposed fundraising would cover. He suggested using parent volunteers to replace hall monitors and classrooms assistants to decrease cost.

He also asked if we could solicit volunteers from the community who may be able to replace some of the outside services we require such as legal services.

Trustee Webb responded that the fundraising initiative is in the first stages of a feasibility study to give us an idea of what we can raise and what the environment is like.

Dr. Melnick responded that we are not legally permitted to have parent volunteers replace employees. He went on to explain that the building of the Victorian Studio has been done by donations in partnership with the Viking Foundation and with community volunteers, including the installation of a geothermal heating/cooling system and solar panels.

Trustee Genovesi added the practice of school law is very specific and between special education issues and collective bargaining alone, it is imperative to have someone who is well versed in school law. Although she agrees having volunteers sounds like a good idea, it is much more complicated than it seems.

Trustee Beyer added that this Board has been active in leading other districts in finding ways to consolidate services and to contain cost. Presently it is not permitted for districts to purchase goods cooperatively or to share legal services. The group has been exploring ways to consolidate services in the areas of auditing, IT services, transportation, and purchasing; during these discussions it was determined that sharing legal services would actually not be practicable. She also noted that the district cannot replace employees with volunteers as it would violate fair labor practice.

Trustee Webb thanked the public for coming out and asked that any additional questions be emailed to the Board or to Dr. Melnick

### **Regular Business**

#### **Another Way**

Dr. Melnick provided a background of the program as it is currently structured and proposed that the program be suspended for next year to explore ideas and innovative ways to enhance the program.

#### **Superintendent's Leadership Council**

Dr. Melnick explained that the leadership council was established to assist the superintendent in formulating/framing possible goals to recommend to the Board to help realize the district's mission statement. The council consists of 37 members including students, staff, faculty, administrators, parents and board members. Values were identified and one general goal was suggested. An action plan was determined which includes continued training for faculty, students and staff and exploration of what is meant by quality instruction in the North Shore Schools.

#### **Tri-State Consortium – Ninth Grade Experience**

Rob Chlebicki gave an overview of the two day visit from the Tri-State Consultancy. A team of 15 administrators, teachers and consultants spent two days examining the Ninth Grade Experience. The team asked clarifying and probing questions of the staff and examined the evidence prepared for the consultancy focusing on critical thinking, conceptual understanding, reflection and motivation and student engagement. During this process the consultancy interviewed students, guidance counselors, the NGE teachers, district administrators, parents and Board of Education members. At the end of the second day the team met to debrief with administrators and share their overall impressions. They gave the program high praise and were very impressed by the district's commitment to provide a unique experience for the students. They felt that the program has all it needs to succeed, and the concerns they have come mainly from the fact that the program is in its first year. Questions were also raised about transitioning students into the tenth grade.

The Board had a brief discussion and also expressed concern for students transitioning from the Ninth Grade Experience to a more traditional tenth grade experience. It was suggested that discussions with students and parents take place now to prepare them for next year. It was also noted there may be a need for tenth grade teachers to be prepared for a different type of student.

### **Committee and Conference Reports**

Trustee Beyer forwarded a written report from the recent Coordinating Council Meeting. There were no other committee reports.

The Board decided to act simultaneously on action items D-K.

On motion of Trustee Pombar and seconded by Trustee Kolkhorst and all in favor, it was:

#### Personnel

##### Resignation - Certified

Resolved: To accept the resignation of Jeanne Incantalupo, Family & Consumer Science, effective June 30, 2010

Resolved: To accept the resignation of Ilona Kusz, Mathematics, effective June 30, 2010

##### Appointment – Administration

Resolved: To approve the appointment of Andrea Davis, Director of English Language Arts, effective July 1, 2010

##### Regular Substitute (Leave Replacement) Appointments

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Jill Abrams, Elementary, on Step 1 of the MA salary schedule, effective May 18, 2010 through June 30, 2010

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Dana Bathie, Elementary, on Step 1 of the BA salary schedule, effective May 14, 2010 through June 30, 2010

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Toni Caracci, Elementary, on Step 1 of the MA salary schedule, effective May 21, 2010 through June 30, 2010

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Candace Huling, English, on Step 1 of the MA salary schedule, effective May 21, 2010 through June 30, 2010

##### Approval of Additions to the Per Diem Substitute List

Resolved: To approve the addition of the following names to the per diem substitute list:

Carolyn Chimeri	Secondary
Lindsay DeFeo	Elementary
Matthew Lucero	Music
Zachary Rifkind	Music

Extra Curricular Activity Supervisor  
Vincent Papa

Approval of Resolution for Tax Anticipation Notes

RESOLVED : That Tax Anticipation Notes (herein called "Notes") of North Shore Central School District, in the County of Nassau, New York (herein called "District"), in the principal amount of not to exceed \$7,000,000, and any notes in renewal thereof, are hereby authorized to be issued pursuant to the provisions of Sections 24.00 and 39.00 of the Local Finance Law, constituting Chapter 33-a of the Consolidated Laws of the State of New York (herein called "Law").

The following additional matters are hereby determined and declared:

- (a) The Notes shall be issued in anticipation of the collection of real estate taxes to be levied for school purposes for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2011, and the proceeds of the Notes shall be used only for the purposes for which said taxes are levied.
- (b) The Notes shall mature within the period of one year from the date of their issuance.
- (c) The Notes are not issued in renewal of other notes.
- (d) The total amount of such taxes remains uncollected at the date of adoption of this resolution.

The Notes hereby authorized shall contain the recital of validity prescribed by Section 52.00 of the Law and shall be general obligations of the District, and the faith and credit of the District are hereby pledged to the punctual payment of the principal of and interest on the Notes and unless the Notes are otherwise paid or payment provided for, an amount sufficient for such payment shall be inserted in the budget of the District and a tax sufficient to provide for the payment thereof shall be levied and collected.

Subject to the provisions of this resolution and the Law, and pursuant to Sections 50.00, 56.00, 60.00 and 61.00 of the Law, the power to sell and issue the Notes authorized pursuant hereto, or any renewals thereof, and to determine the terms, form and contents, including the manner of execution, of such Notes, and to execute arbitrage certifications relative thereto, is hereby delegated to the President of the Board of Education, the chief fiscal officer of the District. The Notes shall be executed in the name of the District by the manual signature of the President of the Board of Education, the Vice President of the Board of Education, the District Treasurer, the District Clerk, or such other officer of the District as shall be designated by the chief fiscal officer of the District, and shall have the corporate seal of the District impressed or imprinted thereon which corporate seal may be attested by the manual signature of the District Clerk.

Approval of Health Services

Resolved: That the Board of Education enter into a contract for Health Services with Port Washington UFSD for 11 students residing within the North Shore Schools and attending St. peter of Alcantara School located within the OPort Washington UFSD for the 2009-10 school year at a cost of \$795.10 per student, as provided under the Education Law of the State of New York

Approval of Special Education Services Contract

Resolved: To approve an agreement with the Westbury UFSD for Special Education Services for parentally-placed students with disabilities attending non-public schools located within the Westbury UFSD and residing within the North Shore School District during the 2009-2010 school year

Approval of Policy Revisions

Resolved: To approve revisions to policies #1222 (Relations with Booster Organizations) #5100 (Student Attendance) #5152 (Non-Resident Students) and #7500 (Naming School Facilities) as reviewed by the Board at the meeting of April 29, 2010

Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the Refunding of Serial Bonds

Resolved: To approve a resolution authorizing the refunding of all or a portion of certain outstanding serial bonds stating the plan of refunding, appropriating an amount not to exceed \$7,800,000 therefor, authorizing the issuance of not to exceed \$7,800,000 refunding serial bonds of the district to finance said appropriation, and making certain other determinations all relative thereto

Approval of a Resolution to Accept Proposals for the Refunding of Serial Bonds

Resolved: To approve a Resolution Announcing the Intention of the School District to Accept Proposals for the Refunding of Bonds

Establishment of Pietro Gaudesi Scholarship

Resolved: To approve the establishment of the Pietro Gaudesi Scholarship for award at Moving Up Day 2010 and at Awards Night in subsequent years.

**Executive Session**

At 10:00 PM on motion of Trustee Kolkhorst and seconded by Trustee Beyer and all in favor, the Board went into Executive Session.

**Adjournment**

At 10:30 PM on motion of Trustee Berliner and seconded by Trustee Genovesi, the meeting was adjourned.

Elizabeth Ciampi  
District Clerk