

MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting - September 13, 2005
Riverhead High School Auditorium

PRESENT: President, Mrs. Lori H. Montefusco; Vice President, Mrs. Nancy G. Gassert; Mrs. Kathleen Berezny; Mrs. Christine Prete; and, Mr. W. Brian Stark.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Paul R. Doyle, Mr. Joseph Singleton, Mr. Joseph Ogeka and Ms. Nancy Carney.

President, Mrs. Montefusco, opened the meeting at 5:35 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mr. Stark, to recess to executive session to discuss negotiations (RCFA and CSEA) and personnel (Cultural Arts, Adult Education Administration and Approval of Coaches).

Yes 5 No 0
Motion Carried.

The Board of Education recessed to executive session at 5:36 p.m.

Mr. Griffing arrived at 5:48 p.m.

Mrs. Harkin arrived at 6:05 p.m.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mr. Stark, to return to open session.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

The Board of Education returned to open session at 7:28 p.m.

A brief recess followed.

The meeting resumed at 7:43 p.m.

There were about 30 other people in attendance.

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs. Barbara O'Kula.

Pledge of Allegiance

Recess to
Executive Session

Return to
Open Session

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A motion was made by Mr. Stark, seconded by Mrs. Harkin, to amend the agenda as follows:

Amend Resolutions

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District authorizes to dispense with the need for multiple readings and to adopt revised Board policy #1500 – *Public Use of School Facilities*; and to approve and adopt all other existing **NYSSBA approved** policies until further action by the Board of Education.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District approves the appointment of the following individuals to support the athletic program **contingent upon background clearance as may be required by New York State Law**:

Volunteers

John Razzano – Cross Country/Football

Vincent DiResta – Girls' Soccer

Thaddaeus Hill – Football

James Hill – Football

Micah Barnes – Football

Move Change in Status to Appointments

William Quintana – To: Lead Teacher 5-7 Program/Alternative School; From: Classroom Teacher, effective 9/8/05-6/30/06.

Yes 7 No 0

Motion to Amend Agenda Carried.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mr. Stark, to approve the minutes of the following meetings:

Regular Meeting – August 30, 2005

Special Meeting – April 19, 2005

Regular Meeting – April 19, 2005

Yes 7 No 0

Motion Carried.

Amend Agenda

-Approved

Approval of Minutes

-Approved

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Mr. Doyle commented on a very good opening day of school with minimum problems. While some busing issues exist, they are diligently being addressed with Mr. McCormick, Supervisor of Transportation. He further commented on the outstanding job done in preparation of the day by the Buildings and Grounds department, the Transportation Department and all staff. He reported on the influx in enrollment of 100 additional students in the High School and down 20-30 youngsters in the elementary grades (enrollment statistics are available upon request). Additionally, that Roanoke, Phillips and Aquebogue have been listed

by the State as “high performing, gap-closing schools.”

Mrs. Montefusco read the following letter sent by Mr. Doyle to Mr. Robert Hall in response to his inquiry of religious services being conducted at the Riley Avenue Elementary School and subsequent constitutional issues as discussed at the last Board meeting:

September 12, 2005

Dear Mr. Hall:

Several constitutional issues arise whenever a church uses a school district for religious worship or services. The United States Supreme Court and the Second Circuit have held that religious organizations and churches may use public schools if the use includes religious services as well as secular elements and the services are open to the general public. Both courts have recognized that secular elements, such as moral instruction from a religious viewpoint and community activism, are separate and apart from religious worship. Thus, it is unconstitutional for a school district to prohibit a religious organization or church from using its facilities simply because the use will involve religious services. As long as other secular activities occur alongside the religious services, a school district must permit the church to use its facilities.

The North Shore Christian Church has signed an Agreement with the District for use of the Riley Avenue Elementary School from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Sundays. Church members and any members of the general public who wish to attend are present at the School from approximately 10:05 A.M. to 11:05 a.m. This allows the Church sufficient time for set up and clean up. We have been advised that the Church’s services, which are open to the general public, typically include singing, religious and secular instruction, and addressing community issues. These activities are a blend of religious services and secular activities. Thus,

Opportunity for
Superintendent

Opportunity for
Board Members

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use by the Church does not violate the Constitution, and if the District denies the requested use, there could arguably be a violation of the Constitution as reflected above.

Very truly yours,

*Paul R. Doyle
Superintendent of Schools*

To that end, Mrs. Montefusco stated that the policy currently on the books is not in accordance with case law and is inconsistent with state law; and, that the Board will recommend to dispense with the need for multiple readings (three-reading protocol) and adopt the updated policy.

Mrs. Montefusco mentioned Bills S2404-B and A4641-B, otherwise known as *Superstar*, now before the House and Senate that would allow New Yorker's who reach age 70 to receive enhanced school tax relief by freezing real property school taxes for people who are age 70 or older. It is the Board's understanding that the State would bear the taxpayer cost of this relief; and, the Board will place it as an agenda item to demonstrate support.

Mrs. Montefusco clarified the District's financial exposure regarding fuel costs as intimated in a recent article in a local newspaper. She stated that the District has been responsible in monitoring the costs of fuel and oil and that the buildings have dual capability and can switch between gas and oil as whatever the situation warrants.

Mrs. Montefusco read the following letter in response to accusations by a community member at a previous Board meeting:

August 11, 2005

*Hon. Lori Montefusco, President
Board of Education
Riverhead Central School District
700 Osborne Avenue
Riverhead, NY 11901*

Dear President Montefusco:

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I am advised that allegations have recently been made to residents of your district regarding your Superintendent, Paul Doyle, relative to his tenure as Superintendent of the Saranac Lake Central School District and particularly with regard to his involvement in that District's building project. As a member of the Saranac Lake Central School District Board of Education from 1999-2004, during which I served as President of the Board in 2000-01 and 2002-04, I am well aware of the problems and deficiencies in that project as well as the identity of those persons who and entities which the Board of Education, its attorneys and consultants, believe are responsible therefore.

In order to avoid lending any credibility to the claims recently made against Mr. Doyle, reported by a former colleague of mine who has a personal dislike for Mr. Doyle, I will not address them specifically. However, the deficiencies and problems which have plagued the Saranac Lake project are not the responsibility or fault of Paul Doyle. If such were the case, the Board would not have sued multiple contractors, the architect and/or the construction manager. The ongoing problems have been determined by a qualified school facility architectural and engineering firm to be the responsibilities, in as yet undetermined shares, of the project architect and its subcontractors, the construction management firm, and certain contractors. The deficient work was the result of either work which did not meet the contract specifications or inadequate/incorrect design. Additionally, some of the problems with the Saranac Lake project, and particularly the horrible acoustics in the High School auditorium, were the result of design changes caused by a lack of funding. There have never been any findings of poor management by Mr. Doyle. He is, after all, a school administrator, not an architect or engineer, not a construction manager, and not a contractor.

During Paul Doyle's time at Saranac Lake, he and I had our differences, as we both did with other Board members. But, he was always professional and his expertise as a school administrator far exceeds that of any school board member with whom I ever served.

Respectfully,

Richard B. Meyer

On behalf of the Board of Education, Mrs. Montefusco wholeheartedly expressed sincere appreciation to Nancy Carney and a team of teachers, who, in a short period of time, made revisions to the school report card that exceeded expectations.

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Mrs. Berezny thanked Sandy Kolbo for the repositioning, web-friendly and exceptional information provided on the District's website.

Mrs. Prete proposed to discuss with administration for 2006/07 the need for central purchasing of items needed for students in the classrooms (pens, pencils, composition books, etc.) purchased at wholesale and passed on to parents to make entry for a new school year easier.

Mr. Singleton responded in that supplies in the budget are those supplies ordered for each of the buildings. Each building principal make allocations to each class or teacher who has the flexibility to order what they want.

Comments from the community included:

-continued criticism and contention on the District's allowing the use of school premises by churches to conduct religious services and "opening the door" to anyone, from anywhere, to use our facilities and place the safety of our children at potential risk and responsibility to safeguard access to students' personal belongings, safety and security (Both Mrs. Montefusco and Mr. Stark stated that the Board is relying on case law and, as school board members, they cannot discriminate and must follow the advice of counsel and note the District to a lawsuit.) Mrs. Prete stated that the Board should be notified, in some manner, of facilities usage requests of this nature or others that might become controversial. Mr. Doyle emphasized that the District will take every precaution to ensure that the security and safety of personal belongings are not tampered with.

-collection of rental/costs from all groups using our buildings (*i.e.*, insurance costs, heat, utilities, etc.) Mrs. Montefusco stated that certain groups are charged – others are not. Mr. Singleton stated that the District has used figures of the past several years that generate the cost and that with the spike in utilities, will prompt the District to restructure the fees. In this regard, Mrs. Prete requested an itemized list of costs; and, Mrs. Berezny stated that the community's concerns are well-noted.

-criticism directed to the Board in adoption/non-adoption of policies that should be modified to meet the District's needs

Community
Comments

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A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mr. Stark, to approve the following resolution as amended:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District authorizes to dispense with the need for multiple readings and to adopt revised Board policy #1500 – *Public Use of School Facilities*; and to approve and adopt all other existing **NYSSBA approved** policies until further action by the Board of Education.

Yes 5
Mrs. Gassert
Mr. Grifing
Mrs. Harkin
Mrs. Montefusco
Mr. Stark

No 2
Mrs. Berezny
Mrs. Prete

Mrs. Berezny's and Mrs. Prete's votes reflect their non-favor of the process and procedure deemed incorrect.

Motion Carried as Amended.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mrs. Harkin, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District approves the transportation contract for the Summer 2005 Program (based on the District's Shared Service Commitment) between the Riverhead Central School District and Eastern Suffolk BOCES for the period of service to begin July 1, 2005 and end August 31, 2005, at a total anticipated annual cost of \$25,711; and, authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to sign such contract.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Mrs. Prete, seconded by Mrs. Gassert, to approve the following resolution as amended:

Adoption of Revised

Board Policy #1500-
Public Use of School
Facilities; and, all other
Existing NYSSBA
Approved policies
-Approved as Amended

BOCES Summer 2005
Program
-Approved

Appointment of Volunteers
-Approved as Amended

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RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District approves the appointment

of the following individuals to support the athletic program contingent upon background clearance as may be required by New York State Law:

Volunteers

John Razzano – Cross Country/Football

Vincent DiResta – Girls' Soccer

Thaddaeus Hill – Football

James Hill – Football

Micah Barnes – Football

Motion Carried as Amended.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mr. Griffing, to approve the following resolutions:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District approves the request of the Riverhead High School Key Club (number of students to be determined) to attend the New York District Convention at Kutsher's Country Club in Monticello, New York on March 24-26, 2005, at no cost to the district (totally paid for via fundraising and Kiwanis' financial support).

Transportation is subject to approval pursuant to Board policy.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District approves the request of the club advisor for the HUGS club for students to attend weekend trainings at Camp Quinipet, Shelter Island, on the following dates:

- November 4-6, 2005
- December 2-4, 2005
- February 10-12, 2006
- March 3-5, 2006
- March 31-April 2, 2006

Cost to the district is cost of transportation; and, transportation is subject to approval pursuant to Board policy.

Overnight Field Trips

-Key Club

-HUGS

-NYSSMA All-State
Festival

-Approved

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RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District approves the attendance of two (2) Riverhead High School students selected to perform at the New York State Music Association All-State Festival, accompanied by a chaperone, at the Rochester Convention Center, Rochester, New York from December 2-4, 2005. Costs for students and chaperone will be borne by the district not to exceed \$1,990 (registration, room and board, transportation). Transportation is subject to approval pursuant to Board policy.

Yes 7 No 0

Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mrs. Harkin, to approve the following resolution as amended:

RESOLVED, that on the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Professional Personnel recommendations be approved per Supplemental File Personnel Report and are subject to Board Policy #9310:

Change in Status/Fingerprint Clearance

Brian Cunningham
Shelley Sanction

Extension of Emergency 20-day Conditional Appointments

Catherine Seuling
Julie Clark
Jacqueline Lonk
Carrie Weber
Danielle Goncalves
Jason Rottkamp
Cara Koenig
Claudette Garley
Michelle Stewart

Emergency 20-day Conditional Appointments

Jane Candela – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/7/05-6/30/06.
Linda Esposito – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/7/05-6/30/06.
Genia Merkel – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/7/05-6/30/06.
Jillian Davey – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

Professional
Personnel
Recommendations
-Approved as Amended

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-
Change of Status

Cara Gianello – To: Leave Replacement/Phillips Avenue School;
From: Substitute Teacher, effective 9/12/05-11/4/05.

Appointments

Donna Maloupis – Substitute Speech Therapist, effective 9/7/05-
10/11/05.

Thomas Zay – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

William Quintana – To: Lead Teacher 5-7 Program/Alternative
School; From: Classroom Teacher, effective 9/8/05-6/30/06.

Teacher Mentor Appointments: Effective 2005/06 school year

Cynthia Acritelli
Donna Antovel
Judy Arnone

Kimberly Benkert
Annette Brewer
Tara Brondo
Laural Olsen
Ruth Clark
Theresa Curry
Darren Dunn
Kim Esteve
Kelly Evers
Linda Figari
Wendy Finter
Maryann Harroun
Chad Haverty
Cyndi Leden
Fran Marsicovetere
Peggy McKinney
Mary Olsen
Gerry Poole
Ann Priapi
Michelle Reed
Ellen Schnabe
Kim Skinner
Cheryl Zampiva
Stacy Tuohy
Christy VanHoesen
Donna Wilson
Cindy Woschnik

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Appointment of Middle School Assistant Department Head
Matthew Moorman – Science (Gr. 7-8), effective 9/14/05.

High School Advisor Appointments
Lisa Anne Donato – Peer Mediation, effective 2005/06 school year.
Jeanine H. Denes-Murphy – SADD, effective 2005/06 school year.

Coaching Appointments for 2005-06
Florence Ofrias – Middle School Intramural Cheerleading, effective 2005/06.
Thomas R. Zay – Intramural Girls' Tennis, effective 2005/06.

Tenure Appointment
Lauren Farber – Elementary Teacher, effective 11/12/05.

Reappointment of Substitutes
Nathaniel Hubbard – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

Jane Jones – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

Georgette Keller – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

Kathleen Kujawski – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

Susan O'Brien – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

Ella Smith – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

Christine Zuhoski – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

Hattierose Marshall – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

Katherine McGonigle – Substitute Teacher, effective 9/6/05-6/30/06.

Revised Unpaid Child Care Leave of Absence

Rebecca Luck – Elementary Teacher, To: 9/1/05-12/5/05 (FMLA), 12/6/05-1/30/06 (Unpaid Child Care Leave); From: 5/16/05-6/24/05 (Using accumulated sick time).

Request for Maternity/Child Care Leave of Absence

Jennifer Hughes – Elementary Teacher, effective 9/6/05-9/30/05 (Using accumulated sick days).

Resignation

Christine Burst – Speech Therapist, effective 9/14/05.

Yes 7 No 0

Motion Carried as Amended.

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A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mrs. Harkin, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that on the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Civil Service Personnel recommendations be approved per Supplemental File Personnel Report and are subject to Board Policy #9310:

Extension of Emergency 20-day Conditional Appointment

Pamela Lillie
Janet Cinelli
Christine Peters
Irene Irwin
Marianne Lynn
Jane Jay
June Stevenson
Carlas Clairborne

Emergency 20-day Conditional Appointment

Sandra Kelly – Substitute Hourly Food Service Worker, effective
9/14/05-6/30/06.

Sarah Futerko – Substitute Clerk Typist, effective 9/14/05-6/30/06.

Reappointment of Substitutes

Donna Clement –1.) Substitute Clerk Typist 2.) School Teacher Aide, effective 9/7/05-6/30/06.

Kathleen Fata – Substitute School Teacher Aide, effective 9/7/05-6/30/06.

Cynthia Simco – Substitute School Teacher Aide, effective 9/7/05-6/30/06.

Jennifer Burke – Substitute Clerk Typist, effective 9/7/05-6/30/06.

Amanda Makson – Substitute Clerk Typist, effective 9/7/05-6/30/06.

Resignations

Donna Alfano – Teacher Aide, effective 9/14/05.

Judy Johnson – Teacher Aide, effective 9/6/05.

Termination

George Rachun – Maintenance Mechanic II, effective 9/14/05.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

Civil Service

Personnel

Recommendations

-Approved

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A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mrs. Harkin, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that on the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Civil Service Personnel recommendations be approved per Supplemental File Personnel Report and are subject to Board Policy #9310:

Change in Status

Donna Alfano – To: 12-month Clerk Typist, From: Teacher Aide,
effective 9/14/05.

Yes 5

Mrs. Gassert
Mr. Griffing
Mrs. Harkin
Mrs. Montefusco
Mr. Stark

No 2

Mrs. Berezny
Mrs. Prete

Motion Carried.

Additional community comments are:

-request for presentation of 2004/05 actual budget/audit
(Mr. Singleton stated that the auditors are in the process of completing their extensive work and will make a presentation to the Board at the second meeting in October)

-status of contracts (per Mrs. Montefusco, the CSEA Unit is voting tomorrow and the RCFA negotiations are on-going)

-the State listing of the Riverhead Middle School as a “school in need of improvement” and any penalties or loss of financial aid as a result (per Ms. Carney, the Middle School is not a Title I school and, therefore, does not receive funding designated for schools with students in need; also, recent results show a 9% increase in ELA and Math scores – the District is moving forward and taking steps in all areas of K-12 curriculum (*i.e.*, professional development, reading initiative, AIS services, etc.)

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-status of land acquisition (per Mr. Stark, the District has advertised in the papers this past week for public dissemination and will be soliciting letters from prospective sellers for property conducive for a building project; a referendum will be presented to the voters when the District is able)

Mrs. Harkin left the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

-concern that the Board would adopt all existing NYSSBA approved policies, dispense with the three-reading protocol and traditional policy review/revise process (as was previously done by a Policy Committee) and alleged neglect to fine-tune or tailor policies for our District; and, as a result of their action tonight, eliminated the element of weighted grades/class ranking in the existing policy (Mrs. Montefusco stated that the policies were adopted *until further review and action by the Board of Education*)

A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mr. Griffing, to adjourn the meeting.

Yes 6 No 0
Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara O'Kula
District Clerk

Adjournment

