

**NORTH SALEM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**NORTH SALEM, NEW YORK 10560**  
[www.northsalemschools.org](http://www.northsalemschools.org)  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY MAY 21, 2008**

**Call to Order**

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of the North Salem Central School District was called to order at 5:42 PM in the Board Conference Room by President Marie Martell.

At 5:42 PM, a motion was made by Ms. Alison Hublard-Hershman, seconded by Ms. Judith Schurmacher and carried, to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations.

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

**Board Members Present at this Meeting:**

Ms. Marie L. Martell, President  
Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman, Vice-President  
Mr. Paul Giamundo, Trustee  
Ms. Katherine Daniels, Trustee  
Mr. Paul Smadbeck, Trustee  
Mr. Jonathan Freeman, Trustee (arrived 7:30 PM)  
Ms. Judith Schurmacher, Trustee

**Guests:**

Mr. Stephen Bobolia (arrived 6:28 PM)  
Mr. Andrew Brown (arrived 6:45 PM)  
Mr. Jeff Kehl (arrived 6:44 PM)

**Also Present:**

Dr. Kenneth Freeston, Superintendent of Schools  
(arrived executive session 6:44 PM)  
Ms. MaryJo Hauser, Assistant Superintendent Pupil Personnel  
Dr. Michael Hibbard, Asst. Superintendent for Instruction and Human Resources  
Ms. Rebecca Narvaez, District 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**

Annual District Election and Budget-  
District Clerk, Rebecca Narvaez announced the Annual District Election and Budget vote results-

**Budget Vote – 630 Yes 248 No**

### **Candidate Votes**

Anthony Navarro 389

Andrew Brown 540

Stephen Bobolia 460

Ms. Marie Martell thanked the public for their support and congratulated the two new trustees, Mr. Andrew Brown and Mr. Stephen Bobolia.

### **Student Reports**

Two student representatives from North Salem High School/Middle School spoke of the recent and upcoming events in the High School/Middle School as well as the Elementary School.

### **Board Recognition**

The Superintendent and Board of Education recognized and congratulated the Valedictorian, Salutatorian, the recipients of 2008 Scholarship for Academic Excellence Award, the New York Lottery Scholarship recipient, and the BOCES Student of Distinction.

Dr. Thomas P. Higgins, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Administration recognized the BOCES Student of Distinction and presented him with the BOCES National Honor Society hood.

Dr. Freeston acknowledged that two proclamations were issued to the district from the Westchester County Board of Legislators, one to the North Salem Advocates for the Arts (May 19, 2008 was proclaimed North Salem Advocates for the Arts Day) and the same day was also declared the North Salem MS/HS Art against Abuse Day. Dr. Freeston congratulated all those involved.

### **Public Hearing**

Partial tax exemptions for qualified members of volunteer fire companies, fire departments and volunteer ambulance services, as provided for in New York State Real Property Tax Law Sections 466-c and 466-d.

Board President Marie Martell opened up the public hearing.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Kurt Gulden, a volunteer for the North Salem Ambulance Corp, stated that there are other exemptions given by the School Board such as the Agricultural Exemption that result in a much larger monetary amount than what the volunteers were asking for and that these volunteers contributed a lot of time and work to the community.

Ms. Marie Martell responded to clarify that the agricultural exemption is given by the State and that it is not an exemption that the school has any control over.

Ms. Nanette Chiappetta, spoke of study done recently with the 50 volunteers from North Salem stating that if the community were to lose these volunteers, the Town would be responsible for approximately \$11,000,000 to cover this service. Ms. Chiappetta stated that the volunteers are asking for less than \$30, 000.

Mr. Paul Tessler expressed his support for the volunteers, stating that 45 days ago his family had an emergency that required the fire department coming to his house. Mr. Tessler wanted to state his appreciation, gratitude and support and also stated that he felt what the volunteers were asking for was very little.

Mr. Joseph Constantino, a volunteer for the Town for 18 years, stated that the Croton Falls Fire Dept has been around for 116 years; and, while it is not a lot of money for the district nor for the firefighters, the exemption is another tool to enable the department to retain the volunteers and recruit others. It makes the time spent away from family and friends more palatable; by passing the resolution the School is making an effort to keep the members and their family in this community.

Mr. Angelo D'Agastino thanked the Board for their consideration and encouraged the Board not to look at this in terms of dollar amounts or numbers, but to consider the heroic actions of the volunteers.

A letter received from Mr. Paul Greenwood was read into the minutes:

*First of all, let me make this very clear that these thoughts are my own and I am not writing on behalf of the Town nor any of the other town board members.*

*If the tax exemption were fair, I would be in favor of it. However, it is not fair and that is why I urge you to not grant this exemption. The following represents my understanding of the facts and the reasons why I consider the exemption unfair:*

- *If you are a volunteer, you must own property in the town of North Salem in order to qualify for the exemption.*
  - *The volunteers who answer the most calls are not residents of the town and therefore are not eligible for the exemption*
  - *Many volunteers rent and therefore are not eligible for the exemption*
  - *Many volunteers live at home with their parents and therefore are not eligible for the exemption nor are their parents*
  - *If the spouse volunteers but is not listed as the owner of the property, they are not eligible for the exemption*
  - *If you do not get the exemption, you are allowed to deduct \$200 from the New York State Income Tax. This seems fair to everyone.*

*One last point, people volunteer because they want to give of themselves – not because they want to be compensated. That is what volunteer means. Of the 25 towns in Westchester County, 16 do not provide the exemption; nor does the county itself.*

*The North Salem Town Board will be holding a public hearing on this issue later this month. You may want to hear the results of that hearing before you take final action.*

*Paul Greenwood*

*May 16, 2008*

A discussion followed involving the various statutes and bylaws of the as well as the tax cap and percentages imposed by the county. Also discussed was the point system and certification process.

As there was no more public comment the public hearing was closed at 8:25 PM

### **Approval of Minutes**

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 that the minutes from April 29, 2008 be approved.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Freeston reported on the upcoming number of events and how strongly the students are engaged in these events and programs, and how supportive the entire North Salem community is to school programs and events.

Dr. Freeston expressed his appreciation to the community for the budget participation and acceptance.

### **Board Reports**

Ms. Katherine Daniels reported on the Wellness Committee, the committee is compiling all of the information from the sub-committees for the committee self-evaluation.

Mr. Paul Giamundo reported on Communications Committee; the committee recently discussed keeping the website up-to-date, making the website more user-friendly and year end evaluations to committee members for feedback and planning.

### **Action Items**

#### **Partial Tax Exemption for Qualified Members-Volunteer Fire Companies, Fire Departments and Volunteer Ambulance Services**

The Board of Education discussed the various questions and concerns of raised by Board members and members of the public. One of the main concerns was that the eligibility criteria established by the fire department and ambulance corps (and memorialized in their by-laws) did not match the criteria desired by the Board, as reflected in the proposed resolution before the Board. At the end of the discussion, the District Counsel recommended amending the proposed resolution to match the eligibility requirements of those organizations and shortening the sunset clause to one year to enable the parties to work out their differences concerning eligibility any other lingering issues. Under the sunset clause, the exemption will expire on June 30, 2009 unless it is re-adopted by the Board of Education.

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board voted 6-0 that the resolution be so amended. On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board voted 6-0 that the amended resolution be adopted. Ms. Judy Schurmacher abstained from both votes.

**WHEREAS**, the applicable provisions of Real Property Tax Law §§ 466-c and 466-d authorize school districts to adopt tax exemptions for enrolled and duly certified members (hereinafter “Certified Members”) of a volunteer fire company, fire department and/or incorporated voluntary ambulance service (hereinafter a “Qualifying Organization”) in recognition of the public service rendered by such persons; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education has been requested to adopt such tax exemptions; and

**WHEREAS**, after publication of notice thereof, a public hearing was duly held by the Board of Education on May 21, 2008; and

**WHEREAS**, it appears to the Board of Education that the public interest will be served by adoption of the tax exemptions provided for by Real Property Tax Law §§ 466-c and 466-d; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that pursuant to Real Property Tax Law § 466-c, real property in Putnam County (provided its population remains within the range stated in the statute) owned by a Certified Member of a Qualifying Organization (or owned by such Certified Member and his/her spouse) shall, commencing July 1, 2008, be exempt from school taxation, exclusive of special assessments, to the extent of ten percent (10%) of the assessed valuation of such property, but not to exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) multiplied by the latest state equalization rate for the assessing unit in which such real property is located; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that, pursuant to Real Property Tax Law § 466-d, real property in Westchester County (provided its population remains within the range stated in the statute) owned by a Certified Member of a Qualifying Organization (or owned by such Certified Member and his/her spouse) shall, commencing July 1, 2008, be exempt from school taxation, exclusive of special assessments, to the extent of ten percent (10%) of the assessed valuation of such property; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the aforesaid exemptions for both Putnam and Westchester Counties shall be subject to the following requirements (hereinafter referred to as the “minimum Legal Requirements”):

1. That the taxpayer resides in the city, town or village which is served by the Qualifying Organization;
2. That the property is the primary residence of the taxpayer;
3. That the property is used exclusively for residential purposes; provided, however, that in the event any portion of the property is not used exclusively for the applicant’s residence but is used for other purposes, such portion shall be subject to taxation and the remaining portion only shall be entitled to the exemption provided for herein;
4. The taxpayer has been duly certified to the School District by the Qualifying Organization, as provided for herein, as having served as an enrolled member of the Qualifying Organization for at least five years; and
5. That as provided for by Real Property Tax Law §§ 466-c and 466-d, the taxpayer shall file application for such exemption with the assessor of the town, village or other municipal

entity which collects taxes on behalf of the School District, on the form prescribed by law, on or before the taxable status date; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the aforesaid exemptions with respect to Westchester County shall be subject to the additional requirement that, for volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers, the area served by the volunteer fire company or volunteer ambulance company does not encompass any area served by a fire company having more than five professional firefighters or an ambulance company having five or more professional ambulance workers, as the case may be; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that in order for a taxpayer to be approved as a Certified Member, the Qualifying Organization shall, not later than March 1 of each year, furnish appropriately authenticated documentation in form and substance satisfactory to the Superintendent of Schools (which may consist of reports of fire and ambulance responses or other equivalent proof) demonstrating that during the School District's preceding fiscal year and for a total of no fewer than five years, the taxpayer (a) has been an enrolled member in good standing of the Qualifying Organization, (b) has been actively engaged in the activities of the Qualifying Organization in accordance with the standards set forth in Schedules A and B attached to this resolution, and (c) otherwise meets the Minimum Legal Requirements to qualify as a Certified Member; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that any volunteer firefighter or volunteer ambulance worker residing in Westchester County who would otherwise be prevented from continuing to be certified as an active service member by reason of permanent disability due to the exercise of his/her duties as a volunteer firefighter or volunteer ambulance worker shall be entitled to the annual certification as a Certified Member during the period of his/her disability; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the School District's independent auditors shall be requested to report annually to the Board of Education respecting the number and aggregate financial impact of the exemptions granted pursuant hereto; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this resolution, and the exemptions provided for herein, shall expire on June 30, 2009, and that there shall be no such exemptions in effect for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2009, unless affirmatively extended by a further majority vote of this Board of Education.

#### **SCHEDULE A – MEMBERS OF VOLUNTARY AMBULANCE SERVICES**

In addition to meeting the Minimum Legal Requirements as set forth in the Board of Education's enabling resolution, the taxpayer must be qualified, in the School District's preceding fiscal year, as an "Active Riding Member" of the incorporated voluntary ambulance service.

#### **SCHEDULE B – MEMBERS OF VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES**

In addition to meeting the Minimum Legal Requirements as set forth in the Board of Education's enabling resolution, the taxpayer must be qualified, in the School District's preceding fiscal year, for "Active – Full Benefits" status.

#### **Acceptance of Vote – Annual District Election and Budget**

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accepts the results of the 2008 Budget Vote and Trustee Election as verified by the District Clerk.

**Math Lab & Director of Technology Office Renovations**

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools approve the expenditure of 2007-2008 funds for the specific purposes of renovating classroom W-36 to accommodate the new math office and to renovate the existing math office in to a Technology Director office space.

**Gift Acceptance**

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the donation of six benches for the North Salem High School Courtyard from the North Salem High School/Middle School PTO.

**Gift Acceptance**

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the donation of two picnic tables for the North Salem High School from the North Salem High School/Middle School PTO.

**Disposal of Fixed Assets**

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education declares the attached list of disposable assets as obsolete or disposable.

**Annual Reorganization Meeting**

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby establishes July 2, 2008 as the date for the Annual Reorganization Meeting for 2008-2009.

**Acceptance of Student Activities Reports for March 2008**

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the acceptance of the Student Activities Reports for January 2008.

**Budget Transfers**

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 to approve the following budget transfers:

**08-040**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$2,600.00 from A 2010-404-04-0000 Curriculum, Development & Supervision-Conference/ Travel/ Dues to A 2010-150-04-2000 Curriculum, Development & Supervision-Instructional Salaries.

**08-041**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$2,800.00 from A 2010-404-90-0000 Curriculum, Development & Supervision-Conference/Travel District wide to A 2010-150-04-2000 Curriculum, Development & Supervision – Instructional Salaries.

**08-042**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$3560.00 from A 2010-443-04-0000 Curriculum, Development & Supervision-Staff Development (Teacher’s Center) to A 2010-150-04-2000 Curriculum, Development & Supervision – Instructional Salaries.

**08-043**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$2,000.00 from A 2010-444-11-0000 Curriculum, Development & Supervision-Staff Development PQ to A 2010-150-04-2000 Curriculum, Development & Supervision – Instructional Salaries.

**08-044**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$680.00 from A 2010-444-31-0000 Curriculum, Development & Supervision-Staff Development MS/HS to A 2010-150-04-2000 Curriculum, Development & Supervision – Instructional Salaries.

**08-045**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$4070.00 from H 1620-293-11-3009 Roof Renovation – General Construction - PQ to H 2110-201-11-3009 Capital Renovation – Construction Management PQ.

**08-046**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$964.67 from H 2110-244-11-3009 Capital Renovation - Legal to H 2110-245-11-3009 Capital Renovation – Architect’s Fees PQ.

**08-047**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$7122.39 from H 1620-293-31-6012 Capital Renovation – General Construction HS to H 2110-245-31-6012 Capital Renovation – Architect’s Fees HS.

**08-048**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$10,960.00 from H 1620-293-31-6012 Capital Renovation – General Construction HS to H 2110-245-31-3009 Capital Renovation – Construction Renovation- Construction Management HS.

**08-049**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$5,000.00 from A 2855-400-31-0000 Athletics – Post Season Expense to A 2855-180-31-0000 Athletics – Chaperones / Scorekeepers.

**08-050**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$16,699.00 from A 2110-400-00-0000 Regular Day Instruction-Contractual to A 2110-450-31-2100 Regular Day Instruction-MS/HS Math Supplies.

**08-051**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$2,407.00 from A 2110-400-00-0000 Regular Day Instruction-Contractual to A 2110-480-31-1600 Regular Day Instruction-MS/HS World Language Textbooks.

**08-052**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$5,046.00 from A 2110-400-31-0100 Regular Day Instruction-Contractual Tutoring to A 2110-480-31-2300 Regular Day Instruction-MS/HS Science Textbooks.

**08-053**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$8,247.00 from A 2110-400-31-0100 Regular Day Instruction-Contractual Tutoring to A 2110-480-31-2500 Regular Day Instruction-MS/HS Social Studies Textbooks.

**08-054**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the transfer of \$2,500.00 from A 1420-400-90-0000 Legal Services to A 1240-161-01-0000 Central Administration – Clerical Substitutes.

**Consent Agenda**

On a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 to approve the following Consent Agenda:

***Summer 2008 Curriculum Projects***

**RESOLVED**, upon recommendation by the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves payment, according to the NSTA contract, to the individuals in the attached chart titled, *BOE Minutes May 21, 2008*

"Summer 2008 Curriculum Projects" dated 5/14/08. The total allocation for each project may not be exceeded except with the approval of the Board of Education, changes in the distribution such funding within a project may occur with the approval of the Superintendent of Schools. A report on all such changes will be made to the Board of Education in September of 2008.

### ***Stipend***

**RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the following individuals to fill the stipend positions as listed for the 2007-08 school year.

<b><u>Name of Individual</u></b>	<b><u>Stipend Title</u></b>	<b><u>Amount</u></b>
Neil Broderick	Coach Spring Intramural Program	Approximately \$357.00 (\$21.00 an hour)

### ***FMLA***

**Ms. Jennifer Galligan**

**RESOLVED**, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education grants Ms. Jennifer Galligan a leave pursuant to FMLA effective on or about June 13, 2008 and following an unpaid child care leave of absence, Ms. Galligan will return to work effective on or about July 1, 2009.

### **Committee Reports Year End Wrap up**

*Wellness Committee – MaryJo Hauser*

*Pupil Personnel Committee – MaryJo Hauser*

*Curriculum – Michael Hibbard*

Ms. MaryJo Hauser reported on the 2007-2008 Wellness Committee reporting the highlights completed this year.

- Development of Vision Statement and the eight areas of wellness.
- Creation of the self-assessment and planning guide.
- Identification of weaknesses and establishment of recommended actions.

Next year the committee will summarize the results, create a scorecard, and develop an action plan with specific steps to address areas of opportunity.

Ms. MaryJo Hauser reported on the 2007-2008 Pupil Personnel Services reporting the highlights completed this year.

- Developed Vision Statement.
- Focused on co-teaching.
- Identified key areas for long and short term goal in Co-teaching.
- Developed outline for New Teacher Orientation Program including Special Education and Co-Teaching.

Dr. Michael Hibbard reported on the 2007-2008 Curriculum Committee reporting the highlights of the past year:

- Systematic, systemic and sustained work to improve student performance.
- Increasing collaboration K thru 12.
- Continued work on the Cycle of Learning.

- Lever Budget connected to improving student performance in: Science, Math, World Language, Music, Wellness and Leadership.

### **Discussion Items**

The Board conducted the first reading of three, of policy # 4321.9 Declassification of Students with Disabilities.

The Board conducted the first reading of three, of policy # 4321.11 Public Report on Revisions to District Policies, Practices and Procedures upon a Finding of Significant Disproportionality.

The Board conducted the first reading of two, of the proposed revisions to Policy #5280-R Interscholastic Athletic and Co-Curricular Policy.

Mr. Paul Smadbeck asked that the board look into the wording in the Interscholastic Athletic and Co-Curricular Policy that discusses team practices during school vacations.

### **Old Business**

Ms. Judy Schurmacher presented the Board with a folder of grant information for further research.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Andrew Brown thanked the North Salem voters for their votes and for approving the budget.

### **Motion to Adjourn to Executive Session**

At 10:40 PM on a motion made by Ms. Alison Hublard Hershman and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 6-0 to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing specific personnel and contracts.

### **Adjournment**

On a motion made by Ms. Judy Schurmacher and seconded by Mr. Paul Giamundo, the Board of Education voted 7-0 and adjourned the meeting at 11:40 PM.