

APPROVED MINUTES

HARBORFIELDS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT GREENLAWN, NEW YORK 11740

Kind of Meeting	-	Special Meeting/Community Forum
Date of Meeting	-	April 1, 2009
Place of Meeting	-	OMS Auditorium
Board Members Present	-	Mr. Mastroianni, Mr. Banks, Mrs. Boba, Mr. Giuliano, Mr. Schoer, Mr. Toles
Board Members Absent	-	Mr. Brennan
Others Present	-	Mr. Carasiti, Ms. Todaro, Mr. Nimmo, Mr. Hartner, Ms. DeVivio, Principals, Assistant Principals, Directors, Community Members

Mr. Mastroianni called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

APPOINTMENT OF DISTRICT CLERK PRO-TEM

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Schoer, seconded by Mr. Toles, and carried (4-0), Diana Todaro was appointed District Clerk Pro-Tem for this portion of the meeting.

Mrs. Boba entered the meeting at 6:22 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Banks, seconded by Mr. Mastroianni, and carried (5-0), the Board moved into Executive Session at 6:22 p.m. for the purpose of discussing employment history of a particular individual.

Mr. Giuliano entered the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Giuliano, seconded by Mr. Toles and carried (6-0), the Board returned to the special meeting/community forum at 7:45 p.m.

Mr. Mastroianni led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and instructed those in attendance where to exit the building in case of an emergency.

Superintendent's Statement

Mr. Carasiti discussed the development of the 2009-10 budget explaining a roll-over budget and also a contingency budget. He then gave an overview of the proposed 2009-10 budget including the proposed reductions and proposed class size changes. Mr. Carasiti advised that district and building administrators have reached a tentative

agreement for a salary freeze to the 2008-09 level resulting in a savings of \$130,000. Mr. Mastroianni recognized the administrators for taking this freeze.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Many residents voiced concern regarding the school-to-career program, the science research program, cutting band lessons, the art program, the SAIL program, the cultural arts program, and the possible elimination of AP classes with enrollments of less than 17. These residents did not want to see these programs dismantled or eliminated.

A resident thanked the Board and administration for all the time they put into this process. She asked the status of the lawsuit by the previous superintendent with regard to legal cost. Mr. Carasiti responded that at this point we have spent approximately \$80,000. Mr. Schoer stated that currently there is an appeal pending. That appeal was made by the district regarding a decision by the Supreme Court of Suffolk County regarding the open meetings law. Mr. Schoer continued that our appeal is on good grounds and we are hopeful that we will prevail.

A member of the teachers' union stated that four years ago the teachers took a freeze with no step and no increase. She continued that contributions for health insurance have increased from 5% to 15%. The average increase we have received is 2 ¼%. Out of 116 school districts, Harborfields teachers place 85 on the list and second to the bottom in the Town of Huntington.

A resident asked if the MTA payroll tax passes, will that affect our budget. Mr. Mastroianni stated that it would.

A resident spoke on behalf of the student assistance program and stated that this program touches all students at the high school.

A resident asked how many teaching positions will be cut. Mr. Carasiti responded that 15 positions will be cut.

Direction to the Superintendent from the Board of Education

Mr. Mastroianni asked Mr. Carasiti to produce an educationally sound budget and one that is fiscally responsible with the following considerations: preserve and maintain as many of our programs as we possibly can; keep in mind a budget to budget increase of 2% and tax rate increase of 4%. Also keep in mind a 3 year financial plan and stay mindful of the future.

Mr. Giuliano agreed with Mr. Mastroianni. We should attempt to limit the tax rate increase to no more than 4.37% keeping in mind an educationally sound budget within financial constraints.

Mr. Banks echoed Mr. Mastroianni's sentiments and stated he has the utmost faith in Mr. Carasiti and his staff that he would include as much as possible in this budget.

Mrs. Boba stated that she has faith that the superintendent will preserve as many programs as possible within budget constraints.

Mr. Schoer stated that he joins in Mr. Mastroianni's direction to administration. He went on to say that those numbers seem reasonable to the community as a whole.

Mr. Toles stated that he concurred with his fellow Board members.

Mr. Carasiti advised the community that it is the ultimate responsibility of the superintendent to provide a budget and the ultimate decision is the responsibility of the superintendent. He continued that he would take the heat for any decisions that will be made.

Mr. Mastroianni stated that although Mr. Carasiti is willing to take the heat for these decisions, this is a team effort and the Board concurs with Mr. Carasiti's decisions.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Toles, seconded by Mr. Schoer, and carried (6-0), the Board adjourned the special meeting/community forum of April 1, 2009 at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Muller
District Clerk