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The Board of Education Meeting of the North Merrick Board of Education was held on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 at 8:00 PM.

Present: Mrs. Jennifer Hyland, President
Ms. Tracey Miller, Vice President (Arrived 6:02 PM)
Mr. Ed Corona
Mrs. Michelle Gordon
Mr. Vincent Lentini
Mrs. Megan Ryan
Dr. Cynthia Seniuk, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Beth Friedman, Deputy Superintendent for Personnel & Instruction
Mr. Thomas McDaid, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Operations
Dr. Edward Murphy, Assistant to the Superintendent of PPS and Special Education
Mr. Samuel Carder, Director of Facilities
Mrs. Bonnie Gorham, Guercio & Guercio, LLP
Joanne Long, District Clerk

Absent: Terri McCurry, Treasurer

CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Hyland called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

It was moved by Mr. Lentini and seconded by Mrs. Gordon to waive the pledge.

Motion carried 5 - 0

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was moved by Mr. Lentini and seconded by Mrs. Gordon that the Board of Education approves to enter into executive session at 6:01 PM to discuss the Superintendent's contract, the employment history of particular persons, and to obtain legal advice from counsel.

Motion carried 5 - 0

RECONVENE TO PUBLIC

It was moved by Ms. Miller seconded by Mr. Lentini that the Board of Education reconvenes to public at 7:00 PM to begin the Museum Walk.

Motion carried 6 - 0

CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Hyland called the meeting to order at 8:06 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Hyland led in the pledge.

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INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE - “Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.” – Mother Teresa

BULLETIN BOARD Mrs. Hyland thanked Mrs. Drewes’ class for bulletin Board display.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Mr. Corona and seconded by Ms. Miller that the Board of Education approve the following minutes: March 12, 2019 monthly Board Meeting, March 20, 2019 Special Meeting.

Motion carried 6 – 0

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS, BUDGET TRANSFERS and WIRE TRANSFERS

It was moved by Mr. Corona and seconded by Ms. Miller that the Board of Education approves the warrant, budget transfer and wire transfers as detailed in the mailing.

Motion carried 6 – 0

APPROVAL OF TREASURER’S REPORT

It was moved by Mr. Corona and seconded by Ms. Miller that the Board of Education approves the Treasurer’s Report, as detailed in the mailing.

Motion carried 6 – 0

PRESENTATION

Dr. Seniuk thanked Mr. McDaid for the final budget presentation. Mr. Lentini commented that the budget increase is one of the lowest, and Mr. McDaid stated it is the second lowest in over 25 years.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Dr. Seniuk thanked Mrs. Friedman for her amazing presentation on curriculum.

She spoke about the following topics:

- Correspondence about Parent University night
- 21st North Merrick Theatre Arts productions of Annie Jr. – and thanked all involved
- Clarification of the following:
Teacher retirements - three teachers are retiring (names not being disclosed at this time). In 2017 the district offered a buy-out of seventy percent for sick days; in 2018 we offered sixty percent and this year we offered fifty-five percent. If there are any questions, please call Mr. McDaid.
- Superintendent’s office renovation: wall was redone because existing wall did not line up to new windows. Mr. Carder explained the work that took place to align the wall with the window. Dr. Seniuk explained that upon her arrival, she removed the old existing bookcase and purchased two pieces of furniture herself to house her books. She still has Mr. Feller’s desk, chair and computer. They reused paint that was used to paint the board room. A television was purchased for \$249 to keep up-to-date with inclement weather and Channel 12 News for any breaking news.
- A parent workshop will be scheduled at the North Merrick Library so the community will better know what the library has to offer.
- State Assessment Test – the district respects parents’ choice to take test or opt out. The district provides a safe environment for all students on that day.
- Clarification of the employee school breaks were explained.

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- Sale of land – Dr. Seniuk stated she reviews/confirms with counsel all executive session items discussed. She explained the topic of the sale of land has been discussed, along with additional leasing options. The land is not being sold and an aerial view is available on Google Earth.

Mrs. Hyland congratulated the students for their amazing Science Fair projects. She spoke about the many wonderful accomplishments in the North Merrick schools, such as the Spanish and Mandarin Saturday Academy, expanded summer programs, revised aftercare, extra help for students, updated technology, and state-of-the-art computer labs. She stated the district is financially sound and there is a ten-year plan in place to maintain that. The district is more transparent and taxes are as low as possible, second lowest in 25 years. She commented on social media and is disheartened about posts to vote down our budget. She asked the community to focus on the district's positive momentum. The Board continues to support one another so that our children have the best possible education.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chris Mitkish spoke about last month's meeting. She commented that the teachers were not intimidating and sat quietly. Public Participation Policy 1120 allows the union president to speak, and she was not disrespectful. She said the writing on social media needs to stop – we need to rise above the bullying. She then asked about work session dates, air conditioning at Camp, and Syntax.

Dr. Seniuk responded that a work session will take place at 7:15 p.m., before the next Board of Education meeting on May 14. Camp Avenue School has a uni-vent system, which produces a/c and heat, but the electrical needs upgrading and we need to get a quote. She further explained that Syntax is a public relations firm, which was recommended for the new Department of Justice mandate to translate all budget materials into Spanish. However, the district was able to contract with BOCES for the Spanish translation, and the budget materials were produced in house. Syntax was not used.

Lisa Katz quoted Public Officer's Law 105 and she questioned executive session discussion.

Mrs. Bonnie Gorham, counsel for the district, explained it is appropriate to seek counsel's legal advice when considering the leasing or sale of land.

Lisa Katz asked about her submitted petition. Mrs. Hyland commented it will be discussed under new business.

Mr. Rodahan stated he is new to the district and he expressed his concern about negative comments going on throughout the community.

BUSINESS:

It was moved by Mr. Lentini and seconded by Ms. Miller that the Board of Education approve Items A – F as a consent agenda.

- a) The Board of Education accepts the donation of \$4,910 from the Old Mill Road 6th grade Committee to be used toward the 6th grade boat trip.
- b) The Board of Education accepts the donation of \$1,845 from the Harold D. Fayette PTA for Earth Balloon Program.
- c) The Board of Education approves to enter into the required Memorandum of Agreement with the Nassau County Board of Elections to provide election services consisting of the provision and usage of voting machines, all equipment and supplies necessary to conduct voting operations, as well as training and assistance concerning voting machine operations, as detailed in the mailing.
- d) The Board of Education approves the agreement with Textbook Central for 2019-20 school year to purchase text books for North Merrick students attending non-public schools. Textbook costs and administrative fees should not exceed \$9,000.

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- e) The Board of Education approves the Cooperative Transportation Agreement with the Bellmore-Merrick Central High School District and other Component Districts for the 2019-2020 school year.
- f) The Board of Education approves the Inter-Municipal Cooperative Transportation Agreement and authorizes the Board President to execute the agreement on behalf of the Board of Education, as detailed in the mailing.

Motion carried 6 – 0

- g) It was moved by Mr. Lentini and seconded by Ms. Miller that the Board of Education approves the following resolution:
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education authorizes the additional funding of the following reserves in accordance with General Municipal Law and Educational Law, said funding will come from undesignated fund balance and appropriations remaining from the 2018-19 budget, and from other available sources: Employee Benefits Accrued Liability Reserve (GML-§6-p)- Funding not to exceed \$1,000,000; Retirement Contribution Reserve (GML-§6-r)- Funding not to exceed \$600,000; Unemployment Insurance Reserve (GML-§6-r)- Funding not to exceed \$25,000; Capital Reserve (ED Law §3651) approved by the voters on May 19, 2015- Funding not to exceed \$1,580,000.

Mr. McDaid explained the process involving the reserves.

Motion carried 6 – 0

It was moved by Mr. Lentini and seconded by Mrs. Gordon that the Board of Education approve Items H – K as a consent agenda.

- h) The Board of Education approves the Board of Education authorizes the following transfers:

ACCOUNT TO	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	ACCOUNT FROM	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	REASON
A1480.400.04	School Comm Relations	\$8,500	A1910.400.04	Insurance	\$8,500	Additional Publications expenses due to new requirements.
A2250.401.04	Contracted Services	\$28,000	A2250.490.04.2374	Contracted Services Therapy	\$28,000	To cover Additional Student Therapy Services
A 1420.402-04	ADDL LEGAL SERVICES	\$15,000	A 1910.400-04	INSURANCE	\$15,000	Cover Cost for additional legal expenses

- i) The Board of Education approves the agreement with Arleen Matos to conduct Yoga and Mindfulness for Mrs. Portmore's 4th grade class (selected through lottery). There will be sixteen sessions; fifteen minutes each beginning April 10 through June 30, 2019. There is no cost. (Addendum)
- j) The Board of Education approves the following resolution:
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education adopt the proposed budget for the 2019-2020 school year in the amount of \$33,107,869.
- k) The Board of Education approves the following resolution:
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education adopt the 2019-2020 Property Tax Report Card for the North Merrick UFSD.

Motion carried 6 – 0

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POLICIES**First Reading Policy Reading (no action):**

- Policy #4323, Availability of Alternative Format Instructional Materials for Students with Disabilities, which has been created for the Board of Education's further review and comment.
- Policy #4324, Impartial Hearing Officer Appointment and Compensation, which has been created for the Board of Education further review and comment.
- Policy #9400, Disclosure of Wrongful Conduct (Whistleblower Policy), which has been created for the Board of Education's further review and comment.

PERSONNEL ACTIONS REPORT

It was moved by Ms. Miller and seconded by Mr. Corona that the Board of Education approves the Personnel Actions Report as detailed in the mailing.

Motion carried 6 - 0

SPECIAL SERVICES

It was moved by Ms. Miller and seconded by Mrs. Gordon that the Board of Education approve Items A – B as a consent agenda.

- a) The Board of Education approves the seventeen (17) Individualized Education Plans which were developed by the Committee on Preschool Education, as detailed in the mailing.
- b) The Board of Education approves the twenty-eight (28) Individualized Education Plans which were developed by the North Merrick Committee on Special Education.

Motion carried 6 – 0

HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Corona discussed the car accident that occurred at MAMS. He said the high school honored all state athletes and has two propositions on the ballot: the budget and capital improvements for upgrades. Ms. Miller stated the BMCHSD music students are going to Disney tomorrow to compete.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONS/PTA COUNCIL

Mrs. Gordon acknowledged the ENT who immediately responded to an incident that took place last week. She spoke about the upcoming events throughout the district. She thanked SEPTA for the fashion show – it was a huge success. There will be Autism Awareness Day, in which all are encouraged to wear blue. Next month's speaker will be Amy Mckoy.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Mr. Carder reported on door projects and getting buildings ready for summer projects, such as ordering floor wax and stripper. He spoke about Field of Flags and said he is hoping for a good outcome. The ceremony will take place at HDF because the venue is best for this event. Camp Avenue Student Council is sponsoring Field of Flags this year and has selected the Wounded Warriors Project as the charity from proceeds for the flags. He also attended a threat assessment meeting offered by BOCES and said it was very informative. Mr. Carder said facilities projects are contingent on the budget passing.

COMMUNICATION

Mrs. Hyland stated she received two email communications.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mrs. Hyland asked whether the district should continue to list addresses when a person makes a public comment.

Mrs. Long, District Clerk, stated it is the practice of the district to list the address, however there are no legal requirements to include an address. Mrs. Hyland recommended keeping the yellow comment cards and look into record retention to determine how long to keep them. The Board agreed to eliminate listing addresses.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Hyland commented the next work session will be held on May 14th before the monthly meeting.

Mrs. Hyland stated she would like to discuss the petition that was submitted to change seven (7) board members to five (5) board members. Mr. Corona stated the petition followed all of the requirements. Mr. Lentini stated moving seven board members to five members will result in a loss of representation on the Board.

Ms. Gorham stated the petition should be amended to make it legally compliant. Mr. Corona questioned what would be amended. Ms. Gorham explained if the Board elects this proposition be placed on the ballot, she suggested to try to keep it in line with the law. There was a paragraph referencing Education Law, but that applies to small city schools. Mr. Corona questioned how it would it affect next year. Ms. Gorham explained that next year two seats would expire, and there would be no trustee election in order to get to a five-member board. Mr. Ryan questioned how that would subsequently be adjusted. Ms. Gorham stated by board policy. The Board agreed to accept the petition.

It was moved by Mrs. Gordon and seconded by Ms. Ryan that the Board of Education accept the following resolution as amended:

VOTER PETITION

RESOLVED, the Board of Education of the North Merrick Union Free School District hereby accepts the petition, as amended, requesting the placement of a voter proposition on the ballot for the District's May 21, 2019 annual meeting regarding decreasing the number of members of the Board of Education as follows: Shall the number of members of the Board of Education of the North Merrick Union Free School District be decreased to 5 members from its current 7 members.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education of the North Merrick Union Free School District directs the District Clerk to amend the Notice of the Annual Meeting ("Legal Notice") to include said proposition in the Legal Notice, which shall thereafter be published accordingly.

Motion carried 6 - 0

Mr. Corona asked about the untouched \$20,000 in the Theatre Arts budget. Mr. McDaid explained that money goes toward running the program and covers about seven or eight stipends. Mr. Corona spoke about the show and expressed it is money well spent. Mr. Lentini commented he felt very proud of the students. Mrs. Gordon said she was impressed by the talent.

Ms. Friedman explained the historical perspective of how the account was established. Mr. McDaid explained it is a separate account that is budgeted specifically for Theatre Arts.

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Mr. Corona spoke about the past practice when participating on the lay budget committee. He expressed that he likes the more in-depth presentation, but he would prefer the more intimate set up for discussion.

Mr. Lentini suggested getting feedback on the Fountas and Pinnell reading program and possibly adding guided reading in the lower level grades, K-2.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was moved by Ms. Ryan and seconded by Ms. Miller to adjourn the meeting at 9:47 PM.

Motion carried 6 – 0

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Long
District Clerk