

Board of Education  
Amityville Union Free School District  
Amityville, NY 11701

Special Meeting Minutes- March 20, 2013  
Park Avenue Elementary School - Auditorium - 7:00 PM

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**LOCATION:** Park Avenue Memorial Elementary School - Auditorium

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Vice President Lisa Johnson                      2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Ron Moss  
Trustee Jeannette Santos    Trustee Michele Sikhrangkur

**BOE ABSENT:** Trustee Nathan King  
Trustee Mark Epps  
President Juliet Jordon-Thompson

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Dr. John R. Williams, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. William Fanning-Interim Asst. Supt. Finance & Operations  
Dr. Mary Kelly-Asst Supt. Technology  
Dr. Stephen Neidell-Interim Asst. Supt. Human Resources  
Mr. Gary Steffanetta, Esq. Guercio & Guercio  
Ms. Nancy Hark, Esq., - Guercio & Guercio

**ABSENT:** Dr. Kathleen Gulbin – Asst. Supt. Curriculum & Instruction

**CLERK IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs. Judith O'Neill/District Clerk

**COMMUNITY:** 20 members present

1. **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER** by Vice President Johnson at 7:01 PM.
  - A. **Emergency Exit, No Smoking Statement**  
*\*In the unlikely event of an emergency, you need to Note that exits are clearly marked. Take a moment to Note the exit nearest to where are you are seated. \*Smoking is not allowed on school grounds. \*As a courtesy, please turn off cell phones and pagers during the meeting.*
  - B. **Pledge of Allegiance** The Board and attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
  - C. **COMMUNITY INPUT REGARDING BOARD AGENDA ITEMS ONLY** - None
  - D. **PRESENTATIONS** - None
  
2. **BOARD ACTION RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION** - None
  - A. **Approval of Board Minutes**
  - B. **Board Policy Committee**
  - C. **Board Action Recommended by Board of Education:**
  - D. **Audit Committee**
  
3. **BOARD ACTION RECOMMENDED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT** - None
  - A. **Superintendent**
  - B. **Personnel**
  - C. **Business and Finance**
  - D. **Monthly Finance Report**
  - E. **CSE & CPSE Action/Meetings/Educational Service Contracts**
  - F. **Curriculum and Instruction**
  
4. **REPORTS** - None
  - A. **Legal Counsel for the District**
  - B. **Superintendent of Schools**

**C. Board of Education**

At this time, Vice President Johnson turned the meeting over to Dr. Williams.

Dr. Williams addressed a concern expressed at the last meeting by a parent about class sizes in Kindergarten. Dr. Williams said that some have 27 children but the average size is 25 children. Special Ed classes are smaller and the Bi-lingual classes are smaller. Right now, we are out of space but we are exploring options for additional space at Northeast for instructional purposes.

There was a discussion in response to Vice President Johnson's question about possibly cutting Board expenses. Cutting Board expense could be done but training is mandated and some training is necessary. Although travel and food expenses for the Board are included in the budget, Board members pay for these expenses out of their own pockets. Money could be cut but it would not be much. Membership in NYSSBA and Nassau Suffolk School Board Association is invaluable and should be continued. These two entities fight for state money on our behalf.

Trustee Santos asked why gas is \$100,000 more than it was last year. Dr. Fanning said that the utilities are a challenge due to weather conditions but we could cut that amount back. Trustee Sikhrangkur asked if we have the option to use oil or gas in some buildings. Mr. Mercurio said we have conversions of oil to gas in some buildings and gas is significantly cheaper to burn than oil. On weekends when the weather report is 40 or 50 degrees, we shut the pumps off to save money.

Ed Mercurio gave the Board a detailed update on maintenance projects that need to be done and could not be started due to the relocation of the third grade to Northwest. Some of those projects included windows and steam pipes. Dr. Fanning discussed the energy saving program.

Trustee Santos noted that Home and Careers is not in the budget. She asked Administration to inquire whether or not it was mandated for 9<sup>th</sup> graders. Trustee Santos asked about textbooks. Dr. Fanning responded that we cut textbook appropriation to an amount equal to textbook aid. It is equal to \$58 per student which calculates to about \$237,000. We will get reimbursed by the state for \$237,000 if we spend that amount. If we spend more than that amount, we still get \$237,000 back in aid.

Vice President Johnson asked how we are planning for tests that will have to be taken on computers by the third grade. Dr. Kelly said New York State has not officially signed on but they are in the process of evaluating the ability of schools to be able to do on line testing for grades 3 through 8. Schools have been asked to fill out technology readiness tools. Our infrastructure is in good shape but the question is having enough computers to do testing. Presently, we have one computer for every three students. The Assistant Commissioner stated that school districts ought to be allocating 5% of their budgets for technology which is untenable. This is a statewide issue.

Dr. Fanning reminded the Board that this budget is still \$950,000 greater than last year.

At this time, Vice President Johnson opened the floor to the public for questions.

Carol Seehoff, Amityville – Ms. Seehoff discussed summer school.

Mr. Robert Claps discussed the possibility of hiring someone to write grants.

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*Trustee Epps arrived at 8:22 PM.*

Trustee Sikhrangkur said that Albany pays 80% of the budgets of school districts located upstate. It is important for parents, administrators and teachers to work together and contact their legislators.

Trustee Santos suggested using Connect Ed to inform parents about Board meetings. Dr. Williams said we could try it – if not effective than we can cease. Vice President Johnson will check with legal counsel. 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss encouraged parents to talk to their legislators.

**MOTION to ADJOURN** Special Meeting at 8:50 PM made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Motion CARRIED:** 5 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith O’Neill/District Clerk