

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

DATE: October 3, 2011

WHERE HELD: Monroe E. Haas Instructional Media Center

PRESENT: Sheri Zarkower, Glen Schuster, Nancy Barr, Jeffrey Diamond, Steven Kaplan, William Stark, Jonathan Ross, Harry Burg, Tracy Taylor, Colin Byrne, Gina Healy, Patricia Lambert, James Spano, and Todd Richard

The Meeting was called to order by Sheri Zarkower at 8:05 PM and the Pledge was recited.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. Mr. Stark reported that the annual PRSS Walk-to-School event will take place on Wednesday, October 5th at 7:45 AM. He thanked Robin Willig for coordinating this project.
2. Mr. Stark stated that the BBMS Student Government election would take place on Thursday, October 6th.
3. He reported that the BBMS Open House would take place on Thursday, October 6th at 7:00 PM.
4. He extended kudos to the BBHS Cross Country Track Team which hosted its first invitational tournament on Saturday, October 1st and came in second place. He also stated that the other sports teams are doing well.
5. Mr. Stark informed the community about the installation of the PRSS Rain Garden.

BOARD COMMENTS

1. Mr. Kaplan reported that he attended the BBHS Open House and was pleased to hear positive reports from parents. He would like to have parents spend more time with teachers in the future. He also commented on the PRSS Rain Garden.
2. Mr. Schuster read a prepared statement relative to the e-mail allegations controversy and criticized Mr. Diamond and his blog.
3. Mr. Diamond commented on the \$850,000 payment to Doral and the shortfall it will cause for the 2012-2013 budget. He wants the focus to be placed on the budget and education of the District's children.

DISCUSSION – ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARGES

Mr. Stark gave notice that he previously forwarded to the Board all Committee Charges for their review. He recommended that all Committees designate someone to take minutes of meetings and that committees should meet once per month. The Board liaison will not give opinions just act as a conduit between the committee and the Board.

BOARD COMMENTS ON GENERAL COMMITTEE MATTERS

Mr. Kaplan – The minutes of the meetings should be placed on the District’s website –

Mr. Stark agreed. Mr. Kaplan would like times for the meetings to be alternated (afternoon/evening) and also asked for each committee to have an elected Chairperson.

Ms. Barr – wants a membership protocol – members should have a vested interest and be committed to the ongoing work of the committee.

Mr. Diamond – Concurred with Ms. Barr and thinks there has to be continuity of membership. He thinks membership should be capped and stated that for example, the Citizens’ Budget Advisory Committee should be limited to 12 people. He also asked for the role of sub-committees to be defined.

Mr. Schuster – Each committee should determine the length of meeting times and roles of sub-committees.

Ms. Barr – Committees that accomplished the most have a strong leader that kept discussions on point and structured. Members need to listen at least as much as they speak.

Mr. Kaplan – would like a two year membership to stand and wants the Board to be careful about the recruitment of new members.

Mr. Stark queried, what is the role of the administrator to the committee?

Ms. Barr used Jim Spano as an example – he set the agenda and always solicited discussion.

Mr. Schuster wants the leader to designate a minute taker.

Mr. Kaplan wants this to be a rotational assignment.

ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ms. Barr wants the charge to reflect feedback to the Arts Department. She does not think issuing report cards to art teachers is appropriate.

Mr. Kaplan – What is the standard/goal of arts education at Blind Brook? The economy will not allow us to do everything that may be desired. He mentioned how class scheduling can impact offerings that students may select.

Ms. Barr – Meetings must have parameters and context.

Mr. Stark – 1. To give feedback to the Art Dept.

2. Scheduling issues – define

3. Explore grants and funding for the arts programs

These three tasks are enough for the committee – Leave existing charge intact.

ATHLETIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mrs. Zarkower – Mr. Spano sets out the agenda regarding issues affecting the Athletics Dept. and does a good job.

Mr. Kaplan – Wants the issue of Booster Clubs discussed by the Committee.

Mr. Schuster – Discussed spending patterns and possible Title IX issues.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Mr. Diamond – wants the Board of Education to appoint a second Board member per policy or amend policy.

Mr. Kaplan wants a Board member with little experience to serve.

Mr. Schuster agrees to serve on this committee along with Mr. Diamond.

CITIZENS' BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Diamond – Questioned what should be discussed by the committee. Emphasized that the CBAC would offer recommendations but the Board would ultimately make the decisions. Feels that all finance information is public information and wants the committee to have wide latitude.

Mrs. Zarkower – asked Jack Robinson (former CBAC Chairperson) to speak about past CBAC experiences.

Mr. Robinson – Stated that the group had strong opinions and thinks the Board liaison needs to provide guidance so committee knows where it should be going. He wants the CBAC topics to be clearly defined by the Board.

Mr. Kaplan – What do other districts do?

Mr. Robinson – We used information from other districts that was available and used it as benchmarking data. He would like to see this continued. Not all districts have budget committees.

Mr. Diamond – The CBAC did its best work when it had specific tasks given to it by the Board.

Ms. Barr – The committee needs context.

Mr. Stark – Here are some tasks for the CBAC:

1. Establish long-range planning outline for capital projects.
2. Create strategic plan for the long-term financial health of the District.
3. How does the District manage its finances with the new tax cap mandate?

Mr. Kaplan – Maybe the committee needs a different name such as “Financial Advisory Committee.”

Mr. Schuster- Maybe the charge needs to include information on both short and long term financial aspects of specific issues.

Mrs. Zarkower – Made distinction between financial and educational implications.

Mr. Diamond – Most committees do touch on educational implications so it may be difficult for a budget committee to avoid these matters. Different points of view are available and necessary in the total scope of discussion.

Mr. Kaplan – Mentioned the 8/9 period debate and how they can become hotbed issues. Learn from watching other districts (such as Briarcliff).

Mr. Stark – Many of last year’s recommendations were all over the place. The Board should establish a reasonable focus for the CBAC. I support changing the name of the committee and sticking to the important tasks mentioned earlier.

COMMUNITY COALITION

Ms. Barr – This is different than other committees, not really a Board of Education Committee.

Mr. Kaplan – “If it’s not broke don’t fix it.”

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Generally follows Board policy for guidelines as to its meetings. It was agreed to leave this Committee as is.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

Mr. Schuster – He wants committee feedback on charge.

Mr. Kaplan – Doesn't want committee involved with inventory issues. Focus on deliverables in the classroom – what is the purpose of technology in the District's classroom?

Ms. Barr - Charge states that the committee will be advisory to the District Administration.

Colin Byrne – Committee charge was derived from language that ties to the need for a committee to maintain e-rate funding.

Mr. Diamond – Wants the committee to look at automating more of the district's administrative functions.

CONSENT AGENDA

The following Resolutions are recommended for action by the Superintendent of Schools to the Board of Education of the Blind Brook-Rye UFSD:

A. Certified Personnel Resolutions

1. Appointment – Leave Replacement – Recommended Motion: The Board of Education does hereby appoint Barbara Bigler as an Elementary Leave Replacement, effective September 19, 2011 and ending when the Elementary teacher returns. Your salary will be at MA Step A \$61,146 – pro-rated \$305.73 per diem*
* Subject to Negotiations
2. Appointment – Part-Time A.I.S. Teacher – PRSS – Recommended Motion – The Board of Education does hereby appoint Danielle DeLaurentis to a part-time (.45) A.I.S. position at the PRSS effective October 12, 2011 and ending June 30, 2012 at MA Step 6 \$81,657 – pro-rated \$31,785.29*
* Subject to Negotiations

Upon motion by Mr. Kaplan and second by Mr. Diamond Resolutions 1-2 were passed unanimously.

B. Other Personnel Resolutions

Salary figures are subject to the outcome of future negotiations

1. Substitute Teachers at BBMS/HS – Recommended Motion: The Board of Education approves the following individuals to be substitute teachers during the 2011-2012 school year as needed:

Curt Pader Anthony Martini Eileen Sweeney Jennifer Borelli

2. Appointment Co-Curricular Assignments – PRSS – Recommended Motion:
The Board of Education approves the following staff members to Co-Curricular Assignments for the 2011-2012 school year:

Kim Vallarelli	7:30 AM –Multi-Purpose Room	\$972
Kim Vallarelli	8:10AM-8:35AM – Multi-Purpose Room	\$972
Betsy Murphy	Grade 5 Yearbook	\$913
Tara Madden & Jackie Giovannone	Green Key	\$456.50
Christine Caldwell & Jane Giard	Grade 5 Student Government	\$1,141
Greg DiMiceli	Director Grade 5 Musical	\$2,853
Paul Mariconda	PRSS Chorus/Pianist	\$572
Christine Onofrio	PRSS Newsletter	\$913
Maria Stocklas	Substitute Procurement	\$2,085

Upon motion by Mr. Kaplan and second by Mr. Diamond Resolutions 1-2 were passed unanimously.

3. Appointment Advisors –(Non Club) - BBHS – Recommended Motion:
The Board of Education approves the following staff members to Co-Curricular Assignments for the 2011-2012 school year:

Cindy Zahl	Freshman Class Advisor	\$2,282
Howard Levy	Jazz Ensemble – HS	\$2,282
Howard Levy	Chamber Ensemble – HS	\$2,282
R. Gianfrancesco	Sophomore Class Advisor	\$2,853
M. Gasparini	Student Senate	\$2,853
E. Ryan	School Congress`	\$2,853
J. Romm	Community Service Facilitator	\$3,423
J. Ambrosio	Junior Class Advisor	\$3,423
N. Simmons	Model U.N.	\$3,423
C. Decker	Senior Options	\$4,565
C. Colangelo	Director Fall Play – HS	\$5,135
C. Decker	Senior Class Advisor	\$5,135
N. Flory	AM Gym Supervision	\$2,158
M. Lombardi	AM Detention Supervision	\$2,158
P. Carapella	Substitute Procurement – HS	\$2,085
B. Gorman	Substitute Procurement – MS	\$2,085

Upon motion by Mr. Kaplan and second by Mr. Diamond Resolution 3 was passed unanimously. Comments on Resolution # 3 - Mr. Diamond feels that Senior Options

does not need a separate advisor and students should go to their scheduled teacher for information. Mr. Stark stated that given participation and size of the senior class there needs to be formal coordination.

C. Educational Resolutions

1. Approval to Host NYSSMA Festival – Recommended Motion: The Board of Education approves that the Blind Brook Middle/High School be the host site for the Westchester County NYSSMA Majors Festival on March 21-24, 2012.
2. Approval of Committee on Special Education Recommendations - Recommended Motion: The Board of Education approves the following Special Education Committee recommendations submitted for review as of September 28, 2011:

Case numbers: 51795 and 50989

Upon motion by Mr. Kaplan and second by Mr. Diamond Resolutions 1-2 were passed unanimously. Comment on Resolution 1 - Mr. Kaplan noted opportunities for fund raising when hosting the NYSSMA Festival.

D. Business Resolutions

1. Approval of Swimming Merger – Boys – Recommended Motion: The Board of Education approves the Boys’ Swimming Merger between Blind Brook and Rye City School District for the 2011-2012 season and payment will be on a per pupil basis not to exceed \$750 per participant. Rye will be the host school for the season.

Upon motion by Mr. Kaplan and second by Mr. Diamond Resolution #1 was amended to read not to exceed \$750 per participant and passed unanimously.

2. Approval of Minutes – Recommended Motion: The Board of Education accepts and approves the Minutes of the September 19, 2011 Board of Education Meeting.

Resolution # 2. was TABLED. Mr. Diamond wants Exhibit “A” and Exhibit “B” to be removed from the Minutes.

3. Acceptance of Donation – Yamaha Drum Set – Recommended Motion: The Board of Education gratefully accepts the donation of a 5 piece DP Series Yamaha Drum Set from Mr. Steven Finkelstein for the Ponterio Ridge Street Elementary School.

4. Approval of Budget Transfer – Recommended Motion: The Board of Education approves the following Budget Transfer:

<u>TRANSFER TO</u>	<u>TRANSFER FROM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
A2020150010000	A2020160010000	\$4,046.04

Upon motion by Mr. Kaplan and second by Mr. Diamond Resolutions 3 & 4 were passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dean Santon, 39 Hillandale Road – wants the Board of Education to accept public comments before taking action on resolutions and wants the Board to embrace fiscal management concerns with a little more assertiveness.

Monroe E. Haas – 15 Lawridge Drive – Read from a prepared statement.

Mrs. Zarkower corrected Mr. Haas – It was not a Board of Education e-mail. The author sent the e-mail and it was not confidential.

Bert Slomin – 1 Bellefair Boulevard – Objected to Mr. Schuster’s opening statement about the e-mail controversy. He supports Mr. Diamond and reminded the community that he received more than 800 votes in winning the last Board election. Does not want Mr. Diamond’s blog to be shut down. Urges the Board to work cooperatively.

Alyce Mariam, 89 Country Ridge Drive North – Critical of Mr. Diamond’s e-mail and wants acknowledgement of his apology. Criticized recent video posted on his blog. Questions for Mr. Stark: Wants to know how NCLB repeal will affect Blind Brook? Why was BBHS rated 188 of 600 schools in the *U.S. News & World Report*? Mr. Stark responded: NCLB will be replaced by Race to the Top. The ranking of schools like this is not the best way to measure the performance of students and schools. Mr. Diamond – objected to Mrs. Mariam’s characterization of the video on his blog.

Dick Hubert, 53 Doral Greens Drive – Objected to Mr. Schuster’s statement and commended Mr. Diamond’s blog and urged everyone to view it.

Mrs. Zarkower – Commented that Mr. Diamond’s blog subjects the District to possible legal ramifications and exposure. The Board of Education is not trying to suppress first amendment rights.

Bert Slomin – responded by stating that “they” will not tolerate the Board trying to muzzle Mr. Diamond.

Dean Santon – responded by stating he was surprised at the divisiveness of the Board over Mr. Diamond’s blog. The tone on this Board has changed, it is petty. Mrs. Zarkower – we must move forward with matters of importance.

Michael Borrelli, 175 Betsy Brown Road – Addressed Mr. Haas’ comments, never asked that Ms. Arkawy should be fired. Disappointed that so many people want the e-mail exchange to remain quiet.

Mr. Haas – responded to Mr. Borrelli’s comments – clarified his earlier comments about Ms. Arkawy and other matters. Stated that he feels like an innocent victim.

Mrs. Zarkower – The Board cannot comment on personnel matters and will not do so.

Julie Schuster, 2 Bobbie Lane – Wants the whole thing put behind us; assured Mr. Haas that Mr. Borrelli did not malign him.

Mrs. Zarkower called for adjournment – Upon motion by Mr. Kaplan and second by Mr. Diamond the Board moved to adjourn this meeting without entering Executive Session at 10:47 PM.

Jonathan Ross, District Clerk

Date

Sheri Zarkower, President

Date

Meeting Date 10/03/11 Approved 11/21/11