

HARBORFIELDS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
GREENLAWN, NEW YORK

Kind of Meeting	-	Special Meeting
Date of Meeting	-	June 24, 2015
Place of Meeting	-	OMS Auditorium
Board Members Present	-	Dr. McDonagh, Mr. Mastroianni, Ms. Gaughan, Mr. Giuliano, and Mr. Lee
Board Members Absent	-	Mr. Steinberg
Others Present	-	Ms. Todaro, Dr. Ianni, Mr. Nimmo, Mr. Cox Ms. Whelan, John Sheahan from Guercio & Guercio, Fred Seeba and Curt Coronoto from BBS Architects & Engineers, and Community Members

Mr. Mastroianni called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Lee, seconded by Mr. Giuliano, and carried (4-0), the board and district office administrators moved to Executive Session at 6:35 p.m. for the purpose of meeting with the district's legal counsel to discuss collective bargaining negotiations. Dr. McDonagh joined the meeting at 6:45 p.m. The board reconvened the special meeting at 7:35 p.m.

**FINANCE**

**4.1 School Services/Specialized Education Agreement**

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Mastroianni, seconded by Mr. Lee, and carried (5-0), and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following School Services/Specialized Education Agreement for the 2015-2016 school year between Harborfields Central School District and the contractor listed below, in accordance with Part 200 of the regulations of the Commissioner of Education for children with handicapping conditions, was approved.

- Lisa Brideson-Glynn, M.S. C.C.C. to provide professional staff and services for children in accordance with the Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016 and compensated at rates set forth in said agreement.

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

**5.1 Resignation**

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Mastroianni, seconded by Mr. Giuliano, and carried (5-0), and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following resignation was accepted:

- Valle, Ismael, Food Service Worker, OMS, effective the close of business June 18, 2015.

### **5.2 Extracompensation Appointment Schedule**

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Gaughan, seconded by Mr. Mastroianni, and carried (5-0), and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the appointees specified on the Extracompensation Appointment Schedule, as attached to the official minutes of June 24, 2015, were approved.

### **5.3 Rescind Appointments**

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Giuliano, seconded by Mr. Mastroianni, and carried (5-0), and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following temporary summer personnel appointments were rescinded.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Alexander Piscitelli	Summer Custodial Worker	HHS	Employee resigned summer position
Barbara Quigg	Teaching Assistant	WDPS	Employee resigned summer position

### **5.4 Summer Workers**

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Gaughan, seconded by Mr. Giuliano, and carried (5-0), and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the following summer personnel were appointed:

<b>SUMMER CUSTODIAL WORKER JUNE 29, 2015 - AUGUST 7, 2015</b>				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Hrs./Day</b>	<b>Hourly Rate</b>
Bryan Sargent	Summer Custodial Worker	HHS	8	\$9.79*

\*Per the 2014/15 Salary Schedule

<b>SUMMER ACADEMY TEACHING ASSISTANT TWELVE 2.5 HOUR SESSIONS (TOTAL 30 HOURS) JULY 7, 2015 - JULY 30, 2015</b>				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Hourly Rate</b>	
Natalie Buccino	P/T Teaching Assistant	WDPS	\$15.00*	

\*Per the 2010/11 Salary Schedule

### **5.5 Revision of Home Instruction List**

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Giuliano, seconded by Mr. Gaughan, and carried (5-0), and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the certified teachers

named in the attachment to the official minutes of June 24, 2015 were appointed as home instructors for the 2014-2015 school year.

#### **5.6 Consultant**

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Gaughan, seconded by Mr. Giuliano, and carried (5-0), and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, Wayne Cronk was appointed as Assistant Principal OMS/WDPS Consultant effective July 1, 2015 at the daily rate of \$709.63.

#### **5.7 Memorandum of Agreement - United Teaching Assistants of Harborfields**

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Giuliano, seconded by Ms. Gaughan, and carried (5-0), and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education ratified the Memorandum of Agreement between Harborfields Central School District and the United Teaching Assistants of Harborfields, dated November 5, 2013, for a collective bargaining agreement covering the period July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2015.

#### **5.8 Memorandum of Agreement - United Teachers of Harborfields**

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Giuliano, seconded by Ms. Gaughan, and carried (5-0), and upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education ratified the Memorandum of Agreement between Harborfields Central School District and the United Teachers of Harborfields for a collective bargaining agreement covering the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2020.

### **COMMUNITY FORUM – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BOND PROJECT**

Ms. Todaro opened the second community forum on the capital improvement bond project with a PowerPoint presentation, which illustrated the list of proposed projects, cost estimates, and the rationale associated with the projects. Ms. Todaro explained that some minor modifications were made to the list of projects based on community feedback, subsequent meetings with the architect and some additional tours of the facilities; some items have been removed and some added. Ms. Todaro emphasized that the capital bond remains a work in progress and the board and district administration will identify the final list of projects at the August 26, 2015 board meeting. Ms. Todaro explained that the financing of a bond project is generally fifteen years, and during that period, the district will receive state aid on the capital bond, estimated to be at a rate of 51%. Ms. Todaro announced that the referendum will be put before the community on Tuesday, October 27, 2015, and she announced that the board has decided to hold another community forum on the bond on Wednesday, July 22, 2015. All material related to the capital bond may be found on the district's website.

Dr. McDonagh mentioned that the board has received a great deal of feedback from the community regarding the capital bond, with particular emphasis on the proposed turf field. As a result, the board compiled a list of questions and presented those questions to the district's architect who was in attendance at tonight's meeting. Dr. McDonagh introduced

Mr. Fred Seeba and Mr. Curt Coronato from BBS Architects & Engineers. Some of the questions posed to the architect covered the following topics:

- Types of available fill materials other than crumb rubber
- Approximate additional cost to use a fill other than crumb rubber
- Annual maintenance costs for grass fields vs. synthetic turf fields
- Replacement and disposal of a synthetic turf field
- Annual number of play hours for a grass field vs. synthetic turf field
- Documented health issues with crumb rubber (based on their experience)
- School bond proposals that have included a turf field
- Actual cost of ownership comparison between grass and turf

Mr. Seeba reported that his firm has predominantly installed turf fields made with the crumb rubber infill. Alternative fills such as Nike Grind and organic materials are available. In terms of additional cost, Mr. Seeba noted that a pure fill (organic) could run anywhere from \$215,000 to \$400,000 more per field which includes the cost of a shock pad. Maintenance of natural grass fields can run from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year, on average. A synthetic turf field would cost approximately \$7,500 per year to maintain. The warranty on a turf field is typically ten years with several school districts reporting that they're getting three to five years above the warranty. The cost to replace a turf field (infill and carpet) is around \$450,000 in today's dollars. The material is removed and disposed of by a contractor. On average, annual play hours on a well maintained, natural grass field would yield about 600 hours of use, where a turf field could see 3,000 hours of use. There are many variables that factor into use hours for grass; the condition of the grass, how it's used (one sport or several); however, a turf field does not have those limitations.

Mr. Seeba continued that they are familiar with the reports that have linked crumb rubber infill to cancer in young athletes. He explained that his office is filled with binders and binders of studies that have been done on the health concerns raised about crumb rubber infill and none have determined conclusively that there's a connection. The biggest issue they've seen is heat, as the surface of a synthetic turf field can get very hot.

Mr. Seeba stated that his firm has done roughly 15 to 20 bonds over the past three to four years that included a turf field; 6 to 7 of them are being done this fall. In terms of an actual cost of ownership comparison between grass and turf, Mr. Seeba stated that they've started to research those statistics and will provide that information at a later date.

Dr. McDonagh also inquired about the proposed new wellness center and the proposed sports field storage building. How much larger is the new center and what is the typical life span of the equipment that would be purchased for it? Mr. Seeba responded that the current wellness center is approximately 1,500 square feet and the new one will be 3,900 square feet. Mr. Valente spoke about the equipment, noting that the typical life span would be based on how often the equipment is used. Commercial grade equipment, such as a treadmill, would require maintenance after three to four years of continuous use. He further noted that many organizations choose to lease, rather than purchase, their equipment. Typical leases are for five-year periods.

Mr. Cacciola spoke about the proposed sports field storage building, explaining that the facility will store all the equipment at the high school. Currently, six old metal storage containers are being used, and their age is creating some difficulties with opening and closing them.

Dr. McDonagh stated that a few other questions were raised at last week's community forum that he would like to address regarding the boilers at TJL, the parking area at the high school by Pulaski Road, and the enrollment prediction for special needs students since indicators suggest that the number is rising.

Mr. Cacciola addressed the boilers at TJL. There are two, dual fuel, commercial grade boilers at TJL; one operates the building at any given time. Made of cast iron, the boilers are well maintained, and all burners were replaced in 2006. Part of the decision to remove them from the bond project was due to a survey conducted by Johnson Controls as part of the district's Energy Performance Contract, which concluded that the boilers were operating very well. Computerized controls were added to the system under the Energy Performance Contract, which help improve efficiency. Mr. Cacciola suggested that it could take 20 years to realize payback on new boilers. With regard to the bus loop at the high school, Mr. Cacciola acknowledged that the area does flood; however, the cause of the flooding is due to poor grading on Taylor Avenue. He's been in touch with the Town of Huntington, and they've confirmed that they will be undertaking a project to re-grade Taylor Avenue and install additional drainage.

Ms. Todaro reported on the enrollment of special needs students, noting that our records indicate that the number of students remains constant and there is no significant increase.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Many community members, including student athletes and young children, spoke out in support of the capital bond, particularly the turf field. Several residents stated that it's a well-rounded bond and should be kept intact. Community members noted that the bond includes projects that offer something for every student. Acknowledging that the turf field has been somewhat of a divisive issue within the community, residents encouraged the board not to further the divide by picking on a particular demographic; leave the turf field in the bond. Several residents suggested that if the capital bond does not include the turf field, they would be unable to vote in support of it.

A resident stated that the project list for the capital bond heavily favors athletics, and he would prefer to see a more balanced bond; more investment in instructional areas. The increased space for the wellness center is huge; perhaps some of that space could be reduced and used instead to house a STEM center. He's concerned with the turf field issues. Heat is a factor, as is the use of crumb rubber. He'd like to see a side-by-side comparison of maintenance costs over a 10 to 20 year period.

A resident stated that there's a huge difference between the community-sponsored referendum in 2013 and this capital bond, as this bond is not only for athletics, but addresses so many other areas as well. She would like the turf field to remain part of it.

A resident commented that he came here this evening thinking that he'd be listening to discussion about all the projects that are included in the proposed bond and yet it's turned into another debate over the turf field. For people to suggest that they'll vote against the bond if the turf field is not included is very problematic to him. People who are not in favor of the turf field are not against turf in general, but the health concerns should not be overlooked. Get real scientific data on the issue and consider using an alternative infill. He suggested the board consider putting everything back in the bond that they took out; even though it will raise the overall cost, he believes that if the bond is all-inclusive and uses a good infill product, the bond will pass.

A resident stated that she believes that everyone's goal is to do what's best for our kids. Research on the health issues troubles her, and she's concerned that it's dividing the community. Other school districts have come up with a solution to the crumb rubber infill and so should we. Cost is nowhere near as important as health. Changing the infill from crumb rubber to either Nike Grind or organic fill might help resolve the division within the community.

A resident questioned the addition of the July 22, 2015 meeting, stating that it was his understanding that tonight's meeting represented the last opportunity for the community to be heard. Dr. McDonagh responded that the board's decision to add another meeting was intended to be helpful by allowing for even more community feedback. Additionally, a new member is joining the board, and she'll be sworn in at the reorganization meeting on July 7, 2015. Having another meeting will provide her with the opportunity to listen and discuss community feedback. The resident encouraged the board to keep the capital bond intact.

Two residents who are members of the Capital Improvement Committee spoke of the hard work the committee did in putting together the proposal to the board. One resident encouraged the board to keep the bond intact stating that it's time to invest back into the district and our kids. The other resident commented that he was surprised at how many people he's spoken with who were misinformed about the capital bond; some didn't even realize there was a capital bond. He stated that the community elected the board members to collectively work together to determine the best path on the bond, and he encouraged them to keep it intact. Additionally, its value as a potential revenue source shouldn't be overlooked.

A resident stated that she couldn't support the turf field with a crumb rubber infill, but she might support an alternative fill. She also questioned the cost to replace the boilers at TJL, noting that Ms. Todaro referenced \$650,000 as the cost and at last week's meeting the cost was given as \$850,000. Mr. Nimmo responded that he misspoke at last week's meeting; the cost is \$650,000.

## **BOARD PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Giuliano asked the architect if they had an opportunity to look at maintenance and health issues associated with turf fields that use an alternative fill. Mr. Seeba responded that health studies have not been completed on alternative materials, only on crumb rubber. Organic fill, made from about 90% coconut and 10% cork, will degrade over time and will need to be replenished, so maintenance costs may be higher. Mr. Seeba stated they will prepare a matrix for comparison of four to five alternative fills which they will try to provide to the district within the next week or so.

Ms. Gaughan inquired about the warranty and life span on the alternative materials. Mr. Seeba responded that the warranties are the same as crumb rubber; ten years. They will try to gather specific information on the life expectancy.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A resident stated that she has no preference either way on the turf, but if there's material that's going to cause harm, it needs to be looked into. She expressed her disappointment with people stating that they would not vote for the bond if the turf field were removed and questioned whether it was a matter of principal or spite. Part of the bond provides for improvements that would aid disabled persons and to deny those improvements from happening because one item is removed doesn't make sense to her.

A resident questioned if a revenue analysis was done to determine what revenue a turf field would generate. Dr. McDonagh responded that there was a field usage study done, but it remains unclear as to how many outside groups would actually rent the fields.

A resident stated that she supports the bond without the turf field. She expressed concern with a group that she claims is using social media as a form of cyber-bullying by posting Facebook photos of people who do not support the turf field. She challenged them to stand up for their convictions and not hide behind a cloak of anonymity.

A few other community members spoke about allegations of bullying over the turf field issue, and some residents stressed the need to avoid negative and divisive conversation, and instead come together to discuss their opinions in a civil manner.

A resident questioned what it would cost to repair a tear in the turf field. Mr. Seeba responded that it would depend on the extent of damage, but could cost approximately \$1,000 to \$2,000. The resident further inquired about the life span of the base. Mr. Seeba responded that as long as it's installed properly, the base could last 50 to 75 years. The resident stated that he doesn't believe there's a whole world of people who are anti-turf, but the health issue can't be ignored. Choose a better infill and the community may not be as divided as they appear to be.

Dr. McDonagh thanked the community for their input this evening.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Gaughan, seconded by Mr. Giuliano, and carried (5-0), the board and the superintendent moved to Executive Session at 9:45 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the superintendent's evaluation. The board reconvened the special meeting at 11:45 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Gaughan, seconded by Mr. Giuliano, and carried (5-0), the board adjourned the special meeting of June 24, 2015 at 11:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon M. Whelan  
District Clerk