

MINUTES  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
WORKSESSION – March 10, 2009  
Aquebogue Elementary School Cafetorium

PRESENT: President, Mrs. Kathleen V. Berezny; Vice President, Mrs. Christine Prete; Mrs. Ann Cotten-DeGrasse; Ms. Angela DeVito; and, Mr. Gregory Meyer.

LATE: Mr. Timothy Griffing and Mrs. Mary Ellen Harkin.

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Diane B. Scricca and Christopher Venator, Esq.

Board President, Mrs. Berezny, opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Pledge of Allegiance

A motion was made by Mr. Meyer, seconded by Mrs. Prete, to recess to executive session to discuss personnel.

Recess to  
Executive Session

Yes 5 No 0  
Motion Carried.

The Board of Education recessed to executive session at 6:06 p.m.

Mr. Griffing arrived at 6:10 p.m.

Mrs. Harkin arrived at 6:55 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Griffing, seconded by Mrs. Harkin, to return to open session.

Return to  
Open Session

Yes 7 No 0  
Motion Carried.

The Board of Education returned to open session at 8:15 p.m.

A brief recess followed.

The meeting resumed at 8:22 p.m.

ALSO PRESENT: Ms. Nancy Carney, Mr. Joseph Ogeka, Jr., Mr. Michael Ivanoff, and Mrs. Barbara O’Kula.

There were about 20 other people in attendance.

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In opening comments, Dr. Scricca informed the Board of Education that the economic stimulus package money for the district right now is at \$750,000 *per year* with distribution of about \$250,000 in Title I funds (Roanoke, Phillips and Pulaski) and the rest in IDEA (Special Education). This comes with certain guidelines and percentages going toward professional development. The Board and administration are working hard to tighten the budget and stay below a 4% tax levy increase. The district will be impacted by lost revenue – for example: bank interest, Medicaid reimbursement, pre-school special education costs (a pick up of 15% of costs), the proposed elimination of STAR rebates, and the list goes on and on. As the town, county, state and nation face unprecedented fiscal challenges, impending cuts of at least 6-7% in the budget will be made across the board, in every unit and every category.

Mr. Ivanoff presented the Special Education proposed 2009-2010 budget that services 470 pupils. The proposed budget includes:

*Proposed 2009-2010  
Budge Presentation  
-Special Education and  
ESL*

Salaries	-	\$ 5,875.513	(3.26% increase)
Equipment Repair	-	2,820	(-6.0%)
Consultants (specialized services over and above what the district can offer)	-	250,000	(-16.67%)
Tuition – Private Schools	-	498,750	(5.0% increase)
Supplies	-	4,606	(-6.0%)
Copier Rental	-	2,350	(-6.0%)
BOCES Services	-	5,496.270	(4.07% increase)
Total Special Education	-	\$12,130,309	

Proposed ESL Budget for 2009-2010  
(525 pupils served)

ESL Salaries	-	\$919,870	(-12.69%)
Supplies	-	1,200	
Total ESL	-	921,070	

The proposed 2009-2010 budgets for these areas are made part of the Supplemental File of the Minutes.

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Dr. Scricca stated that the district has been notified that we are currently out of compliance with the New York State Commissioner's Regulations Part 154 to provide bilingual education services to English Language Learners when the number of ELL's with the same first language on the same grade level in a building reaches or exceeds 20 students. This is another unfunded mandate. The following schools will be impacted: Roanoke, Phillips, Pulaski, Middle School, and High School. The district will post for positions to find qualified candidates.

Mr. John McCormick, Supervisor of Transportation, gave a report on the Transportation/Routing Efficiency Study conducted in December 2008 which focused on the existing bus routes and schedules for both the public and non-public schools serviced by the Riverhead Central School District fleet. The Riverhead Central School District is the largest in Suffolk County's six eastern townships and covers a total area of about 100 square miles and provides for the educational needs of children from pre-kindergarten through grade twelve which also includes children with handicapping conditions, extensive adult educational opportunities, a large community volunteer program, an alternate high school program (STAR Academy), before and after-school academic enrichment programs, and extra help for students. Some considerations resulting from their study are:

*Review of  
Transportation  
Efficiency Study*

- a required voter referendum to approve an increase in the walker/rider eligibility mileage limits with the currently set limits (most effective at the K-4 and 5-6 levels). Increasing the limits would reduce the number of riders thereby reducing the number of runs. The amount of savings would be in direct relation to the increase in distance requiring students to walk to school. (Mr. McCormick stated that any consideration to change mileage limits for children in K-4 encompasses concern with the sex offender trailers, the crossing on Route 58 and the Child Safety Zone north of Route 58 and parental resistance).
- the pre-K program (a half-day program) uses both vans and large buses...only vans are used during the mid-day return home/pick-up. Only the instructional portion of this program is reimbursed by the State -- bottom-line is that the district picks up the tab for transporting pre-K students.
- the possibility of running bell times at Roanoke concurrently with Middle School could result in a net gain in the fleet of a six bus reduction.

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- a time change schedule for Pulaski Street School from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. to 9:05 a.m. – 4:05 p.m. could result in a 15 bus reduction.

Mr. McCormick proposed that while BOCES costs are aidable, the district could save \$170,000-189,000 by bringing equipment, drivers, and matrons in-house versus the \$670,000 BOCES bill to transport a limited number of children on those buses.

Mrs. Prete requested that in light of the very grave economic times we are in, the possibility of lowering bus stops be explored (“group” stops that are safe for children versus stops at every single street) and that an accounting of such a policy be brought forth to the Board.

In response to a request to use district-owned buses for a rally in Hauppauge, Dr. Scricca stated that a check with our insurance company confirms that the district is only insured to transport our students.

Dr. Scricca commented on the proposed building of a YMCA facility within our community. A new plan is being discussed with the Town of Riverhead and Suffolk County officials. Discussions raise the possibility that the district could sell the development rights (for farm preservation) on the 27-acres on Tuthills Lane to Suffolk County and receive an estimated \$1.7 million of the assessed value (75-80%) and continue to lease the property for farming of sod. In turn, the district could use the \$1.7 to purchase property at Stotsky Park from the Town of Riverhead (5.9 acres) with the possibility to acquire an additional 1.1 acres adjacent to the 5.9 acres for a total of 7 acres and then allow the YMCA to build on that total parcel of land and lease it from the school district.

*YMCA Project*

However, as she so stated, the problem is that the district would be selling the development rights on Tuthills Lane for less than what the land is worth (appraised at \$2.7 million). Mrs. Prete questioned the selling of 27 acres at Tuthills at a loss of \$1 million resulting in getting only a 7-acre parcel at Stotsky Park which will not provide the acreage needed to accomplish the building of a YMCA (8-10 acres needed). Mr. Meyer suggested that all parties (the school district, Town of Riverhead, YMCA, and Suffolk County officials) meet together and come to a settlement. The district will get an appraisal on the value of land at Stotsky Park and on the development rights on Tuthills Lane, as well as, the value of selling the development rights from the Agriculture Review Board which will assist the Board in making an informed decision.

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Mrs. Berezny requested to know who has jurisdiction over what. Ms. DeVito requested that in addition to a legal disposition, a definition on the limitations of agricultural uses on the Tuthills Lane property be sought should the district sell the development rights.

A motion was made by Mrs. Prete, seconded by Ms. DeVito, to adjourn the meeting.

Adjournment

Yes 7 No 0  
Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara O'Kula  
District Clerk