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MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting – January 24, 2006
Riverhead High School Auditorium

PRESENT: President, Mrs. Lori Hulse-Montefusco; Mrs. Kathleen Berezny; Mrs. Christine Prete; and, Mr. W. Brian Stark.

LATE: Mrs. Nancy G. Gassert; Mr. Timothy Griffing; and, Mrs. Mary Ellen Harkin.

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

President, Mrs. Hulse-Montefusco, opened the meeting at 5:42 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

A motion was made by Mrs. Prete, seconded by Mrs. Berezny, to recess to executive session to discuss negotiations (RCFA, RAA, auditor's contract and acquisition of property; and personnel (nurse liaison position and revised administrative reorganization).

Yes 4 No 0
Motion Carried.

The Board of Education recessed to executive session at 5:43 p.m.

Mr. Griffing arrived at 5:45 p.m.

Mrs. Gassert arrived at 5:47 p.m.

Mrs. Harkin arrived at 6:37 p.m.

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

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

The Board of Education returned to open session at 7:33 p.m.

A brief recess followed.

The meeting resumed at 7:45 p.m.

There were about 200 other people in attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance

Recess to
Executive Session

Return to
Open Session

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ALSO PRESENT: Mrs. Barbara O'Kula.

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

Regular Meeting – January 10, 2006

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

Jill Fichter, CPA of Coughlin Foundotos Cullen and Danowski, LLP gave a brief report of their audit of the financial statements of the Riverhead Central School District for the year ended June 30, 2005. The auditors' report expresses an unqualified opinion on the financial statements of the District and reports no instances of noncompliance material to the financial statements – the highest level of assurance a district can obtain. She stated that the District obviously watches the budget and appreciates the cooperation of Mr. Singleton and staff.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mr. Stark, to amend the agenda to include the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District calls for and approves a special meeting of the Board of Education to be held on January 31, 2006 at the District Administration Office at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss acquisition of real property and administrative reorganization in an executive session only.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion to Amend Agenda Carried.

Mrs. Prete commented that in previous years the auditor had remained after reporting to the Board of Education to answer questions from the public. Mr. Singleton stated that the auditors' report is in the Riverhead Free Library for public review.

Approval of Minutes
-Approved

Audit Report
-Jill Fichter, CPA

Amend Agenda
-Approved

Opportunity for
Board Members

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She commented on the trip to the State Education Department in Albany by administration to discuss the potential Little Flower annexation. Mr. Doyle reported that himself, Joe Singleton and George Grigg (Superintendent of Little Flower U.F.S.D.) met with SED officials on January 18th to discuss the possibility of the Little Flower School program being annexed by the Riverhead Central School District. An interesting exchange of exact language in the law as to mergers and annexations was had (*i.e.*, a “special act” school could be dissolved by special legislation). The SED representatives will meet with other members of the SED staff and get back to the District in a week or so with possibilities and/or obstacles related to the Little Flower annexation initiative.

Mrs. Prete’s understanding is that you cannot annex a “special act” school...some kind of legislation must be approved and signed to eliminate the “special act” designation and/or modify the existing law. She stated that clarification is needed on the specifics or modification to the process and/or existing regulations that would have to be adjusted. She, also, requested opinions from the public on “uniforms in the schools”

Mrs. Berezny thanked Bonnie Campbell for the invitation to tour the Alternative School at its new location – now much larger and beneficial to the education of the students. Both she and Mrs. Gassert commented on the great time they had at the Varsity Awards Dinner on January 12th.

Mrs. Montefusco took special opportunity to thank Connie Gevinski and Bob Jester for their coordination of the spectacular project where children had the opportunity to talk with astronauts of the International Space Station this afternoon at the Aquebogue School. She reported on the issue of the possible annexation of the Little Flower School program by the Riverhead Central School District. She reported on her recent discussion with Senator LaValle when he gave positive indication that Riverhead will have options down the road (actually pursue annexation or increase building aid in some way or another).

Mrs. Prete expressed concern that if legislation is not approved relative to the issue of Little Flower, then the study and associated costs will be for naught. Mr. Doyle stated that the study is merely to gather information on the merits (financially and educationally) as required by the State that must precede the action.

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Community comments included:

-the RCFA President, Barbara Barosa, spoke on behalf of the teachers' union and their request for fair and equitable treatment contract that expired seven months ago to assure that this district will remain a quality place to live and learn

-cost of chaperones on field trips in and out of state (costs are covered through fundraising efforts; chaperones who are members of staff receive salary for the day(s))

-John Neely, representative for the Relay for Life fundraiser for the American Cancer Society announced that over\$220,000 was raised and is a testament to our community – he thanked the secretarial, custodial and security staff and the principals and students who served on the committees to raise such high grossing dollars for this cause

-congratulations to Frank Rotenberg for being awarded the honor of *2005 Educator of the Year* by The News Review

-request for presentation of the auditors' report the "old fashioned way and need to separate the duties of the Purchasing Agent from that of the business official (in this regard, Mrs. Prete emphasized the need to separate these duties and hire an Internal Claims Auditor and a Purchasing Agent accountable to the Assistant Superintendent for Business. Mr. Singleton agreed on this point and further stated the unfortunate situation that public agencies must go through costly expense through the malfeasance of other districts. In all his years of experience, this audit of the district is the most extensive he has seen.)

-statement that a member of the Board of Trustees of Little Flower is also party to the auditing firm, Coughlin Foundotos Cullen and Danowski, LLP (As a point of clarification, Mr. Singleton stated that the individual was a member of the

Little Flower Board for several years prior to the District's hire, discussions on the proposal of annexation began in early December – was discussed at the next Board meeting – then acted upon publicly via Board resolution – no one stands to gain anything to withhold information.)

-cost to the district per student who participates in the 8th Grade trip to Hershey Park (Mr. Doyle stated that it is his understanding that the Middle School PTO raised funds sufficient to cover the cost for any student unable to meet the expense)

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-in a show of unity, a number of teachers spoke on the need for a fair and equitable contract settlement encompassing competitive salaries with that of other districts and costs/contributions into retirement in health care plans
-clarification of new appointments of CSE/CPSE Chairpersons (Mr. Doyle stated that these are additional alternate chairpersons on an "as needed" basis in the event that the people appointed are unable to serve and fulfill the responsibility on a given day at a daily rate of \$350)

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District accepts the following recommendations of the Committee on Special Education regarding children with disabilities and whose Individualized Education Plans need to be implemented:

C.S.E. MEETING STUDENT NUMBERS

11/30/05 206060
12/07/05 214006, 213019, 214023, 215105,
214110, 215116, 217143, 218219
12/10/05 205051, 205055, 206039, 206302,
208049, 208870, 209554, 209857,
209858
12/14/05 205005, 207586, 207689, 207716,
207801, 207835, 207341, 205886,
209001, 209097
12/15/05 210094
01/10/06 209009, 209020, 209026, 210057,
210070, 210089, 210094, 210550,
210606, 211650

and, authorization of Agreement with parents regarding (2) special education students.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

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

Committee on
Special Education
-Approved

Out of State Trip
-Approved

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District approves the request of the 8th Grade Class of the Riverhead Middle School (approximately 140 students) to participate in a trip to Hershey Park, Pennsylvania on Saturday, June 3, 2006. Cost to the district is limited to the cost of approximately 40 chaperones (6:1 ratio); and, transportation is subject to approval pursuant to Board policy.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District approves the attendance of the Boys' and Girls' Winter Track Teams (approximately 15 athletes) to the Pearl River Holiday Track and Field Festival at Rockland County Community College, New York on December 26-27, 2005. Cost to the district is limited to school bus transportation, lodging for coaches/chaperones/bus drivers and entry fees for two teams at a cost not to exceed \$970.00 (approved 2005-06 Athletic Budget); and, transportation is subject to approval pursuant to Board policy.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District approves the attendance of the Boys' and Girls' Winter Track Teams (approximately 15 athletes) to the Yale High School Interscholastic Track Classic on January 20-21-2006 at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. Cost to the district is limited to school bus transportation, lodging for coaches/chaperones/bus drivers and entry fees for two teams at a cost not to exceed \$850 (approved 2005-06 Athletic Budget); and, 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. Berezny, to approve the following resolution:

Overnight Trips

-Approved

Donation

-Approved

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RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District gratefully accepts the donation from the Riverhead High School PTSO to the Riverhead High School library of the book entitled, The Halycon Years 1861-1919 by Thomas M. Stark.

Mrs. Berezny commented encouraged the community to read about the “old” Riverhead in this very informative book on the Heritage of the community in which we live.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District accepts the first reading of Board Policy #1222 – *Relations With Booster Organizations*.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

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 Professional Personnel recommendations be approved per Supplemental File Personnel Report and are subject to Board Policy #9310:

Extension of Emergency 20-day Conditional Appointments

Jillian Davey
Colleen Gallagher
Danielle Goncalves
James Jones
Tara Malanga
Genia Merkel
Deborah Mitchell
Nancy Poserina

-Relations with
Booster Organizations

Professional
Personnel
Recommendations
-Approved

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Emergency 20-day Conditional Appointments

Erika Loeb – Substitute Teacher, effective 1/25/06-6/30/06.
Cynthia Moore – Substitute Teacher, effective 1/25/06-6/30/06.
Marisa Medina – Substitute Teacher, effective 1/25/06-6/30/06.
Amanda Dangelmaier – Substitute Teacher, effective 1/25/06-
6/30/06.

Appointments

Ellen Baron – CSE/CPSE District Chairperson, effective 1/9/06.
Joseph Colantuoni – CSE/CPSE District Chairperson, effective
1/9/06.

Change of Status

Elizabeth Roberts – Teacher on Special Assignment/Administrative
Intern, effective 2/1/06-6/30/06.

Continuation of Leave Replacement

Christopher Dorr – Elementary Teacher, effective 1/31/06-6/30/06.

Tenure Appointment

Cheryl Alexander – Math Teacher, effective 3/25/06.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Mrs. Gassert, seconded by Mr. Stark, 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/Fingerprint Clearance

Diane Hayes
Debra Trent

Extension of Emergency 20-day Conditional Appointments

Carlas Clairborne
Colin Grattan
Marianne Lynn
Denis Naso

Civil Service
Personnel
Recommendations
-Approved

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Lillian Ramos
Cynthia Saletel
Doris Taylor

Appointment

Tye Jones – Substitute Guard, effective 1/26/06-6/30/06.

Change in Status

Dorothy Casciole – To: Teacher Aide-Reading, From: 1:1 Special Education Aide, effective 1/25/06.

Donna Clement – To: 1:1 Special Education Aide, From: Substitute Teacher Aide, effective 1/25/06.

Karen Westwood – To: Permanent Food Service Worker, From: Substitute Food Service Worker, effective 1/25/06.

Phyllis Escobar – To: Permanent Food Service Worker, From: Substitute Food Service Worker, effective 1/25/06.

Michelle Ceparano – To: Substitute School Bus Driver, From: School Bus Driver, effective 2/6/06.

Request for Leave Without Pay

Ivelisse Gonzalez – School Bus Driver, effective 2/27-28/06.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Griffing, seconded by Mr. Stark, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Riverhead Central School District calls for and approves a special meeting of the Board of Education to be held on January 31, 2006 at the District Administration Office at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss acquisition of real property and administrative reorganization in an executive session only.

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

Special Meeting
-January 31, 2006
-Approved

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Additional community comments are:

-request to see "unencumbered balance" as a separate line item in the budget and presentation during the budget process of a comparison of the 2005/06 budget to the actuals year-to-date in preparation of the proposed 2006/07 budget

-question as to what happens to any surplus

(Mr. Singleton explained that the surplus, if any, can be used for:

1. Need a commitment from the Board of Education to reduce taxes by applying the surplus to lower the tax rate
2. Under New York State Law, the district is able to keep up to 2% of the uncommitted/unallocated fund balance in case of emergencies or shortfalls through obligations during the year
3. Other balances used for long-term liabilities

Mr. Stark left the meeting at 8:44 p.m.

-request to familiarize the public on the current RCFA contract discussions (Mrs. Montefusco read a statement on the Board's position and inability to reach an agreement since July 1, 2005 and outlook/efforts to reach an agreement as soon as possible)
-impression that the district was looking to implement the Smaller School Learning Grant and request to look at the Elmont School District for having turned around a problematic district (Mr. Doyle stated that it was presented as a "planning" grant and Ms. Carney stated that our teachers are constantly analyzing and communicating with other districts (even nationwide) and would pursue researching Elmont as a model)

-concern of new climate of prejudice in the High School and statement that "police do not belong in our schools" (In response, Mr. Griffing stated that all children are treated equally and that the high school is now being better run than in 15 years. Mrs.

Montefusco stated that the comments are inflammatory and not the policy of the district. Mr. Doyle commented in that when students commit criminal acts, they violate the penal code and it is the district's responsibility to report such incidents which are dealt with regardless of race, color or disability. A safe environment is vital for both students and employees.

-request for a fair and equitable contract equal to other teachers on Long Island

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-relating to her personal experience, a parent commented on safety in our schools and that the Juvenile Review Board should be contacted if your child is harassed or threatened/violated in any
-request to take care of loyal employees and comment that the new health insurance plan is expensive (To controvert, Mr. Singleton stated that the former health insurance plan recently went up 19% and operated with a \$2.6 million deficit and the co-payment structure had to be adjusted accordingly.)
-birthday wishes were extended to the High School PTSO President, Laurie Downs

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

Yes 7 No 0
Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara O'Kula
District Clerk

Adjournment

