

MINUTES
ROCKY POINT PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
February 7, 2022

Mrs. Sullivan called the meeting to order at 4:58 p.m. in the auditorium of Rocky Point High School.

Present: Susan Sullivan, President
Edward Casswell, Vice President
Michael Lisa, Trustee
Jessica Ward, Trustee
Scott O'Brien, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
Susann Crossan Assistant Superintendent
Christopher Van Cott, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Kelly White, District Clerk

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 4:58 p.m a motion was made by Michael Lisa, and seconded by Jessica Ward, to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss confidential legal and personnel issues.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

Upon a motion made by Michael Lisa, and seconded by Jessica Ward, the Board adjourned Executive Session at 6 p.m. to attend the Budget Workshop presented by Christopher Van Cott.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

At 6:17 p.m., upon completion of the Budget Workshop, a motion was made by Michael Lisa, and seconded by Jessica Ward, for the Board to return to Executive Session to continue their discussions regarding confidential legal and personnel matters.

The Board returned to Open Session at 7 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. O'Brien reviewed the recent mask requirement changes and thanked the community for their patience as they navigate through the daily updates. He added that a decision on the existing appeal was scheduled to be announced on March 2. Dr. O'Brien shared that they have consulted with legal counsel throughout the entire process and will continue to do so.

Dr. O'Brien stated that weekly COVID-19 update letters would no longer be sent as reported positive cases continue to decline. He shared that he, Mrs. Sullivan, Mr. Casswell and Mrs. Crossan had participated in the Longwood Legislative Workshop over the weekend. Assemblywoman Jodi Giglio and Senator Anthony Palumbo were also in attendance.

Mrs. Sullivan opened the floor to questions/comments regarding the agenda.

There were no questions/comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

The items listed below are presented as part of the Consent Agenda which can be adopted by the Board of Education under a single motion followed by a second and then a formal vote. On the following page the Consent Agenda items are listed in their regular order within a group. Before an actual vote is taken, any Consent Agenda item may be removed by a Board member without a formal motion or second. If this occurs, the indicated resolution will be discussed during its regular order on the agenda and voted on individually.

III-IX CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Upon a motion made by Ed Casswell, and seconded by Jessica Ward, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accepts the following agenda items as one item:

- III: Minutes** – Regular Meeting, January 10, 2022; Special Meeting January 27, 2022
- IV: Budget Transfer Summary** – December 2021
- V: Treasurer's Reports** – December 2021
- VI: Extra-Classroom Activity Account Treasurer's Report** – December 2021
- VII: Financial Reports** – December 2021
- VIII: Internal Claims Audit Report** – December 2021
- IX: Committees on Special Education Schedules 2-7-22-A and 2-7-22-B**, as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools, to arrange for appropriate services, as indicated.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

X SURPLUS EQUIPMENT

Upon a motion made by Jessica Ward, and seconded by Michael Lisa, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves for surplus the following list of attached equipment.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

**XI RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PRELIMINARY PROPERTY TAX
CAP FORM**

Upon a motion made by Michael Lisa, and seconded by Ed Casswell, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the preliminary 2022-2023 Rocky Point Union Free School District Property Tax Cap Form, as attached.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

XII RESOLUTION TO INCREASE THE PRICE OF STAFF LUNCH MEALS

Upon a motion made by Ed Casswell, and seconded by Jessica Ward, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves the increase in price of a staff lunch meal to \$5.02 + tax in accordance with updated regulations from the New York State Child Nutrition Department. This change will take effect March 1, 2022.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

XIII 2021-2022 HEALTH SERVICE CONTRACTS

Upon a motion made by Jessica Ward, and seconded by Michael Lisa, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education authorizes the President of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools to enter into an agreement for health services for the 2021-2022 school year with the following districts:

Middle Country Central School District
Uniondale Union Free School District

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

XIV

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT

Upon a motion made by Michael Lisa, and seconded by Ed Casswell, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education has considered the request for a contract between Rocky Point Schools and Francisca Guevara and her daughter, Kimberly Rodriguez (grade 12), to remain in the Rocky Point Union Free School District tuition-free for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year beginning on February 8, 2022 and ending on June 24, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby approves this request.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

XV

ANNUAL MEETING (BUDGET VOTE AND TRUSTEE ELECTION)

Upon a motion made by Ed Casswell, and seconded by Jessica Ward, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Annual Meeting (Budget Vote and Trustee Election) of the Rocky Point Union Free School District, Town of Brookhaven, Suffolk County, New York be conducted on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 from 7:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M., and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that pursuant to Section 2017 of the Education Law, a Public Hearing for the purpose of discussion of the expenditure of funds and the budgeting thereof be held at 7:00 PM on May 3, 2022 at the Rocky Point High School, Rocky Point, New York and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Legal Notice of the Public Hearing and Annual Meeting, as required by law, be published in the *LONG ISLAND BUSINESS NEWS*, on April 1, April 15, April 29 and May 13 and in *THE VILLAGE BEACON RECORD* on March 31, April 14, April 28 and May 12 and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Legal Notice of the Annual Meeting (Budget Vote and Trustee Election), as required by law, be published in the *LONG ISLAND BUSINESS NEWS*, April 1, April 15, April 29 and May 13 and in *THE VILLAGE BEACON RECORD* on March 31, April 14, April 28 and May 12 and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following location is hereby designated as the polling place:

Rocky Point High School Gymnasium; and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education, in addition to the legal publication in four editions of each of the two above-mentioned newspapers, will send a notice with all information relative to the date and time of the vote and election to all residents within the District, and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that the residents of the Rocky Point Union Free School District may register to vote for School District Meetings at the office of the District Clerk between the hours of 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM on any day that the office is open, and on the evening of May 10, 2022 until 9:00 PM. However, such registration may not take place less than five (5) days preceding any School District Meeting, and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that the District Clerk is authorized to assign the necessary personnel to function as Election Inspectors, and further

BE IT RESOLVED, that the final tally of votes shall be held at the Rocky Point High School, 82 Rocky Point-Yaphank Road, Rocky Point, New York at 9:00 PM on the evening of the election as soon thereafter as the election inspectors can certify as to the necessary information.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

**XVI APPOINTMENT OF POLL CLERKS AND TELLERS; AND
SUBSTITUTE POLL CLERKS AND TELLERS FOR THE ANNUAL
BUDGET VOTE AND ELECTION TO BE HELD ON MAY 17, 2022
AS WELL AS THE BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR THE SPECIAL
VOTER REGISTRATION TO BE HELD MAY 10, 2022**

Upon a motion made by Jessica Ward, and seconded by Michael Lisa, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education appoints the Board of Registration; Poll Clerks; Tellers and Substitute Poll Clerks and Tellers at an hourly rate of \$15.00 as per the attached list:

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

XVII ADOPTION OF THE REVISED 2022-2023 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Upon a motion made by Michael Lisa, and seconded by Ed Casswell, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education adopts the revised 2022-2023 school calendar as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

XVIII MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT / ROCKY POINT SCHOOL-RELATED PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

Upon a motion made by Ed Casswell, and seconded by Jessica Ward, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education hereby approves a Memorandum of Agreement with the Rocky Point School-Related Professional Association to add two additional job titles and revise the language under Article IX; item G. All other terms and conditions of the 2020-2025 collective bargaining agreement between the District and the Rocky Point School-Related Professional Association shall remain the same.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

XIX PERSONNEL

Upon a motion made by Jessica Ward, and seconded by Michael Lisa, the following resolution was offered:

BE IT RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the attached Personnel changes.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

Once again Mrs. Sullivan invited the meeting attendees for questions/comments.

- Ms. Hyne thanked Mr. Lisa and Ms. Ward for voting yes to join the lawsuit against mask mandates. She inquired with Mrs. Sullivan and Mr. Casswell as to why they voted against it. Mrs. Sullivan advised that she felt the decision would be rushed without clarification with some particular language regarding a retainer. Mr. Casswell read a statement explaining that at each stage of the process they have coordinated with legal counsel and followed the law.
- Miss Luce shared her perspective as a student in support of the mask mandates. She expressed her concern for arguments amongst the students if personal choice is allowed.
- Mister Palifka explained his opposing view as a student in support of personal choice. He noted his positive experience on the day that the mandate was lifted. He added his concern of an impending vaccine mandate.
- Ms. Antonucci spoke about the likelihood of vaccine mandates in the near future. She also stated that legally they do not have to disclose all of the ingredients.
- Miss Sarlo read a statement and provided her views as a young student. She spoke about the negative effects and ineffectiveness of the mask mandate.

- Ms. Sarlo asked why the open trustee spot had not been filled. Mrs. Sullivan explained that the person they had in mind for the position was no longer available. She added that an additional election would've been very costly. Ms. Sarlo expressed the importance of a fifth Board of Education member to avoid a tie vote, especially in important situations such as the vote taken at the recent emergency meeting.
- Ms. Pinkenburg explained that many parents are in support of the mask mandate. She inquired with the Board of Education as to the basis in which the decision would be made to allow parental choice. Mrs. Sullivan advised that they would follow the law.
- Ms. Salz expressed the importance of evidence over public opinion and urged the Board to follow the science.
- Ms. Puckey reviewed some damaging effects such as speech issues and a lack of socialization as a result of the mask mandates.
- Ms. Hubert stated studies showing that cloth masks are not effective, therefore rendering the mandates ineffective. She cited the current non-socialization culture as a contributing factor to mental health issues.
- Ms. Baldi thanked the Board members who voted in favor of joining the lawsuit. She emphasized the importance of filling the open seat on the Board of Education, especially when difficult decisions need to be made. Ms. Baldi expressed her intentions of working together along with the support of the Board.
- Ms. Walsh inquired if a legislative committee would be created. Ms. Ward advised that there would be. Ms. Walsh thanked those Board members that voted in favor of joining the lawsuit and called for the resignation of those who opposed. She suggested that a second meeting could've been scheduled once the deadline was extended. Ms. Walsh advised the Board to do what's in the best interest of the children.
- Dr. Pinkenburg asked if the NYSED advised that the mask mandate should stay in effect, why they didn't abide by it. Dr. O'Brien stated that it was not enforceable.
- Mr. Baldi spoke about the ineffectiveness of the masks against small particles. He expressed the sentiment that those who are willing to sacrifice liberty to gain security would lose both.
- Ms. Van Horne stated concerns of psychological damage and shared that she homeschools her children because of the mask mandates. She commented that her child has been attending an indoor physical education class without masks and has not experienced any negative issues. Ms. Erin inquired as to why the community would no longer receive the emails containing the number of positive COVID-19 cases. Dr. O'Brien stated that it was due to the amount of positive cases being so low.

- Ms. Vergara asked if the constitution was part of the curriculum currently being taught in school. Dr. O'Brien confirmed it was. Ms. Vergara stated that children do not know how to fight for their rights so their parents speak out on their behalf. She added that there are consequences from the lack of contact.
- Ms. Borella questioned if contract tracing was still taking place. Dr. O'Brien stated that it was no longer required but does suggest that parents be contacted if their child is at risk. Ms. Borella stated that research takes time to be comprehensive. She added that she felt masks were not effective.
- Ms. Veit advised that masks are used to protect yourself from infection, and not others. She advocated for parental choice regarding mask usage.

There were no further questions/comments.

XX ADJOURNMENT

At 8:08 p.m. a motion was made by Ed Casswell, and seconded by Michael Lisa to adjourn the meeting.

All in favor – Motion carried 4-0

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly White
District Clerk