

**NORTH SALEM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
NORTH SALEM, NEW YORK 10560
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2008**

Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the North Salem Central School District was called to order at 6:32 PM in the Board Conference Room by President Marie Martell.

At 6:32 PM., a motion was made by Ms. Judith Schurmacher, seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo and carried, to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing negotiations.

At 7:30 PM, on a motion made by Ms. Judith Schurmacher, seconded by Mr. Jonathan Freeman and carried, the Board adjourned the Executive Session and reconvened to the Public Session.

Board Members Present at this Meeting:

Mrs. Marie L. Martell, President
Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman, Vice-President
Mr. Paul Giamundo, Trustee
Ms. Judith Schurmacher, Trustee
Ms. Katherine Daniels, Trustee
Mr. Paul Smadbeck, Trustee
Mr. Jonathan Freeman, Trustee

Also Present: Dr. Kenneth Freeston, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. MaryJo Hauser, Assistant Superintendent Pupil Personnel
Dr. Michael Hibbard, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Human Resources
Ms. Louise Lynch, Director of Business Administration
Mr. Ken Waldron, Director of Facilities
Dr. Patricia Cyganovich, Principal North Salem Middle School/High School
Ms. Roberta Reiner, Principal Pequenakonck Elementary School
Ms. Sarah Capichioni, Administrative Clerk
Members of North Salem School District Staff
Members of the Public

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by Board President Ms. Marie Martell and followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Announcements

Ms. Sarah Capichioni made the following announcement; requests for transportation for private and parochial schools can made to the Transportation Department by April 1, 2008.

Also, the nominating petitions for candidates interested in running for a seat on the Board of Education are due in the District Office no later than Monday, April 21, 2008. The qualifications to run are that the candidate must: be a United States Citizen, eighteen years old by the date of the election, a resident of the district for 30 days and registered in the school district. Nominating packets for those interested in running for the Board of Education are available in the District Office.

Ms. Marie Martell also reminded those interested in running for Board of Education Trustee that there will be a workshop for prospective Board Members, Saturday, April 12, 2008 from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM at the Education House at 5 Homeside Lane in White Plains.

Public Comments

Ms. Sue **Aruillo** on behalf of parents of students participating in the Ice Hockey Program, stating that the parents of these students are the only parents contributing to a sports team. Ms. **Aruillo** stated that other sports programs do not require parents to pay for part of the cost of the field or the court etc.; she asked that Ice Hockey be recognized and funded as all other sports teams are in North Salem. Ms. **Aruillo** stressed that **athletics** are a vital part of the school experience and stated that she hopes the Board shares in this feeling; the Ice Hockey Program has proven to be solid and successful, proven itself a source of community spirit and pride and a fun event for spectators. Ms. **Aruillo** urged the Board to agree to fully support the Ice Hockey costs in the proposed school budget for 2008-2009.

Ms. Rosemaria DosSantos, co-president of the MS/HS PTO, remarked on the large presence of parents at the meeting and thanked the members of the community for coming out to learn about the budget process.

Ms. DosSantos reminded the public of the upcoming High School Drama Club performance of "All I need to know I learned in kindergarten."

As a parent, Ms. DosSantos, asked the Board to consider putting funding towards another Physical Education teacher and therefore offer more electives and be of greater assistance to students.

Mr. John Kennedy, Ice Hockey Coach, spoke of the respect and crowds the team attracts, at the games, within the league and the community.

Mr. Andrew Brown thanked the Board of Education for the work they have done and will do in the next few weeks, with regard to the budget.

Ms. Barbara Paesano spoke in support of the Hockey Program stating that it is time for the Board to consider that this is the only sports program that requires financial contribution by the parent in order for the student to take part in it.

Ms. Marie Martell recalled that merged association between North Salem and Somers Central School District for the Ice Hockey Program was initially created after much discussion regarding parental financial contributions and that the Board has never stated that it would be fully funded by the district; also she stated that there has been an increased level of district funding in the last few years.

Mr. Steve **Rome** stated that while he understood the Board never promised full funding, the parents were told that it would be open for discussion.

Budget Work Session Presentations

Budget Overview – Superintendent Kenneth Freeston

Dr. Freeston spoke about it being a big night in budget work and that all involved have worked hard to bring about a student focused, collaboratively developed budget with measurable goals and objectives. He also stated that this has been accomplished in the budget work. Dr. Freeston thanked the Board for their patience with the new format and compromising to bring the old and new formats together.

Fiscal CAC John White-See attached

Mr. John White, Chair of the Fiscal CAC, stated that the budget analysis and work this year has been transparent and focused on actuals. The Fiscal Committee supports the 4 % Un-appropriated Fund Balance which allows for greater savings and security if money is needed by the district. The committee unanimously recommends that the Board utilize the unexpended funds from the 2007-2008 budget to enable a tax levy reduction in 2008-2009 and create the 4% Un-appropriated Fund Balance.

The Board thanked the committee for their work and consideration.

Louise Lynch

Undistributed Expenses-see attached

Ms. Louise Lynch presented the undistributed expenses which include employee benefits: employee retirement, teacher retirement, social security, worker's compensation and unemployment insurance, medical/dental/vision insurance, insurance reimbursements, union welfare, other contractual, and the employee assistance program.

The presentation covered the proposed increases for employee benefits, the debt service schedule for the district and the interfund transfers.

Revenue and Tax Rate Forecasts-see attached

Ms. Lynch also presented the numbers adding up to a balanced budget, breaking down the revenue sources; two scenarios were presented that added up to the budget number of \$38,575,435, one with a reduced local share and one with a reduced Appropriated Fund Balance.

Ms. Lynch presented the factors that affect school taxes and broke down these factors presenting estimated tax increase numbers. Ms. Lynch cautioned that these levy numbers are not firm as the equalization rate has not been set yet, assessed values are still changing and therefore, the full market value numbers remain estimates.

Budget Considerations

Ms. Louise Lynch briefly reviewed the score card and budget lines included therein stating the lines on the bottom of the page reflected the greatest change and that most of the line items at the bottom of the score card had been reduced.

Ms. Marie Martell asked if there were any items to add to the scorecard; board members gave Ms. Lynch their additions to the scorecard for discussion.

Budget consideration began with fuel/oil, gas and diesel to which Mr. Ken Waldron stated that the numbers in this line fluctuate due to the prices increasing frequently. Mr. Waldron stated that he would explore a program he had used prior, in the private sector that involved securing a price by buying in bulk and guaranteeing a certain number of gallons.

Mr. Paul Smadbeck asked about the substantial increase in the gas and diesel budget line compared to last year to which Mr. Waldron gave the price increases in gas from July to present.

The levers on the scorecard numbers one through ten (see attached score card) were agreed upon by the Board to go forward on the budget with no changes.

A discussion took place with regard to the Ice Hockey Program reviewing the past understanding and looking at the parent contribution. The members of the Board agreed to add \$9000.00 to the funding.

The following changes, additions and subtractions were discussed and made with regard to the budget (see attached score card): the Ice Hockey Program, Contingency Teaching Positions, Employee Benefits and transfer to Capital Funds. All are reflected on the final scorecard.

Public Comment

Ms. Rosemaria DosSantos commented on the per pupil cost difference between the Elementary School and Middle School students as per academics and the per athlete cost of the Ice Hockey Program. Ms. DosSantos questioned the addition of \$9000.00 to the Ice Hockey Program while deferring money for technology in light of a recent article rating elementary schools with regard to technology. Also, Ms. DosSantos questioned the discussion on the validation of math positions, stating the new math instruction programs need this kind of support.

Mr. Paul Giamundo thanked Ms. DosSantos for her input regarding the math program.

Ms. Judy Schurmacher responded that as a board member it is her duty to try to look at the budget from all aspects including academics and athletics.

Ms. DosSantos thanked the Board and the Superintendent for the new format in budget planning and for their hard work.

Ms. Katherine Daniels stated that looking at the per pupil cost break down by the administration is a good idea, but needed more time to analyze the numbers.

Dr. Freeston thanked Ms. DosSantos and cautioned that the per pupil allotment per athletics vs. academics involves a big difference with regard to salaries.

Adjournment

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 the Board adjourned the meeting at 10:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rebecca Narvaez, District Clerk