

| <u>February 6, 2006</u><br>Date | <u>Special Meeting</u><br>Type of Meeting | <u>MESMS Cafeteria</u><br>Where Held | <u>J. McCoy</u><br>Presiding Officer |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Members Present:                | <u>A. D'Alessandro</u>                    | Members Absent:                      | <u>T. Perrino</u>                    |
|                                 | <u>M. Drexel</u>                          |                                      |                                      |
|                                 | <u>P. Faigle</u>                          |                                      |                                      |
|                                 | <u>P. Harris (ar: 6:15 pm)</u>            |                                      |                                      |
|                                 | <u>J. Miller</u>                          |                                      |                                      |

Also present: Dr. Bruno, G. Heller, T. Cole, E. Cariello, staff, community and press.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Ms. McCoy.

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Faigle that the Board convene into Executive Session at 6:08 p.m. to discuss a specific personnel issue/work history.

5 aye 0 nay, Motion carried

There was no action taken.

Motion by Mr. Drexel, seconded by Mr. Miller, that the Board return to open session at 7:15 p.m.

6 aye 0 nay, Motion carried

Ms. McCoy led the Board in the pledge to the flag.

Ms. McCoy read a notice from the Westchester-Putnam School Boards Association regarding a workshop, scheduled for April 1, 2006, for anyone thinking of running for the Board in the May 2006 election. She also read a statement from the District Clerk stating that absentee ballots for the bond vote (March 14, 2006) would be available in the District Clerk's office in the Administrative Offices at Triangle Center.

Ms. McCoy clarified information about a public meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup> regarding the superintendent search is sponsored by the Board of Education and not the Families for a Smarter Yorktown as stated in an advertisement in the local newspapers. The purpose of that meeting is to get input from the community regarding a leadership profile for the superintendent search. The Board sent out letters to over twenty organizations in the Town and home in backpacks with students to ask the community to contribute their input. The meeting, sponsored by the Board, will be held in the Mildred E. Strang Middle School cafeteria at 7:30 p.m. All members of the community are welcomed to attend. In addition, on the District's website (yorktown.org), there is a link to the leadership profile form that the public can download to review and submit.

**Public Comment:** None.

## **Board of Education Discussion Items**

### **Board Subcommittee Progress Reports**

**Facilities Committee:** Mr. D'Alessandro introduced Paul Tozzi, Arris Contracting, to review the progress on Phase I construction. Mr. Tozzi stated that the construction for the administrative space was about two weeks ahead of schedule. The paperwork for the new high school addition was moving along. The projected opening date would be in the beginning of July 2006.

**Audit Committee:** Mr. Miller stated that there was a blurb in the North County News asking community members to volunteer for the committee. It also appeared in The Journal News. He stated that the committee is seeking three community members to join with Mr. Drexel and himself to meet the State mandated criteria for the audit. Both Mr. Miller and Drexel will be meeting with Ray Preusser, the District's Auditor, on how the committee should proceed.

**Superintendent Search:** Ms. McCoy stated that the entire Board met with Dr. Bruce Dennis, with the search firm of Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, to develop an advertisement to be placed in the February 16<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> editions of Education Week. Dr. Dennis recommended that placing an ad in the NY Times is not really cost effective. It would cost between \$6,000-7,500 and would not be as successful as the ad in Education Week. Dr. Dennis suggested using the phrase "compensation will be highly competitive" to be preferable to listing a specific salary and benefits package. A discussion ensued regarding whether or not specific salary information should be included in the advertisement. The American Association of School Administrators Conference is on February 26<sup>th</sup> and ad could be placed in the conference daily paper for a modest cost of \$175. The Board postponed the decision until after the curriculum presentations. Ms. McCoy passed out a list of dates and asked the Board for dates that they would be available to interview the superintendent candidates.

### **Superintendent Reports:**

**Good News Items:** Dr. Bruno stated that the Yorktown High School Evening of Dance performance was outstanding. He thanked the First Nighters President Valerie Stern, for mentioning the upcoming bond vote on March 14<sup>th</sup> at each of the performances. He added that Crompond School published an excellent newspaper – a wonderful piece of journalism. Crompond also held their usual outstanding science fair and if anyone missed it, Brookside School would be having one soon. Dr. Bruno encouraged the community to take a look at the beautiful mural on diversity directly outside of the cafeteria in the middle school, which was created by middle school students.

**Gifted/Talented Work Group Progress Report:** Dr. Bruno said that "this is the year of committees." The Board has already seen two excellent presentations by the English/Language Arts Committee and the Math Committee. He introduced the chairs of the Gifted/Talented Committee, Linda Grimm and Joel Feldman.

Dr. Feldman invited those present on the committee to sit at the Board table, including Cathy Russell, Sheryl Goldberg, Valerie Stern, Janet Beechert, Beth Crescimanno, Anna Fazio and Colleen Mangan.

Dr. Feldman and Ms. Grimm reviewed the charge given to the Gifted/Talented Committee. Ms. Grimm noted that the website contained the documents on the District's gifted program. The committee will be working with those documents from 1996 and 1998. The G/T teachers will be contacting their colleagues in other districts to set up a network meeting to share formats for their G/T programs hosted by Yorktown on February 9<sup>th</sup>.

Janet Beechert, parent of three children, stated that the district must meet the needs of the gifted children, including clustering and tracking.

Colleen Mangan, first grade teacher at French Hill School, asked the Board to add back in the budget an enrichment specialist to work with the two K-2 buildings, which had been eliminated.

Anna Fazio, gifted/talented teacher at Crompond School, agreed with Ms. Mangan regarding the need for additional support in the k-2 schools.

Sheryl Goldberg, enrichment specialist in MESMS, asked the Board to support the gifted students in the middle school because they are at a crossroads in their lives and it is a critical time in their lives.

Cathy Russell, parent and District PTSA President, said that the committee is working on a survey for all parents to complete, not just parents of gifted children.

Beth Crescimanno, gifted/talented teacher at Brookside School, stated that they met the needs of the gifted children socially and emotionally – that there is a staff of dedicated staff who meet to discuss those needs. Last year, two people were cut. The needs of grades 3-5 are being met, but asked about the needs in K-2 and 6-8.

The Board followed with questions and suggestions regarding the charge given to the committee.

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. McCoy to have a five minute recess before the next presentation.

6 aye, 0 nay, Motion Carried

### **Differentiation Task Force Progress Report**

Dr. Bruno introduced the two co-chairs for the task force: Susan Berry and Adele Kivel.

Ms. Berry and Ms. Kivel named the members of the task force: Renee Menzie, Jackie Carbone, Karen Corrado and Mr. Miller. They reviewed the charge to the task force, a survey that was developed to find out the needs of teachers regarding differentiation. The task force is asking for an opportunity for staff development days with noted speakers and instructors on the differentiation topic. Also expressed a need for two differentiation specialists – one at the elementary level and one

at the secondary level – to work with teachers and principals and to be available on a daily basis to help with ongoing staff development.

The Board asked questions about the training and needs of the teachers.

Karen Corrado, parent member, asked that the district make an investment in differentiation because it can benefit every child.

Renee Menzie, teacher at French Hill, stated that having a colleague in-house is very helpful and helps to get feedback.

Board members expressed support for differentiation because it is a process that affects every student, and asked what the district could do to support differentiation if budget constraints prevent hiring the two specialists requested by the task force. They asked if it could be done with a stipend and what the costs were associated with teacher visits to another district.

There was a two-minute recess.

Ms. McCoy announced that the budget meetings scheduled for February 11<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> were being cancelled. The Finance Committee will be meeting on February 15<sup>th</sup> to work on the budget. The preliminary superintendent's budget will be presented on March 6<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. McCoy asked whether the Board wanted to place an ad in the NY Times which Dr. Dennis recommended against. The Board decided not to use the Times. Mr. Miller asked the question regarding whether the specific salary should be placed in the advertisement or “highly competitive salary.” Dr. Bruno suggested taking the word “highly” out of the ad and say “regionally” competitive. It was decided to leave the ad as recommended by Dr. Dennis, using “highly competitive.”

### **Budget Assumptions**

The first assumption regarding a “maintenance” budget was discussed. Mr. Drexel emphasized his desire to use a “zero-based” budget and a discussion followed. It was determined that it would be too much to change the entire budget to zero-based all in one year. Three categories were selected for the 2006-07 budget: (1) materials & supplies; (2) substitute teachers; and (3) Instructional Assistants labor codes.

The second assumption refers to “new hires limited to State mandates and student enrollment levels.” Dr. Bruno stated that he had instructed the principals to review each of their requests with that assumption in mind.

Mr. Cole stated that regarding the third assumption on State Aid, the District decided to go with the Governor's proposal, which is higher than last year by approximately \$585,000. The TRS rate in assumption four is proposed at 8.6%.

Assumption five is self-explanatory regarding settlement of employee contracts/salaries. In assumption six on energy costs, the estimates will be slightly lower because of the mild winter.

The assumption for debt service costs would include the cost for the proposed bond in March using a BAN (Bond Anticipation Note).

Assumption eight regarding student enrollment does not change.

Assumption nine mandates the hiring of an internal auditor which has been put in the budget as a new hire. The district has decided to share to costs of the auditor with other Districts in the area. In assumption ten, the Board would need to decide on whether they agree to create a "purchasing agent" position. Number eleven is also self-explanatory regarding No Child Left Behind legislation requirements.

Ms. McCoy questioned where the assumption was to put "X" amount of money in the budget to put towards maintaining our buildings. Final (12<sup>th</sup>) assumption should be: "Begin restoring operations and maintenance budget to a level that allows the district to maintain and improve district-wide infrastructure."

Ms. McCoy proposed that the district keep the budget under 8%. Mr. Drexel and Ms. Harris believed that it should start at "0%." Mr. Miller suggested asking the Finance Committee to come up with a budget with a "0%" increase. Mr. Heller stated that the Board had discussed the three areas of the budget to be "Zero-based" at the beginning of the meeting. Dr. Bruno said that the administration would build a budget and work with the Finance Committee to have a budget that would be acceptable to the Board. Mr. D'Alessandro stated that the budget should be a joint effort.

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. McCoy, to extend the meeting beyond 11:00 p.m.

5 Aye, 1 Nay, Motion Carried  
(J. McCoy, J. Miller, A. D'Alessandro, M. Drexel, T. Faigle, Aye; T. Harris, Nay)

Dr. Bruno stated that the administration would present the proposed budget to the Finance Committee, modify it, if necessary, and then present it to the Board.

Mr. Cole explained the need to increase the current budget by \$45,000 to reflect the grant-in-aid received for the EMF remediation project at the middle school. It will have no effect on next year's budget. The business office must pay the bill.

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Mr. Miller, to increase the budget by \$45,000 to reflect a grant-in-aid received for the EMF remediation project. Such funds to be deposited into Account A1621-468-10-9950 Special Projects. This action does not increase the basis for calculation of next year's budget or tax rate.

6 aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

## **RESOLUTIONS**

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Ms. Faigle to approve the substitute list.

6 aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

## **PERSONNEL**

### **INSTRUCTIONAL**

#### **Resignation**

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Ms. Faigle, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Ellen Mager, mathematics teacher at Yorktown High School, effective February 28, 2006.

6 aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

*Note:* Ms. McCoy thanked Ms. Mager for all of her years of service at Yorktown. She is taking advantage of her advanced degree by becoming the Assistant Principal at Croton-Harmon. The down side of this advancement is that Ellen will be leaving the classroom. She will become a stellar administrator. Dr. Bruno said that in Ms. Mager's letter of resignation, she expressed the desire to one day return to the district in an administrative capacity.

The District has retained the services of an excellent teacher to fill in.

#### **Parental Leaves**

Motion by Ms. Faigle, seconded by Ms. Harris, to approve the following parental leaves of absence:

Victoria Luczkowski, science teacher at Strang Middle School, effective February 15, 2006 through June 30, 2006.

Marissa Reed, guidance counselor at Yorktown High School, effective March 21, 2006.

6 aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

#### **Appointment**

Motion by Ms. Harris, seconded by Ms. Faigle, to approve the appointment of Mary Egan, as a permanent substitute/leave replacement science teacher at Strang Middle School, Step 4 of the Bachelors salary schedule plus 42 credits, effective February 15, 2006 through June 30, 2006. Ms. Egan has Provisional certification in Biology 7-12. She is replacing Victoria Luczkowski who has been granted a parental leave of absence.

6 aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

### **Creation of Position**

Motion by Ms. Faigle, seconded by Ms. Harris, to approve the creation of an Academic Intervention Services Teaching Assistant position from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. This position is necessary to provide coverage at the Yorktown High Internal Suspension Room. This position will require a valid NYS teaching certificate.

5 aye, 1 Nay, Motion Carried  
(J. McCoy, J. Miller, A. D'Alessandro, M. Drexel, T. Faigle, Aye; T. Harris, Nay)

### **SUPPORT**

#### **Resignation**

Motion by Ms. Faigle, seconded by Mr. Miller, to accept the resignation of Dina Puglia, as a 0.85 FTE nurse for the district assigned to St. Patrick's School, effective February 17, 2006.

6 aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

Motion by Ms. Faigle, seconded by Mr. Miller, to accept the resignation of Khaleeli, Computer Technician, effective February 20, 2006.

6 aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

#### **Consortium Agreement**

Motion by Ms. Faigle, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve the terms of employment for the 2005-06 school year with Joan Valenstein, former Director of the Consortium, to continue coordinating certain programs previously sponsored by the Consortium, (including, but not limited to, Red Ribbon Week; P.S. We Care; PAKT [Parents And Kids Together]; Yorktown Community Day and interaction with senior citizen community groups) at the rate of \$36.00 per hour, total not to exceed \$15,000.

**Discussion:** The Board discussed the dollar amount. It was decided that the amount should be changed to \$5,000 for salary and the remainder for program and supplies.

Motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. D'Alessandro, to approve the amended motion changing it to the "total not to exceed \$5,000."

6 aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

### **Board of Education Comments**

Ms. Harris questioned why the signs donated for French Hill and Brookside Schools had not been approved. She stated that the Foundation for Excellence fundraiser was a fabulous event and that the County Executive had attended, along with some of our teachers and principals. Ms. Harris thanked them for their support.

**Review of Tentative Agenda for February 27, 2006 Business Meeting.** – There were no questions.

### **Public Comment**

Ed Ciffone, UTY President, stated that he would not support the bond, but wanted the specifics of what was in the bond. He believed that the full-day kindergarten proposition should be a part of the total bond. He questioned the issue of not approving a copier bid. Mr. Ciffone also requested that the Board come out with their budget as quickly as possible.

Tony Grasso, resident, stated that he had written to the Board regarding a donation that he would like to make to all six schools and that according to the District's policy, it would be okay to display a crèche in each building. He asked for the Board's decision on acceptance of the gift.

Ms. McCoy stated that regarding the copier bid, the company in question did not meet the District's specs. She said that all of the information pertaining to the bond propositions had been posted on the District's website.

Ms. Harris said that she believed the District should accept the donation of the crèches for each of the schools, but asked for confirmation of that from the District's legal counsel. Mr. Miller agreed with checking with the attorneys.

Motion by Ms. Faigle, seconded by Mr. D'Alessandro, to adjourn the meeting.

6 aye, 0 Nay, Motion Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Board Secretary