

NORTH SALEM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
NORTH SALEM, NEW YORK 10560
www.northsalem.k12.ny.us

BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2006

I. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the North Salem Central School District was called to order at 6:35 p.m. in the Board Conference Room by President Marie Martell.

Board Members Present at this Meeting

Mrs. Marie Martell, President

Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman, Vice President (Arrived at 7:20 pm)

Mr. Paul Giamundo, Trustee

Ms. Carla Palma, Trustee

Ms. Judith Schurmacher, Trustee

Also Present: Trustee Elect Paul Smadbeck
Trustee Elect Katherine Daniels
Dr. Sidney Freund

II. Motion to Enter Executive Session

- At 6:40, on a motion by Carla Palma, second by Paul Giamundo and carried, the Board moved to an Executive Session for the purpose of discussing specific personnel and litigation.

III. Motion to Adjourn Executive Session and Reconvene to Public Session

- At 7:30 p.m., on a motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Judith Schurmacher and carried, the Board adjourned the Executive Session and reconvened to the Public Session.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

V. Results of the Special Meeting – December 5, 2006

- A. Jennifer Wilson, District Clerk, presented the results of the December 5, 2006, special meeting. The Roof Referendum passed with a vote of 448 Aye and 161 Nay. The results of the Board of Education Trustee election were:

Paul Smadback:	217
Katherine Daniels:	185
Gary Windus:	86
Jonathan Freeman:	69
Karen Aronian:	35
Jason Clark	1 Write-in Vote

Motion by Alison Hublard-Hershman, second by Carla Palma. Results of the Board of Education Trustee election were accepted as reported by the District Clerk. Vote: 5-0.

As top vote recipient, Paul Smadbeck, was announced as the new Board of Education Trustee to fill the position vacant until 06/30/07.

- B. District Clerk, Jennifer Wilson, swore in Paul Smadbeck as a Board of Education Trustee.
- C. Motion by Alison Hublard-Hershman, second by Judith Schurmacher. Katherine Daniels was appointed as the second Board of Education Trustee, until 05/15/07. Ms. Daniels was the second highest vote recipient. Vote: 6-0.
- D. District Clerk, Jennifer Wilson, swore in Katherine Daniels as a Board of Education Trustee.

VI. Announcements

- Marie Martell congratulated the two new Trustees, Paul Smadbeck and Katherine Daniels, and welcomed them to the Board of Education.
- Marie Martell congratulated the National Honor Society inductees and thanked Todd Chamberlain and Kathleen Murphy for organizing the event.
- Marie Martell congratulated the Varsity Girls Soccer Team and explained the historical significance of their accomplishments. Many thanks to the coaches for a job very well done! Dr. Freund stated the girls' season record was 18-2-1. Certificates were distributed by Coach, Bob Martin, Dr. Sidney Freund and the members of the Board of Education.

VII. Committee Reports

- A. **Town Task Force:** Paul Giamundo and Judith Schurmacher met with the Town/School Board Task Force. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of 74 new home units being built within the school district, with a possible 100 new students entering the schools. It was stated that there were no known new open land purchases within the District boundaries for the next one to two years. Discussion also included development of a Northern Westchester/Southern Putnam coalition of town councilmen and BOE members to work on increasing state aid.

Paul Giamundo felt the meeting went very well with an honest, open exchange of ideas. He feels a “nice partnership” is developing. He also shared that the town is working on a descriptive piece of literature for the school district and the town to provide to incoming residents.

- B. **Fiscal Planning Committee:** Dr. Freund reported that the committee is working on its five-year plan. The next work session is scheduled for December 18, 2006.
- C. **Audit Committee:** Marie Martell reported that the Audit Committee had interviewed for an internal auditor and further discussion would follow later in the meeting.
- D. **Facilities, Fields and Transportation Committee:** Paul Giamundo stated that next week the committee would review the architect’s rendering for the roof in order that it may be sent to the State Education Department for approval. The committee is working on establishing dollar amounts on future projects in order to forward the information to the Finance Committee. Paul also noted that North Salem Baseball and Softball Association had donated two (2) dugouts to the school facility. Dr. Freund stated this had been formally accepted by the Board last year. Work has already begun on these dugouts.
- E. **Educational Technology Committee:** Jennifer Wilson reported the committee had met on December 6, 2006, and is organizing several subcommittees.
- F. **Strategic Planning Committee:** Carla Palma stated that she, Jo Drawec, and Dr. Freund had met to discuss the format of the final report.
- G. **Communications Committee:** Marie Martell reported the committee had met on November 28, 2006. Paul Giamundo will contact Comcast regarding the 500 households in Southeast with no access to the North Salem BOE meetings on cable. Also, Dr. Bovino continues to update the cable information, as necessary.
- H. **Foundation for Learning:** Marie Martell reported the minutes had been accepted on November 29, 2006 with changes in the bylaws; a copy will be provided in your next packet.

Marie Martell offered thanks to the Pearson's for the "Foundation and Friends" Holiday Celebration. Mrs. Martell stated that she and Paul attended a Vision of Education Leadership and Governance Conference, sponsored by Northern Westchester Putnam School Boards. Information shared at this meeting included that there will not be enough engineers in the future and how do we know that students are really learning. It is important to know students by name/need/how many go off to college/how many actually graduate from college. The bottom line is that there will be a shortage of math and science teachers for the future and that it is very important to get more technology into the schools. Paul Giamundo explained to the new Board members that this is a good place for an exchange of ideas District-to-District.

Marie Martell thanked the District's voters and also acknowledged the residents that voted no. The Board is working hard to gain trust and understanding from the community. She explained that transparency is important.

Dr. Freund wished everyone a Happy Holiday Season!

Dr. Freund informed everyone that this would be Bob Celente's last Board of Education meeting and that he would be sorely missed. Mr. Celente thanked the Board for his time as Interim Finance Administrator and the worthwhile experience he has had with North Salem.

Alison Hublard-Hershman spoke about the Advocates for the Arts and their upcoming events.

VII. Reports to the Board

- A. Budget Status Report:** Dr. Freund presented the Monthly Status Report. The District will spend approximately 94% of the budget. The projected fund balance is \$2,000,000. The Fiscal Planning Committee is looking at how to use this money and will bring forward their recommendations. The Administration is on target for budget development and believes it will be sent to the Board before the February break. Dr. Freund explained the current year budget for salaries and benefits exceeded what was needed. He explained that when estimating a budget, if the monies left equal approximately 3%, it is reasonable. There will actually be closer to 6% left this year. He explained that the District is looking at actual energy consumption to estimate next year's costs. He stated that the per pupil allocations for 2007-08 have been established for the individual school budgets. He described the monies the building principals control. Marie Martell asked about lane changes and Dr. Freund described the changes in salaries and that there were salaries included in the budget based on unknown teacher turnover. Carla Palma stated that this would also relate to employee benefits. Dr. Freund stated that we will automate

teacher data, i.e., their current placement on the salary schedule and what is needed to move to the next lane. This will help with projections for future budgets. The goal was to have this completed by the end of December 2006 but has been delayed due to staff turnover.

VIII. Public Comments

No public comments.

IX. Approval of Minutes

- Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. The Board of Education approved the minutes of the November 15, 2006. Vote: 7-0.
- Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. The Board of Education approved the minutes of the September 6, 2006, minutes. Vote: 7-0.

XI. Action Items

A. Software Consulting Group

Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. Jennifer Wilson explained this was needed because the teacher who did the State reporting and data entry last year retired and State demands have increased. Once we move to the new student management system, this will not be needed any longer. Vote: 7-0.

B. Sick Bank

Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. Carla Palma thinks this is a worthy plan. She is hoping that all groups in the District are similarly protected. Vote: 7-0.

C. Expense Reimbursement Policy

Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. Dr. Freund shared that there are significant changes regarding requirements for reporting expenses and monies allocated for meals and other travel expenses.

D. New Board of Education Orientation

Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. Per Dr. Freund, this policy will help new trustees learn their roles and responsibilities in an efficient manner. This should actually say first reading of “revised” policy.

E. Accume Partners

Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Paul Giamundo. Marie Martell explained that the District is required by law to hire an internal auditor to conduct a risk assessment and subsequently report back to the Board. This is not a “numbers” auditor. Vote: 6-1. (Carla Palma voted nay.) Carla Palma shared her reservations with the appointment. George Neuhaus (of the Audit Committee) and several Trustees defended the appointment.

F. BOCES Communications Proposal

Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Judith Schurmacher. Dr. Freund stated that the Communications Committee had met last week. Fiona Mitchell, BOCES, has assisted with public information dissemination. The budget had been cut back for the second budget vote and the Superintendent recommends restoring some of those lost funds. Additional funding of \$13,010.00 would support 12 media days to be used as required and publication of two additional issues of the District newsletter. Vote: 7-0.

G. Westchester Community Foundation Grant – Elizabeth G. Butler Angel Fund

Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. Marie Martell thanked the Foundation for this gift. Dr. Freund explained that this is a “new type” of agenda item and the Board will now formally accept all gifts, consistent with policy that states the Board should approve all gifts. Vote: 7-0.

H. Foundation for Learning:

Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. Marie Martell again offered thanks to the Foundation for the gift. Carla Palma congratulated the students for writing a proposal and having it granted. Vote: 7-0.

I. Hall of Fame Trust Fund

Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. Dr. Freund stated the Hall of Fame basketball game monies would be used to create plaques for future hall of famers. Carla Palma inquired why we needed such a fund and Dr. Freund explained that monies can only be carried over in this type of a fund, not in a club. Vote: 7-0.

J. Consent Agenda:

Motion by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. Marie Martell welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Vassack back to the district as substitute teachers. Carol Pawlinski was welcomed to the position of Secretary to the Superintendent and District Clerk. The Ballard family was thanked for the television they donated to the school. Mary Jo Hauser noted that the Consent Agenda should be revised to read

acceptance of both the “CSE and CPSE Reports” instead of “CSE Report.” Motion to accept this change by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma. Vote: 7-0.

XI. Old Business

A. GASB 45

Per Dr. Freund, the District will be seeking another company to work for the calculation of medical insurance for future retirees as we were too late to become part of the group proposed at the last Board meeting. Paul Giamundo asked what happened and Dr. Freund explained that the other municipalities have moved forward and this is no longer an option for North Salem. He explained that a Putnam/Westchester group may be available in the near future. Carla Palma offered her help in establishing criteria for assessing new groups.

B. Water Quality

Dr. Freund shared the District water quality results stating that all possible contaminants were either undetectable or well within limits. The water is safe to drink. Paul Giamundo inquired about the particular element a staff member was concerned about. Dr. Freund reported that the results were shared with each bargaining unit's president along with an explanation of these results and he has heard nothing back to date. Marie Martell asked if Ken Waldron knew the particular element of concern and Dr. Freund stated he would find out this information.

C. Athletic Policy Review

Dr. Freund stated that Henry Sassone would be scheduling the meeting.

D. SAVE Plan

Dr. Freund will check to see if this is updated.

E. Paul Giamundo asked for a moment to clarify his intention regarding an inquiry he made in October 2006. He had spoken about staff attendance and absenteeism. He stated that he had not brought this forward because of any specific group or person within the District but rather because of his two beliefs: that the human resources element of any company is the most precious resource and that when absences occur, there is a related loss of productivity and continuity. He wanted to add three additional points: 1) daily attendance in the District is 95%, which is very good, 2) the District does not have a Friday/Monday problem with illness-related absenteeism, which is good, and 3) there were 13 staff members with perfect attendance last year. He felt that perfect attendance warranted some type of commendation. He would like to see the new Assistant Superintendent have the title of Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Human Resources. He feels that Human Resources are something we should emphasize and this could be an ongoing process to make "happy and healthy" employees and, thus, have better students. Carla Palma stated that she felt

administration should discuss this and Paul Giamundo's idea of standardized reports within the area is a good one.

XII. Future Agenda Items and Meetings

- A. February 28, 2007** – Report from the Math Consultants

XIII. New Business

- A.** Carla Palma inquired whether there is a way to get student performance data on a quarterly basis, real time versus after the fact. Dr. Freund answered that we get quarterly grades in each subject and he is not certain what information as a Board or superintendent would be useful. Just looking at this information on a quarterly basis may not give anything more useful than which students are passing or failing. Carla Palma asked for examples. She would like to have a more reactive assessment. Dr. Freund asked if she was looking for how we are monitoring student progress. He will go back to the principals to ask what systems are now in place.

- B.** Marie Martell shared that Alison Hublard Hershman had been appointed Vice President of the Board at the November 15, 2006 Board of Education Meeting.

C. Review of New Committees with New Board Members

- Fiscal Planning – Katherine Daniels currently serves on this committee.
- Educational Technology – Rotates afternoon/morning meetings, meets about six times per year. Subcommittees meet primarily in the evenings. Paul Smadbeck stated he will serve on a subcommittee.
- Audit Committee – Katherine Daniels will serve on this committee if meetings can be held at 8:00 p.m.
- Curriculum Committee – will alternate days/evenings. Will next meet in January.
- Long-Term Strategic Planning Committee – Paul Smadbeck will serve on this committee.
- Pupil Personnel Committee – Paul Giamundo agreed to be on call for when Marie Martell cannot make a meeting.
- Public Relations Committee (Communications) – Katherine Daniels will be an alternate for this committee. Member from the Public asked if this wasn't disbanded. Dr. Freund relayed that it was just to meet with Fiona Mitchell to discuss public information.

- Facilities, Fields and Transportation – Paul Giamundo stated this will alternate day/evening meetings. A member from the Public asked about the turf field and whether this was still an open discussion?
 - Bid Committee – Dr. Freund inquired why the Board was doing this review. Carla Palma explained it was to review all supporting detail before bringing a bid to the Board. Dr. Freund felt this was a function of the administration, not the Board of Education. Discussion ensued regarding where this function belonged. There will not be a Bid sub-committee of the Board.
- D.** Marie Martell presented the minutes of the Booster Club. She stated the turf field has not been in conversation with the Board since last year and is not planned for an agenda in the near future.
- XIV.** Motion Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Carla Palma to adjourn Regular Meeting and enter Executive Session at 9:25 p.m. for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining. Vote: 7-0.
- XV.** At 10:16 a motion was made by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Judith Schurmacher to adjourn to Executive Session.
- XVI.** The Board of Education came out of the Executive Session at 10:55 pm.
- XVII.** At 11:00 pm a motion was made by Alison Hublard Hershman, second by Judith Schurmacher to adjourn the public meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Pawlinski, District Clerk