

NORTH SALEM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
NORTH SALEM, NEW YORK 10560  
[www.northsalem.k12.ny.us](http://www.northsalem.k12.ny.us)

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 15, 2006

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the North Salem Central School District was held on Wednesday, February 15, 2006, in the middle school cafeteria. The meeting was called to order at 7:11p.m. by Board President Carla Palma.

**Board members present at this time:**

Carla Palma, President  
Alison Hublard-Hershman, Vice President  
Marie Martell, Trustee  
Paul Giamundo, Trustee  
Norma Hart, Trustee

**Board members absent at this time:**

John O'Meara, Trustee  
Lisa Douglas, Trustee

**Also Present:**

Peter R. Litchka, Superintendent  
Sylvia Fassler-Wallach, Director of Finance  
MaryJo Hauser, Assistant Superintendent, Pupil Personnel Services  
Leigh Smadbeck, Student Representative  
Christopher DosSantos, Student Representative

**Executive Session**

At 7:12 p.m. a motion was made by Ms. Hart, seconded by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, and carried to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel. Ms. Fassler-Wallach was appointed Clerk Pro Tem for this Executive Session.

At 8:18 p.m., a motion was made by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Hart, and carried to adjourn the Executive Session and reconvene to Public Session in the middle school cafeteria.

### **PLEGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

After the Pledge, Ms. Palma welcomed all present.

### **ACTION PERTAINING TO EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

None at this time.

### **COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:**

Ms. Palma asked the public for comments.

- Ms. Rosemaria DosSantos commented on her disappointment of the Board's approval of \$35,000 study for the proposed sports complex. She felt that the Board has not taken into consideration the public's wants and needs, and that the money should be spent on the immediate needs of the school, i.e., roof, generators, other academic programs.
- Mr. Andrew Brown submitted a copy of a photograph of the North Salem gym which clearly shows that the gym is not large enough to hold all of the students during sports functions. He felt that children attribute their success not only to academics, but to their involvement in sports.
- Ms. Rita Driscoll asked a question with reference to the field capacity of the proposed sports complex.

Board Member Paul Giamundo responded to Ms. DosSantos' comments; defending the attorney's comments with reference to the sports complex. He stated that very few public comments strongly opposed the sports complex.

Board President Palma also commented that the committee has been looking at the sports complex for the past several years. The Board is always faced with difficult choices, but she feels that the fields are used at 100% capacity and are in need of expansion.

### **STUDENT REPORTS**

**Christopher DosSantos** reported that the high school has benefited from a program that is underway in the building that is addressing personal safety issues. There have been safety tips announced on the morning announcements and posters throughout the high school building. There have been assemblies, both large group and small group, with speakers talking to

the students about healthy relationships. North Salem Mock Trial will be competing this Thursday at the White Plains Court House. Students went to leadership conferences in Washington, D.C. this past week as a result of teacher nominations. Students were able to interact with NSA, CIA, FBI, and also visited the Secret Service Headquarters. A recent high school Invitational Small Work Exhibition at Pace University featured the presentations of 10 North Salem High School students.

**Leigh Smadbeck** reported on the National Honor Society's fundraiser for Ms. Katie Cammann, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher at North Salem who is ill. The NHS sold carnations and the profits will go towards a fund for Ms. Cammann. Also, on a positive note, the North Salem Ski Team went to Sectionals.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Ms. Palma recommended that the Board members attend the School Board Association seminar being held March 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

**Ms. Hart** reported that the Audit Committee met on February 8, 2006 and invited an internal auditing firm to speak to the Committee at its next meeting. She thanked Ms. Fassler-Wallach for her help. Sylvia suggested perhaps recruiting a CPA who would like to join the committee next year. The Audit Committee is scheduled to meet again March 14, 2006.

**Ms. Hart** inquired whether Board members Policy Books had Code of Conduct Policy 5300 to replace Student Conduct Policy 5300 because Dr. Litchka's book was not updated.

**Ms. Martell** reported that the full-day kindergarten visitation for Monday, February 12 was cancelled due to inclement weather. Mrs. Reiner will give her another date for the visitation.

**Ms. Martell** would like to thank the Booster Club and the Athletic Department for Senior Night, recognizing our senior basketball players and their parents with flowers and a reception after the game on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

**Mr. Giamundo** reported on the Facilities Committee's efforts to continue to meet with reference to the dugout proposal. The Committee is in the final stages of the proposed score board. Details in reference to its size and

location were discussed. Mr. Giamundo also talked about a “wish list” of items for the fields to be included in the budget. There is a need for members of the community with backgrounds and expertise in different areas to join the committee, for instance, landscaping. The Booster Club gave an update on the status of the field and discussed donation of the scoreboard. Mr. Giamundo also encouraged board members to participate in the Booster Club. A dinner-dance is being held on March 4, 2006, or perhaps support the Club by purchasing an ad in their journal.

### **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

*Dr. Peter R. Litchka, Superintendent*

Dr. Litchka reported on a small fire in the Home Ec room of the high school. It appears the fire was caused by a damaged stove. The alarm sounded at 3:05 p.m., the fire department arrived at 3:11 p.m. Everyone still in the building exited safely and without incident. There were no injuries. Damage was minimal and the room will be back in use in a couple of days.

North Salem has been designated as an area shelter in the event of an emergency at Indian Point. Dr. Litchka reported that a North Salem Safety Summit will be held on April 21, 2006, from 10-2 p.m. All regional organizations, NYSEG, Red Cross, etc., will be present to share information and enhance partnerships with these groups. Dr. Bovino, a member of the District Safety Team, has made several suggestions, including emergency flipcharts in classrooms, upgrading two-way radios, generators, three-year safety plans, cameras and fire alarms. The team has discussed how the District and schools reacted and learned from the January incident. Dr. Litchka will be putting a report together on the January incident, and noted that the Safety Plan must be approved by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Dr. Litchka reported that he attended a workshop on the International Baccalaureate Program. He suggested we continue to look into three programs: primary years, middle years and diploma program. The program has an interesting concept that pushes students to the next level. There is a two-year program for juniors and seniors. New York is slow in accepting this program, but Dr. Litchka proposes we look into the program further. Dr. Litchka reported that there are budgetary implications in these programs – teachers must be trained in Chicago, assessments are graded internationally, and there are annual fees associated with the program. Ms. Martell asked Dr. Litchka to put together a presentation with reference to his

vision and focus on this program and how he sees it fitting into North Salem. Dr. Litchka indicated that he will be receiving a powerpoint presentation outline program specifics and details and suggested that Board members view it and read the supporting material.

### **PRESENTATIONS:**

#### **State of Education Report, *Dr. Peter R. Litchka***

Dr. Litchka presented the “State of Education” for North Salem. Following are key points of the presentation.

- What do we really want for our children’s education, their best interest, and how can we pay for it.
- The condition of the infrastructure must be addressed.
- The field issue must be addressed.
- We have to be ready for the future

Dr. Litchka stated that he looks forward to the journey.

Ms. Palma wanted to know the breakdown for students going to two-year versus four-year colleges. She also asked how North Salem is being measured and what the goals are academically. Ms. Hart stated that she was impressed with the ELA test results. Dr. Litchka stated that North Salem teachers and the NS curriculum are ahead of other districts in this area. It is a testimony to the amount of staff development, best practices, curriculum, etc. He commented on the middle school grades achieving very high test scores. Ms. Hart wanted to know how North Salem compares regionally in AP and SAT scores. Dr. Litchka stated he will follow-up on Ms. Hart’s request. Ms. Hauser talked about how kindergartners were being assessed with dated assessments. The new screening procedures will keep data on students so that we can begin to track local norms. We will need several years of data to develop local norms. The new screening procedures give us more pertinent data for each student that will help us make placement and early intervention decisions.

(The entire *State of Education Report* is posted on the website).

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- A. Discussion of Architectural and Legal Services for the Proposed Sports Complex**

- Ms. Palma asked for an explanation on the steps leading to the \$35,000 expense.
- Mr. Giamundo responded that the Board can vote to go ahead with the \$35,000.
- Mr. Hershman, community member, asked the scope of the \$35,000.
- Dr. Litchka responded that the \$35,000 covers legal fees, surveys, environmental impact, etc. It is a necessary process.
- Ms. Fassler-Wallach indicated that the money is coming from savings of fuel surcharges and non-instructional codes. Approximately \$7,000 left in the fuel surcharge code will be transferred and the balance would come from the fuel encumbrance. Ms. Fassler-Wallach will provide the Board with a breakdown at the next meeting.
- Ms. Rosemaria DosSantos, community member, asked what happens with the \$125,000 remaining.
- Ms. Palma answered that the money stays encumbered.
- Ms. Martell suggested going over the codes that the \$35,000 is coming from.

**B. Food Service Consultant**

The Board has asked Ms. Fassler-Wallach to find a consultant to write a bid for an outside food service. Ms. Hart suggested doing an RFP to obtain the lowest bidder.

**C. Review of the Study of the Present Administrative Structure**

- Dr. Litchka was asked to review the administrative staff for the upcoming budget. Currently North Salem is – 9 administrators, ratio of 150 students to 1 administrator. Using study by BOCES 10.18 administrative positions for North Salem. Comparative analysis regarding salaries – six (6) below median, three (3) above. Per pupil cost - \$160 per student.
- Middle school has been nominated as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.
- Dr. Litchka suggested that the Board look into hiring a full-time athletic director.

- Jennifer Wilson’s position is Customer Service Coordinator for Educational Technology.
- Suggested bringing in an outside consultant to study North Salem’s administrative structure.
- Ms. Palma stated that 12 years ago North Salem hired an outside consulting firm. At that time the school was growing. The study determined that North Salem was short in administrative personnel. The present enrollment is declining.

## CONSENT AGENDA

### ACTION ITEMS:

- A. Consent Agenda – motion by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Hart, and carried to approve the Consent Agenda.
- B. Policy Reading – Third reading, adoption of **Proposed Policy #9170 – Meals and Refreshments**. Motion by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Hart and carried 5-0.
- C. Policy Reading – Third reading, adoption of **Proposed Policy #3500 – School District Credit Cards**. Motion by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Hart, and carried 5-0.
- D. Policy Reading – Third reading and adoption of **Proposed Policy #5151 Homeless Children, and #5151-R Homeless Children Regulations**. Ms. Palma stated that this policy is mandated by state law. All approved.
- E. Approval of the **Joint Sponsorship of Athletic Teams for 2006-2007(Katonah-Lewisboro Central School District, Somers Central School District)**. Motion by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Hart, and carried 5-0.
- F. **Approval** of the Recommendation of the CSE/CPSE. Motion by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Hart, and carried 5-0.
- G. **Establishment** of the Class of 2980 Scholarship Fund. Motion by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Hart, and carried 5-0.

- H. **Approval** of the Transfer of Funds. Motion by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Hart, and carried 5-0.
- I. **Resolved** that the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent and the Director of Finance to enter into a contract with a consultant qualified to:
- Evaluate and analyze the existing facilities, pricing, and meal plan.
  - Prepare and deliver a comprehensive food service bid specification that addresses all district concerns.
  - Conduct a pre-bid conference with contractors.
  - Evaluate all contractors' proposals.
  - Ensure SED requirements are met.

Motion made by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Hart, and carried 5-0. Ms. Hart volunteered to be a member of this committee.

- J. **Resolved** that the Board of Education appoint Jennifer Wilson as the District Clerk, effective February 16, 2006 through June 30, 2006, at a stipend of \$3,000.
- K. **Approval** of expenditures, up to \$35,000 to cover expenses for the proposed sports complex. Motion made by Ms. Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Hart, and carried 5-0.

#### **APPOINTMENTS – CERTIFIED PERSONNEL**

**Kathryn Bartsch**, substitute teacher, effective February 16, 2006

#### **APPOINTMENTS – CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL**

**Yamira Alfano**, emergency conditional provisional appointment, Office Assistant, Financial Support, Step 1, CSEA clerical schedule A, effective February 27, 2006 (#204).

#### **Leave of Absence**

**James LaRosa**, bus driver, leave of absence without pay, effective January 21, 2006 through June 30, 2006 (item was tabled at 2/1/06 Board of Education Meeting).

#### **COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:**

Mr. Steve Fuller – spoke about approximately \$2,000 that NSTA has raised for the Hurricane Katrina relief fund. Asked about CSEA negotiations. Also had a question on administrative structure and can consideration be given to replacing positions lost.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Ms. Hart asked Dr. Litchka to follow-up with the State regarding superintendent conference days.
- Ms. Martell asked Dr. Litchka for clarification on high school repairs. Dr. Litchka stated we are waiting for coils to come in.
- Ms. Hart asked for a follow-up report on how many teachers are posting homework assignments on the website. Ms. Martell responded that the number of teachers participating in this process is low.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Ms. Martell stated that there is no supervision or chaperones in the hallways when there are evening or weekend activities and functions.
- Ms. Palma suggested speaking with the building administrator on the policy, etc.
- Mr. Giamundo attended the school contract meetings and an attorney spoke about the importance of updating the district’s policy manual.
- Ms. Hublard-Hershman asked Dr. Litchka to follow-up on visitors signing in at the front desk.
- Ms. Palma requested a list of suspensions and detentions by teachers.

**CONSIDERATION OF EXECUTIVE SESSION SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL**

None at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Ms. Palma, seconded by Ms. Hart, and carried, meeting was adjourned at 11:21 p.m.

