

**MINUTES**  
**ROCKY POINT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
**March 31, 2008**

**Mrs. Thalen called the meeting to order at 7:43 PM.**

Pledge of Allegiance

Present:           Geraldine Thalen, President  
                  Joseph Sanseverino, Vice-President  
                  Edward Darcey, Trustee  
                  Michael Matera, Trustee  
                  Margaret Smith, Trustee  
                  Carla L. D'Ambrosio Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools  
                  Sherry J. Alessandro, Ed.D., Asst. Supt. for HR/Administration  
                  Michael W. Ivanoff, Director of Finance and Operations  
                  Patricia Jones, District Clerk

**Mrs. Thalen opened the floor to questions and/or comments from meeting attendees.**

- Mr. Hassett introduced himself as a parent of a special education student and advised that he had questions concerning a recent CSE meeting pertaining to his child. Mrs. Thalen informed Mr. Hassett that the Board of Education was not permitted to discuss individual students during a board meeting. Mr. Hassett stated that he had serious concerns about a possible change which would require the special education students to attend the upcoming summer program out-of-district as opposed to in-district. Mr. Hassett asked for an explanation as to why the district was spending money on a Pre-K program and not using funds to maintain the summer special education program at Rocky Point. Mrs. Thalen explained that the revenue is available for twelve-month special education students to attend a summer program but that it was most cost-effective for the students to do so outside the district. Mrs. Thalen advised Mr. Hassett that the monies for the Pre-K program were provided through a grant and not through district funds established by taxes. Mrs. Thalen further explained that the state pays for the Pre-K program and that the monies provided may not be used for any other programs other than Pre-K. Dr. D'Ambrosio remarked that a cost analysis revealed that it was most cost-effective to send the special education summer school students outside of the district for this instruction and assured Mr. Hassett that his child, and all twelve-month special education students, would receive all mandated services. Mr. Hassett expressed that autistic children require routine and would be unable to adapt to the unfamiliar faces and surroundings of Longwood. Dr. D'Ambrosio stated that the Rocky Point School District would do everything and anything that would be necessary to ease the transition for the students. Mr. Hassett informed Dr. D'Ambrosio that the special education department required a signed commitment from him as early as April 1, 2008 in order to secure a summer program placement in Longwood and that he was not accepting said CSE

recommendation. Mrs. Thalen thanked Mr. Hassett for his comments and advised him to expect a follow-up telephone call from Dr. D'Ambrosio concerning this issue tomorrow morning.

- Mr. Coward, cub master of Boy Scout Pack 6249, and Mr. Hoffman, assistant cub master, voiced their concerns regarding the \$40.00 per hour room usage fee for outside groups utilizing room space at Rocky Point Schools. Mrs. Thalen advised that the Board of Education were looking into the fees being charged to outside groups to ascertain that they were fair and equitable and would research this matter and report back to Ms. Nina Kelly.

There were no further questions or comments.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. William Caulfield, Rocky Point High School principal, invited Ms. Jeanne Stiasny to the podium in order to recognize former cosmetology student, Jillian Meehan. Ms. Stiasny announced that Jillian was a graduate of the first graduating class in cosmetology and also a member of the Skills USA Club. Jillian was invited to be part of the RUSK design team and may train as a platform artist or travel to other salons to educate students on the latest Rusk trends and products. Ms. Stiasny congratulated Jillian on this most prestigious award for beginner hairdressing students.

Mr. William Caulfield, principal, Rocky Point High School:

- Mr. Caulfield introduced Ms. Nicole Waldbauer, English coordinator, so that she could recognize Ms. Loiacono and the RPMS and RPHS students who were published in the *Anthology of Poetry by Young Americans* ®. This item was tabled until the next scheduled meeting in order that the students and Ms. Loiacono could be present to receive their certificates of achievement.
- Ms. Waldbauer announced the fourth annual "Coffee House" Poetry Night would be held on Thursday, April 3, 2008 from 7:00 to 9:00 PM in the high school student dining room.

Dr. Joseph Tanen Centamore, Rocky Point Middle School principal, announced the following:

- Congratulations to the young poets and Jillian Meehan in recognition of their outstanding achievements.
- Dr. Centamore extended his sincere appreciation to Marla Freeman for her outstanding contributions as she filled in as secretary to the RPMS principal.
- The annual poetry night is scheduled for 7 PM on Thursday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, in the MS cafeteria.
- The orientation/transition program for fifth grade students will take place during the week of April 7<sup>th</sup> through April 11<sup>th</sup>. Each fifth grader will buddy with a sixth grade student in order to experience a day in the life at Middle School.

- The Middle School drama production of *Rumpelstilskin* will be presented on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Dr. Centamore thanked the members of the Shared Decision Making Team and the guidance department for a very successful 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Fair.

Ms. Carol Tvelia, Joseph A. Edgar principal, announced the following:

- April 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> will be half-days due to parent-teacher conferences.
- The second annual book fair will be held on Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, to support the KIN program.
- The annual Battle of the Buildings volleyball game will take place on April 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Third graders will be welcomed at JAE for the orientation program.

Dr. Scott O'Brien, principal, Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School, announced the following:

- The Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School will be participating in the annual Brookhaven National Lab Science Fair. The students will have their projects on display in the FJC cafeteria April 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>. Two students from each grade level will be selected to represent their grade and school at the BNL Science Fair on May 3, 2008. All students will receive participation ribbons.
- Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup> and Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup>: The FJC Science Fair will be open for viewing in the cafeteria during parent-teacher conferences. During the evening of April 17<sup>th</sup>, viewing and awards presentation will take place from 7 to 8 PM in the cafeteria.
- Congratulations to second grade student, Julia Bogart, for winning first place in New York State for her winning essay in a contest sponsored by the Long Island President's Council. Julia will receive a \$500.00 prize and have her story recorded and aired on the radio.
- The annual Battle of the Buildings Volleyball Game between FJC and JAE will take place on Friday, April 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Len Kies, Director of Health, Physical Education, Athletics and Intramurals, announced the following:

- Mr. Kies presented a winter season sports summary for the Boys Basketball teams, the Girls Basketball teams, the Bowling team, the Wrestling teams, and the Varsity Cheerleading team, highlighting individual student-athletes' major contributions and achievements.

## **2008-2009 BUDGET OVERVIEW**

Dr. D'Ambrosio and Mr. Ivanoff commenced a Power Point presentation to provide the meeting attendees with an overview of the proposed budget for the 2008-2009 school year. Following the presentation, Dr. D'Ambrosio invited members of the audience to ask questions related to the presentation.

- Mrs. Noto asked for an explanation of the high cost expenditure item of the sixteen special education entrants with disabilities requiring high cost out-of-district placements.

- Dr. D'Ambrosio explained that these students were not presently enrolled students of the district but new entrants with state mandated special services requirements.
- Mr. Sanseverino inquired about the cost for these students and was advised by Dr. D'Ambrosio that the cost was to be approximately one million dollars.
- Mr. Sanseverino asked for the financial impact of the accounting change to the employee benefits portion of the budget. Mr. Ivanoff responded that the impact was a one-time fee of \$600,000.00
- Mr. Matera inquired about the dollar figure for the underfunded mandates. Dr. D'Ambrosio advised that she did not have an itemized list at her disposal during the meeting but can have that information available.
- Dr. D'Ambrosio reminded everyone in attendance that New York State had not met the deadline for establishing its budget and the impact upon local school district budgets was still uncertain. Dr. D'Ambrosio stated that she will advise the public as soon as she learns of any changes in state aid from Albany lawmakers.

There were no further questions or comments.

#### **MINUTES**

Upon a motion made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Michael Matera, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Minutes of the following Board of Education Meetings be accepted as presented: **Regular Meeting, February 25, 2008, Special Meeting, March 18, 2008.**

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

#### **TREASURER'S REPORTS**

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accepts the Treasurer's Reports for the month of January 2008 as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

#### **EXTRA-CLASSROOM ACTIVITY ACCOUNT TREASURER REPORT**

Upon a motion made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Edward Darcey, the following motion was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accepts the Extra Classroom Activity Treasurer Reports for the month of January 2008 as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

#### **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Upon a motion made by Edward Darcey and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accepts the Financial Report for the month of January 2008 as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**RESOLUTION FOR HEALTH SERVICES CONTRACT**

Upon a motion made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Michael Matera, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education authorizes the Board President to enter into an agreement for health services for the current 2007 – 08 school year with the following districts:

Central Islip Union Free School District  
Patchogue-Medford Schools

All in Favor – Motion carried 5-0

**BUDGET TRANSFER SUMMARY – JANUARY 2008**

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the January 2008 Budget Transfer Summary, as presented.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**DONATION – ROCKY POINT PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION TO CHALLENGE DAY**

Upon a motion made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Edward Darcey, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves and accepts the \$250.00 donation from the Rocky Point Parent-Teacher Association.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

Mrs. Thalen expressed her gratitude to the PTA for constantly supporting the efforts of each of the schools of the Rocky Point School District.

**DONATIONS – TARGET TAKE CHARGE OF EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Upon a motion made by Edward Darcey and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino, the following motion was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves and accepts the donations from Target:

Take Charge of Education – FJC	\$314.72
Take Charge of Education – JAE	\$192.39
Take Charge of Education – HS	\$520.00

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Rocky Point Union Free School District hereby approves, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, to increase the general fund budget by \$1027.11, as a result of the donations from the Target Take Charge of Education Program.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the following budget codes be adjusted to reflect that increase:

A2110500010000	\$314.72
A2110500020000	\$192.39
A2110500030000	\$520.00

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**DONATION – BANK OF SMITHTOWN TO COSMETOLOGY CLASS**

Upon a recommendation made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Michael Matera, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves and accepts the \$271.87 donation from the Bank of Smithtown.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Rocky Point Union Free School District hereby approves, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, to increase the general fund budget by \$271.87 as a result of the donation from the Bank of Smithtown.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the following budget code be adjusted to reflect that increase:

A2280406033185	\$271.87
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All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

Mrs. Thalen thanked the Bank of Smithtown for its donation to the cosmetology class.

**DONATION – MATERIALS TO MIDDLE SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT**

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera and seconded by Margaret Smith, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the donation of materials, as presented, from Mr. Charles Spoleti at an estimated value of \$296.50.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**DONATION - PARTICIPATION OF ROCKY POINT MIDDLE SCHOOL IN 2008  
NEW YORK YOUTH TOBACCO SURVEY**

Upon a motion made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Edward Darcey, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the \$1,000.00 donation from Macro International, Inc.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Rocky Point Union Free School District hereby approves, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, to increase the general fund budget by \$1,000.00 as a result of the donation from Macro International, Inc.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the following budget code be adjusted to reflect that increase:

A2110500060000      \$1,000.00

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

Mrs. Thalen offered her thanks to Dr. Centamore for organizing the students for their participation in this survey.

**RESOLUTION FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR HEALTH INSURANCE AND RATES  
OF CONTRIBUTION FOR VESTED STATUS RETIREES**

Upon a motion made by Edward Darcey and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education establishes the additional requirement that the employee's discontinuance of employment from the Rocky Point Union Free School must be within five (5) years of their entitlement to receive a pension, and

**FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education establishes the employer shared contribution rate of fifty (50%) percent of the cost of individual cost and thirty-five (35%) percent of the cost of dependent coverage under NYSHIP.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

**COMMITTEES ON SPECIAL EDUCATION/PRESCHOOL SPECIAL  
EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Upon a motion made by Joseph Sanseverino and seconded by Michael Matera, the following resolution was offered:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education votes to arrange for appropriate services pursuant to the recommendations of Schedule 3-31-08-A and Schedule 3-31-08-B.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

### **PERSONNEL**

Upon a motion made by Michael Matera and seconded by Margaret Smith, 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.

Discussion ensued. Mrs. Thalen announced that the personnel agenda included a large number of retiring teachers. Mrs. Thalen asked those teachers who were retiring at the end of this school year to please stand as their names were called in order to be recognized for their many years of service to the students of the Rocky Point School District. Mrs. Thalen announced the name of each retiring teacher and their number of years of dedicated service. Combining their years of teaching, Mrs. Thalen announced a total of more than four hundred and thirty years. Mrs. Thalen also recognized the one retiring member of the School Related Professional Association, Mrs. Patricia Carr, and extended to Mrs. Carr the Board of Education's appreciation and gratitude for her twenty five years of service to the students of the district. On behalf of the Board of Education, Mrs. Thalen wished the retirees the best of luck in the next stage of their lives.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

### **Mrs. Thalen opened the floor to questions and or comments.**

- Mrs. Noto commented that she sensed, from the budget overview, the special education children were a burden on the district and asked that those children requiring special education services be viewed as people and not as dollar signs.
- Dr. D'Ambrosio stated that it was her duty and responsibility to indicate the areas where budget monies were allocated. Dr. D'Ambrosio noted that the special education students were our children and we embrace them as such. Dr. D'Ambrosio thanked Mrs. Noto for her comments.
- Referring to the budget overview, Mrs. Hassett asked for an explanation of the cost of the sixteen special education students coming to the district.
- Both Dr. D'Ambrosio and Mrs. Manitta explained that these students register in the district after having been already placed in a BOCES, special education, residential or private program. As new students to the district, we must legally provide all the services mandated on each incoming student's IEP.
- Mrs. Thalen noted that Mrs. Manitta has much information to share concerning the areas of special education and invited Mr. and Mrs. Hassett to telephone Mrs. Manitta and make an appointment to discuss these matters, particularly the cost-effectiveness of summer school out-of-district placement.
- Mrs. Johannesen commented that she has opted out of summer services for her child due to the period of time it takes for her child to adjust to the change from the regular school-year routine. She urged the Board of Education to revisit the outsourcing of the special education students as she views this cost-effective solution as a disservice to the children.



- Mrs. Thalen expressed her understanding of the frustrations the parents of the special education students were experiencing and suggested that they contact SEPTA for possible assistance and advocacy. Mrs. Thalen reiterated that the decision to send the twelve-month special education students to Longwood for the out-of-district summer program was a numbers problem only. Mrs. Thalen conveyed that SEPTA is an important resource for parents to look into.
- Dr. D'Ambrosio reminded everyone that the proposed budget is tentative and things could still change. The budget has not yet been adopted by the Board of Education, however, at this stage outsourcing of the special education summer program is a go and it is imperative that the children secure placement in the Longwood School District to avoid the possibility of being shut out. Dr. D'Ambrosio stated that Mrs. Manitta would continue to look into other options for the students.
- Mrs. Johannesen asked for the difference between the cost of in-district summer school and out-of-district summer school. Mrs. Manitta did not have those numbers readily available but advised Mrs. Johannesen that she would look into it for her.
- Mrs. Thalen thanked Mrs. Johannesen for her comments.
- Mrs. Thalen stated that she realizes it sounds as if the administration does not care about the students but that Mrs. Manitta is filled with angst over the situation and wants to provide as much as she can for the students with special needs.
- Mr. Hassett thanked Mrs. Thalen for her explanation of the Pre-K program vs. the in-district summer school program for special education students.
- Ms. Reynen asked for information concerning the \$40.00 building usage fee. Mrs. Reynen stated that it was ridiculous to charge groups for using the buildings when the custodians are already working.
- Mrs. Thalen responded that the Board of Education must pass a policy for outside group usage of the RPUFSD facilities when the building(s) must be opened up on weekends. Mrs. Thalen noted the buildings are open during the week and available for usage without charge.
- Ms. Carangelo, in support of Mrs. Noto, expressed that she, too, felt the tone of the special education piece of the budget overview was a burden on the taxpayers. As a social worker, Ms. Carangelo shared research results had proven the importance of maintaining routine with special education students and the out-of-district summer program would be detrimental to the students.
- Mrs. Thalen thanked Ms. Carangelo for her comments.
- Mrs. Thalen advised that the budget hearing is scheduled for May 13<sup>th</sup> and the annual school budget vote/election will be held on May 20<sup>th</sup> from 7 AM to 9 PM in the high school gymnasium.
- Mrs. Thalen reminded everyone the next regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting is Wednesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, for BOCES purposes in order to pass the BOCES budget.

There were no further questions or comments.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 9:15 PM, a motion was made by Margaret Smith and seconded by Edward Darcey to go into Executive Session to discuss particular personnel matters.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Jones  
District Clerk

The Board returned to Open Session at 9:45 PM.

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:50 PM, a motion was made by Edward Darcey and seconded by Joseph Sanseverino for the Board of Education to adjourn the meeting.

All in favor – Motion carried 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Carla L. D'Ambrosio  
Superintendent of Schools



