

APPROVED  
7/10/2013

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

**Regular Meeting Minutes- April 10, 2013  
Park Avenue Elementary School - Auditorium - 7:00 PM**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** President Juliet Jordon-Thompson 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

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Dr. John R. Williams, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Kathleen Gulbin – Asst. Supt. Curriculum & Instruction  
Dr. William Fanning-Interim Asst. Supt. Finance & Operations  
Dr. Mary Kelly-Asst Supt. Technology  
Mr. Gary Steffanetta, Esq. Guercio & Guercio  
Ms. Nancy Hark, Esq., - Guercio & Guercio

**ABSENT:** Dr. Stephen Neidell-Interim Asst. Supt. Human Resources

**ADMINISTRATION** Mr. Anthony Cerullo, Director of Athletics, Phys Ed. and Health  
Ms. Fran Fernandez, Director of Fine Arts  
Mr. Michael Fusaro, Director of Science  
Mr. Claude Irwin, Director of Mathematics  
Daniel Noviello-Director Social Studies  
Dana Musso, Director of English  
Mr. Peter Paternostro, Administrator - Pupil Personnel Services  
Elizabeth Reveiz, Director of ELS  
Mr. Ed Mercurio-Plant Facilities Administrator

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION** Pauline Collins, Principal, N.E. Elementary School  
Mr. Scott Bullis, Principal PAMES  
Ms. Rose Hutcherson, Asst. Principal, PAMES  
Dr. Mary DeRose, Principal-AMHS  
Dr. Shirley Martin, Interim Principal – NW Elementary School

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

**COMMUNITY:** 25 members present

1. **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER** by President Jordon-Thompson at 7:05 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.

Dr. Williams introduced Ms. Fran Fernandez who announced the names of students who had received awards in art and music. Congratulations to all.

The high school drama club then performed a piece from “Grease” under the direction of Roxanne Tannenbaum and Carol Seehoff with Mrs. Margaret Brooks on piano. There will be performances on 4/19 at 7 PM, on 4/20 at 7 PM and on 4/21 at 3 PM.

**C. Community Input Regarding Board Agenda Items Only** - None

**D. PRESENTATIONS**

Dr. Fanning said that the legislative state aid proposal, \$20,240,000, represents an increase in our state aid of almost \$1.6 million. We are presuming that the amount of local revenue will remain approximately the same. We can exceed the cap but 60% of the voters must approve it. If they did not approve it, the tax levy we are permitted to impose is the same as the 12/13 tax levy and this means a loss of \$1.7 million. In this proposed budget, the levy of \$54,474,000 which is a 3.29% increase, is the levy that would result from setting the tax at the cap. We have been using the Workmen’s Comp. reserve for the past few years and we are permitted to do so. We will use it again this year and then we will be finished with the Workmen’s Comp. reserve but we must if we want to preserve the budget. We also used \$300,000 of the Retirement System Fund. As we have seen our fund balance diminish, I am going to recommend that we begin to back away from using the fund balance. The total revenues come to \$80,830,000. What we still don’t know is what positions we will be replacing. I am still in the process of finalizing some budget requests. I recommend that the Board adopt a budget of \$80,838,781. We would have a budget to budget increase of 3.36%.

Trustee Santos said that we cannot tap into the fund balance anymore. Dr. Fanning said that the fund balance is utilized by all Districts and we are precluded by law of holding more than 4%. If we do not use it, we will have to go back and cut \$3,800,000 out of the budget. Trustee Santos said that there are other places to make the cuts - do away with some staff members and combine positions. Dr. Fanning said that his proposal works but he will cut whatever the Board wants him to cut. Trustee Sikhrangkur said that we are doing the right thing by using the fund balance to keep the taxes down. Trustee Santos said that an Assistant Principal was needed at Northwest. Vice President Johnson said that she wanted to have a discussion with the Board members about whether the model we have it the best model. Dr. Fanning said that we have two weeks to make a decision about the amount you want to work with. If it less than this proposal, you will have less to work with. You can make the decisions as to how staffing will look. But if you make a decision to cut more, than you don’t have options. President Jordon-Thompson said that Dr. Williams will respond to the questions raised here by Board members tonight.

Dr. Williams said the directors represent roughly \$600,000 in an \$81 million budget. It is a small amount of money comparatively. A question was asked whether or not the elimination of selected directors will prevent teacher loss. The answer is we do not anticipate the layoffs of any employees in this budget. Another question was whether the elimination of directors would prevent class sizes from increasing. It is the goal of the district to reduce class sizes in our early childhood education program. We feel that the most favorable class size should be at the early elementary level. Our plan is to add an additional section of Kindergarten to Northeast. .

Dr. Williams went on to say that last week, he gave credit to the directors for bringing all five of our schools into good standing. Mrs. Seehoff pointed out that it is the teachers who have done that and Dr. Williams responded that you cannot pay teachers enough for the work that

they do but for the past 10 years our schools have been in need of improvement. Our teachers are doing a better job because they are getting good feedback and leadership from the directors. The directors provide leadership and good feedback to the teachers.

Vice President Johnson asked for data showing that the directors have helped bring our schools into good standing. Trustee Sikhrangkur said that it is not fair to assign success to any one entity. President Jordon-Thompson said that with the APPR there is more accountability and we are responsible for improving the educational outcomes for our students.

***Motion to move agenda out of order made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. Motion CARRIED: 5 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain***

**3. Board Action Recommended by The Superintendent**

**B. Personnel:**

3. Tenure Appointment: Archaga, I.
4. Tenure Appointment: Carmen, Y.
5. Tenure Appointment: Cottone, M.
6. Tenure Appointment: Gambino, E.
7. Tenure Appointment: Wilson, K.

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Items 3B-3 through 3B-7 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Motion CARRIED:** 5 Yes, 0 No. 0 Abstain.

Mrs. Seehoff thanked the Board for celebrating the tenure appointments and said that Amityville teachers go above and beyond what is expected of them.

***At this time the Board recessed for 10 minutes to celebrate with the new tenured teachers.***

***Meeting resumed at 8:35 PM.***

President Jordon asked for community input on the budget.

Carol Seehoff commented that the amount of teaching staff has decreased from 287 to 254. Dr. Williams said that we have less staff across the Board - teachers, custodians and administrators and teaching assistants. Mrs. Seehoff said that we really hope that the teaching positions will be filled and asked if teachers would be hired to fill the positions of the 16 retirees – class sizes are already too large. Dr. Williams said that the class sizes in the elementary school are large but some in the secondary schools are very small. Teachers could do a great job with some additional students in those classes. We will probably not hire 16 people with the exact certification as the 16 retirees because there are other things we can do without negatively impacting on class sizes. Dr. Neidell said that we will be working on teacher replacements with the Board. We know that we have to replace most of the 16 teachers who are retiring.

Allison Varley, 20 Hildreth Ct., Amityville-Mrs. Varley discussed the matter of a suspended employee. Nancy Hark responded that the litigation was complete but there has been no decision issued by the judge.

Trustee King arrived at 8:43 PM

President Jordon-Thompson asked the community if they wished to comment on non agenda items only. No one responded.

**2. BOARD ACTION RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**A. Approval of Board Minutes**

1. Draft #1 –Regular Meeting – September 12, 2012
2. Draft #1 – Audit Committee – October 3, 2012

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Items 2A-1 & 2A-2 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** Floor opened for discussion. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

3. Draft #1 – Regular Meeting – October 10, 2012

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Item 2A-3 with the correction to 3B-57 (vote should be 4 Yes, 1 No-Trustee Santos voted no) made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** Floor opened for discussion. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

4. Draft #1 – Special Meeting – December 5, 2012
5. Draft #1 – Regular Meeting – December 12, 2012

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Item 2A-4 & 2A-5 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** Floor opened for discussion. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

**B. Board Policy Committee Recommended by Board Policy Committee:**

1. 2nd Reading – Policy Manual – Section

President Jordon-Thompson noted that an additional reading is required before the Policy can be adopted.

**C. Board Action Recommended by Board of Education:**

1. Superintendent Suspension Appeal

**MOTION to TABLE** Agenda Item 2C-1 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** Floor opened for discussion. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

**D. Audit Committee – None**

**3. BOARD ACTION RECOMMENDED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT**

**A. Superintendent**

1. Approval of Board of Education Meetings for the 2013/2014 School Year

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Item 3A-1 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** Floor opened for discussion. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

2. Approval of Confidential Secretaries Benefits/Salary Increase

**MOTION to TABLE** Agenda Item 3A-2 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** This item will be discussed in Executive Session. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

**B. Personnel**

1. Resignation for Retirement: Food Service Worker/HS – Kaye, G.
2. Resignation: Special Ed 1:1 Aide/NW – Bryant, K.

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Items 3B-1 & 3B-2 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** President Jordon-Thompson explained to the community that the review of the agenda is done at the work session on the first Wednesday of the month. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

8. Leave Replacement Appointment: Elementary Teacher/NE – Thompson, G.
9. Appointment: Test Prep Class/PA – Persaud, A.
10. Appointment: Substitute Teacher/English 7-12 – Nielsen, N.
11. Appointment: Substitute Clerk/Typist – Guglieri, M.
12. Appointment: Substitute Food Service Worker – Roy, S.
13. Appointment: Substitute Food Service Worker – Rojas, F.
14. Appointment: Substitute Food Service Worker – Schmidt, J.
15. Leave of Absence W/O Pay: Elementary Teacher/NE – Aversa, D.

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Items 3B-3 through 3B-15 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** Floor opened for discussion. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

16. Resignation for Retirement: Music Teacher/PA/NW – Colletti, L.
17. Resignation for Retirement: Special Education Teacher/MS – Cunningham, B.
18. Resignation for Retirement: Art Teacher/MS – Fabian, K.
19. Resignation for Retirement: Librarian/HS – Gross, E.
20. Resignation for Retirement: Elementary Teacher/NE – Hawthorne, L.
21. Resignation for Retirement: Reading Teacher/NW – Heckman, P.
22. Resignation for Retirement: Special Education Teacher/NW – Hromada, M.
23. Resignation for Retirement: Social Studies Teacher/HS – Kretz, W.
24. Resignation for Retirement: Art Teacher/HS – Lark, B.
25. Resignation for Retirement: Art Teacher/NW – MacGregor, D.
26. Resignation for Retirement: Elementary Teacher/NW – McEachin, H.
27. Resignation for Retirement: Spanish Teacher/HS – Silberberg, R.
28. Resignation for Retirement: Elementary Teacher/NW – Walsh, P.
29. Resignation for Retirement: Elementary Teacher/NE – Wood, J.
30. Resignation for Retirement: Elementary Teacher/NW – Zitofsky, A.
31. Resignation: Teaching Assistant/NW – Valentino, A.

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Items 3B-16 through 3B-31 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** Floor opened for discussion. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

**C. Business and Finance**

1. Budget Transfer – Items 1 through 5
2. Fund Raising – Items 1 through 3
3. Use of Facilities – Items 1
4. Health Service Contracts – Other Schools- Items 1 through 2

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Items 3C-1 through 3C-4 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** Floor opened for discussion. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

**D. Monthly Finance Report**

**1. December, 2012**

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Items 3D-1 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** Floor opened for discussion. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

**E. CSE & CPSE Action/Meetings/Educational Service Contracts** None

**F. Curriculum and Instruction** -

**1. Approval of Conferences** – Items 1 through 2

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Items 3F-1 made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Discussion:** Floor opened for discussion. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

**REPORTS**

**A. Legal Counsel for the District** –Items for executive session.

**B. Superintendent of Schools**

Dr. Williams announced that the Amityville School District has been designated, for the second time in the last three years, as one of only 300 districts nationwide to receive the honor of best Communities for Music Education. 5 Middle School students participated in the U.S. Department of Energy’s Science Bowl competition. This is a nationwide science competition during which Middle School and High School teams competed in a jeopardy style match to test their knowledge in all areas of science. The Amityville step students did very well and progressed to the finals. Congratulations to the team members. Three AP World students were honored at Suffolk County’s Holocaust Remembrance Day Commemoration for their service to the community. Two students have been included in the highly competitive “Long Island’s Best” art exhibition to be shown at the Heckscher Museum of Art in Huntington. The girl’s Middle School Basketball team received the Sportsmanship Award this year. Three Northwest students have been recognized as finalists in the national Aeropostale t-shirt design contest “What Makes U Smile”. Thanks to Assemblyman Robert K. Sweeney for his advocacy and support for our schools. He secured an Assembly grant of \$60,000 for our schools. The District can use funds whatever way it sees fit. Congratulations to Board President Juliet Jordon-Thompson who received the NYSSBA Mastery Award for achieving Level 3 Mastery.

**C. Board of Education**

Nancy Hark answered two questions posed by Lisa Johnson at a previous meeting. Connect Ed was okay to use for neutral messages but the public should be given the opportunity to sign up to be called. The other question was regarding talking points for the community on the website regarding legislative questions. Ms. Hark said that the website could have a Superintendent’s message. Trustee Santos asked if Connect Ed messages could be sent the day before a meeting.

*President Jordon-Thompson asked for community comments on non agenda items.*

Ed McDaniels, 111 Bayview Ave., Amityville – Mr. McDaniels discussed the findings of the intervention team that was sent to the Middle School in 2011 citing deficiencies in the curriculum. Dr. Williams responded that the findings of the intervention team are no longer pertinent to us due to all the changes that have been made. Dr. Gulbin said that the intervention team was correct. We have been working on changing the curriculum according to Common Core. We now have a common lesson plan in place for the District. The current scholastic programs are being replaced with the new modules.

Brian Raleigh, 34 Terry Ave., Amityville – Mr. Raleigh was concerned about the lack of communication from the District when an emergency situation arises.

Ms. Pauline Collins said that the evacuation site for Northeast School is the Middle School and if it is a district wide evacuation, the site will be the North Amityville Fire Department. We can walk to that site and hold the students there until parents pick them up.

Trustee King discussed updating the contact numbers for parents. They must inform the school if information changes.

Laura Pawlewicz, Van Nostrand Pl., Amityville – Mrs. Pawlewicz discussed updating Connect Ed.

Dr. Kelly said that the Connect Ed system was updated today.

Allison Varley was concerned about the District's communication with parents.

Susan Heenan, 2 Matthew Dr., Amityville – Mrs. Heenan was also concerned about the lack of communication from the District.

President Jordon-Thompson appointed Michele Sikhrangkur as District Clerk Pro Tem.

**MOTION to ADJOURN to Executive Session** at 9:44 PM for employment history of particular person, status of negotiations and advice from counsel made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Motion CARRIED:** 6 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

*Judith O'Neill left at 9:50 PM.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith O'Neill, District Clerk

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** called to order by President Jordon-Thompson at 9:51 PM.

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** President Juliet Jordon-Thompson      Vice President Lisa Johnson  
                                    2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Ron Moss                      Trustee Jeannette Santos  
                                    Trustee Michele Sikhrangkur                      Trustee Nathan King

**BOE ABSENT:** Trustee Mark Epps

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**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Dr. John R. Williams, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Kathleen Gulbin – Asst. Supt. Curriculum & Instruction  
Dr. William Fanning-Interim Asst. Supt. Finance & Operations  
Dr. Mary Kelly-Asst Supt. Technology  
Mr. Gary Steffanetta, Esq. Guercio & Guercio  
Ms. Nancy Hark, Esq., - Guercio & Guercio

**ABSENT:** Dr. Stephen Neidell-Interim Asst. Supt. Human Resources

*Trustee King left at 10:06 PM.*

**ACTION TAKEN:** None

**MOTION to RESUME** Open Session at 11:29 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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Michele Sikhrangkur, District Clerk Pro Tem

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** President Juliet Jordon-Thompson Vice President Lisa Johnson  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Ron Moss Trustee Jeannette Santos  
Trustee Michele Sikhrangkur Trustee Nathan King

**BOE ABSENT:** Trustee Mark Epps

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Dr. John R. Williams, Superintendent of Schools  
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Mr. Gary Steffanetta, Esq. Guercio & Guercio  
Ms. Nancy Hark, Esq., - Guercio & Guercio

**ABSENT:** Dr. Stephen Neidell-Interim Asst. Supt. Human Resources

**3A-2 - Approval of Confidential Secretaries Benefits/Salary Increase**

**MOTION to APPROVE** Agenda Item 3A-2 with change to resolution from 3 people to 4 to include Superintendent’s secretary as a confidential secretary made by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Moss, seconded by Trustee Santos. **Motion CARRIED:** 5 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain.

**MOTION to ADJOURN** regular meeting at 11:38 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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Michele Sikhrangkur, District Clerk Pro Tem