

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of South Huntington Union Free School District was held on Wednesday, November 19, 2014, in the cafeteria of Maplewood Intermediate School, 19 School Lane, Huntington Station, New York.

Present: **Board Members:**

President
Vice President

Mr. Kaden
Mr. Ciappetta
Mrs. Brieff
Mrs. DeGaetano
Mrs. LaCara
Mr. Nitkewicz

Staff:

Superintendent of Schools
Deputy Superintendent
Asst. Supt. for Personnel and District Services
Asst. Supt. for Instruction and Curriculum
Business Administrator
Deputy District Clerk

Dr. Bennardo
Ms. Harris
Dr. Centamore
Dr. Bloom
Mr. Light
Mrs. McLean

Absent: Mrs. Hammond, District Clerk
Mrs. Carey (on official business); arrived 8:15 p.m.

Call to Order: Mr. Kaden opened the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Executive Session: Motion by Mr. Ciappetta, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, be it Resolved that the Board go into Executive Session to discuss the employment history of a particular person.
Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. DeGaetano, be it Resolved that the Executive Session be adjourned.
Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Kaden opened the Business Meeting at 7:30 p.m. and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing on a School Tax Exemption for Veterans: Mr. Kaden announced that the first order of business was the public hearing on the school tax exemption for veterans; he then turned the meeting over to Dr. Bennardo. Dr. Bennardo shared that he and the Board of Education welcomed the opportunity to address this topic. He further added if questions were asked that could not be answered by either he or Mr. Light, he would, in turn, seek out those answers and respond to the individual accordingly. Dr. Bennardo stated that the exemption(s) would take place in the 2015/16 school year. Dr. Bennardo reviewed three of the 17 levels of exemptions; within each level are three categories of veterans' service. He cited the "Reduced Maximums" for wartime, combat and disabled veterans; the "Basic Maximums" for wartime, combat and disabled veterans; and the "Increases Maximums"

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School Tax
Exemption for
Veterans:
(Continued)**

for wartime, combat and disabled veterans. Additionally, Dr. Bennardo reviewed the exemption that provides a qualified veteran to transfer, on a pro-rated basis, the exemption to another home should the veteran sell and purchase another home within the district. In other words, the exemption goes with the individual to the next home. Dr. Bennardo further stated that with the "Basic Maximum," which he considered as the "middle ground" exemption, would cost non-veteran homeowners an additional \$21/year. Dr. Bennardo then asked Mr. Light to share his expertise on this subject.

Mr. Light stated that this was, in his opinion, an extremely complicated law. Within each level there are various reductions that relate to wartime veterans, combat veterans and disabled veterans. He provided the example with the "Basic Maximum" exemption and shared that for wartime veterans, \$12,000 was the full value reduction; for combat veterans, \$8,000 was the full value reduction; and for disabled veterans, \$40,000 was the full value reduction. The exemptions are reductions from the full value of the property. Mr. Light further stated that these exemptions are not reimbursed by the State. With the STAR exemption, Mr. Light continued, the State does reimburse the district. Mr. Light explained that the final collective amount of the veteran reduction would be spread out amongst all other non-veteran homeowners to make up the difference. The tax levy would remain the same; non-veteran households would make-up the difference. Mr. Light reiterated what Dr. Bennardo had shared earlier, that with the "Basic Maximum" exemption, each household would have a \$21 increase. Mr. Light added that the law contains 17 different levels ranging from "Reduced Maximums" to "Basic Maximums" to increased multi-maximums and further shared that there were a number of complexities and quirks within this legislation. There was an exemption that related to an apartment building and condominium complex owners, as well. Mr. Light stated that the district had until March to make this decision and continued that it is the Board's intent to hear from the public regarding this matter.

Mr. Kaden asked if the Board had any questions. Mr. Ciappetta asked when the exemptions would go into effect; Mr. Light responded in the 2015/16 school year, and further explained that Suffolk County is the last county to send out their tax bills; the district does not receive any monies until January. Mr. Ciappetta posed the question of the tax freeze and asked how the freeze affects the exemption(s). Discussion ensued regarding the tax rebate; the tax rebate would be less for the veterans with the exemption and more for those taxpayers paying the difference.

Mr. Nitkewicz expressed his dissatisfaction, although not surprise, with the complex language utilized within this piece of law. He stated that nothing was simple and concise, but rather the contrary, which was the problem with taxes. Mr. Kaden responded that complaining was not an option, as this legislation provided the Board with a choice to approve or not approve. The choice is with the Board. Mr. Kaden asked Dr.

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Bennardo to review the four possible resolutions.

Dr. Bennardo reviewed Resolution No. 1 for wartime, combat and disabled veterans. Mr. Kaden asked what percentage of the assessed value was associated with each level. Mr. Light responded that he had not completed percentage calculations, however, he estimated that with the “Basic Maximum” the percentage was 3.2%.

Dr. Bennardo reviewed Resolution No. 2, which is applicable to co-op owners; and Resolution No. 3, applicable to gold star parents, those parents who sadly lost a child in combat. Discussion ensued regarding veterans who would qualify under all three categories—wartime, combat and disabled—Mr. Light stated that if a veteran was entitled to all three, the veteran would receive the cumulative exemption. The question was asked as to how many veterans currently reside within the district; the response Mr. Light provided was 728. Dr. Bennardo shared that using this 728 figure was how the cost of \$21 was ascertained for the “Basic Maximum” level. The question was asked as to how many veterans live in the district who were disabled; the response was 219. The question was asked how this information was ascertained; Mr. Light shared that the Town has the information on file. Mr. Nitkewicz added that a family member of his, a veteran, recently received a letter from the Town of Huntington regarding his status as a veteran. Dr. Bennardo agreed that the Town provides districts the information required; the burden is not put on the district to secure this data. Mr. Ciappetta asked when the Town of Huntington adopted their veteran exemption; Mr. Light responded that it was back in 2004. Mr. Ciappetta then stated that the change was that school districts were now asked to consider providing these exemptions to veterans.

Mr. Kaden stated a concern that he had with the exemptions was with those veterans who have achieved affluence and were not in need of a tax exemption, as they were fairly well off. His concern was for the non-veteran homeowner who was struggling with a mortgage, bills, and will now have to pay more in taxes. Mr. Ciappetta questioned the purpose of the law; was it to help people who cannot pay or was it a form of recognition for service? Dr. Bennardo responded that it was his understanding that the law was created to recognize the service and sacrifices made by those who have served in the military. Discussion ensued regarding the difficulties the Board faces while operating under a two percent tax cap. Several veterans in the audience articulated that the amount of money the non-veteran homeowners would pay was the equivalent of a meal at McDonalds. Mr. Nitkewicz agreed with the comment, however, also acknowledged that there were families who cannot pay their taxes. Dr. Bennardo interjected and stated that the recommendation of the “Basic Maximum” strikes a medium balance that had a palatable increase to the other homeowners. Mr. Kaden concurred.

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(Continued)**

A brief discussion ensued regarding gold star households, and the question was raised by Mr. Nitkewicz as to how many gold star families lived within the district. Dr. Bennardo responded that the number was very small, and the cost very negligible with respect to the exemption.

A veteran in the audience directed his question specifically to Mr. Kaden and asked him what aspect of the exemption was he uncomfortable with, citing Mr. Kaden's previous statement. Mr. Kaden responded he was uncomfortable with the higher levels of the exemptions. He provided the example of a veteran having attained the status of a millionaire, then why would he wish to provide a tax exemption to that individual? The veteran responded firmly to Mr. Kaden that the same affluent veteran served his country for the opportunity to pursue success, why would Mr. Kaden penalize the veteran? Mr. Kaden addressed the veteran and respectively shared that he worked in the defense industry and was surrounded by veterans who honorably served this country; he had nothing but admiration and respect for these individuals. However, he reiterated that if someone had achieved wealth, he does have a problem in providing that person an exemption. The veteran appeared agitated with this response and stated that the same veteran put his life on the line. Mr. Nitkewicz interjected at this point and stated he agreed with providing an exemption to veterans and discussion ensued with comments made by various board members that spoke to the respect for the invaluable service provided by the country's military forces. Dr. Bennardo concluded the conversation by stating that everyone in the room agreed more than they disagreed. A veteran asked the question if the general consensus of the Board was that they were in support of the exemption. Mr. Kaden responded that no one was opposed to it.

Mr. Freeman, a veteran from the American Legion Post 1244, summarized by stating there are 728 veterans and together with the three posts—VFW Post 1469, American Legion Post 1244, and the American Legion Post 360—there were 1,100 people. He spoke of balancing the budget on the backs of the veterans and that it took courage for the Board to vote yes.

**Resolutions on
School Tax
Exemption for
Veterans:**

Motion by Mr. Ciappetta, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves Resolutions 1, 3 and 4 for School Tax Exemptions for Veterans:

Resolution 1

Whereas, veterans have provided an invaluable service to this country by risking their lives to protect the freedoms enjoyed by all citizens of the United States; and

Whereas, in recognition of this service and the sacrifices that it entailed, on December 18, 2013, Governor Cuomo signed a bill to allow school districts to partially exempt property owned by certain qualified veterans; and

**Resolutions on
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Exemption for
Veterans:
(Continued)**

Whereas, such bill requires the governing body of a school district to pass a resolution to adopt such bill,

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved, that the South Huntington Union Free School District does hereby adopt the Basic Maximum exemption provided for in Real Property Tax Law (RPTL) §458-A.

Resolution 3

Resolved, that the South Huntington Union Free School District does hereby adopt the expanded definition of the term “qualified owner,” as that term is defined under RPTL §458-a, to include a “Gold Star Parent” as that term is defined under RPTL §458-A.

Resolution 4

Be it Further Resolved, that the South Huntington Union Free School District does hereby allow a qualified veteran under RPTL §458-a to transfer, on a pro-rated basis, his exemption to another home purchased within the South Huntington Union Free School District.

Motion carried unanimously.

The audience applauded; and Veteran Mr. Thomas Freeman asked to make a statement. Mr. Freeman wished to pay tribute to the South Huntington School District. He stated that his children went through the district, and it all started at the Countrywood School. He favorably mentioned the multi-grade program that his children were enrolled in. His wife is a Hall of Fame honoree, having served 30 years as a special agent in the FBI. He gave credit to the district for their educational foundation, which he believed provided the spark for their success.

**Adoption of
Agenda:**

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. Carey, be it Resolved that the revised tentative agenda be adopted.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Motion on Minutes
through Schedule
of Bills (Warrants):**

Motion by Mr. Ciappetta, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District approve the following items:

Minutes:

Minutes of Board meeting held on October 15, 2014.

**Schedule of Bills
(Warrants):**

General Fund	Warrant 47	\$ 182,534.15
School Lunch	18	7,730.78
Special Aid	17	57,533.95
Scholarship	2	500.00

Approved – Board Packet of November 7, 2014

General Fund	Warrant 45	Dental	\$ 11,666.67
"	46		113,102.65
School Lunch	17		22,021.68
Special Aid	15		37,868.82
"	16		157.40
"	V015		(174.31)

**Vote on Minutes
through Schedule
of Bills (Warrants):**

Mr. Kaden asked for any additional comments or questions on the above items, and then called for a vote on the motion.
Motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution Relating
to Continuing
Disclosure Matters
Application to
Bonds and
Authorizing
Certain Actions:**

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. Brieff,

WHEREAS, the South Huntington Union Free School District, in the County of Suffolk, State of New York (the "District") has previously issued its bonds, bond anticipation notes and/or other debt obligations (collectively, the "Bonds"); and

WHEREAS, in connection with the issuance of certain of the Bonds and for purposes of assisting underwriters/purchasers to comply with Rule 15c2-12 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the District has covenanted and/or entered into one or more undertakings or agreements to provide continuing disclosure (the "Continuing Disclosure Obligation") to the public marketplace; and

WHEREAS, in general the Continuing Disclosure Obligation requires the District to file certain financial information and notice of certain events in specified places and at specified times; and

WHEREAS, in connection with the sale of certain of the Bonds, the District issued one or more official statements that, among other things, described the District's Continuing Disclosure Obligation and whether or not the District had previously complied with its Continuing Disclosure Obligation in all material respects; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Enforcement (the "Enforcement Division") of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") announced its Municipalities Continuing Disclosure Cooperation Initiative (the "Initiative"), to address potentially materially inaccurate descriptions in official statements (made innocently, inadvertently or otherwise) of prior compliance with continuing disclosure obligations; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the terms of the Initiative, the Enforcement Division will recommend "favorable settlement terms" for issuers and underwriters that self-report by 5:00 p.m., eastern standard time, on December 1, possible materially inaccurate statements in official statements in the last five years relating to prior compliance with continuing disclosure obligations by submitting a specified questionnaire (the "Questionnaire") to the Enforcement Division; and

WHEREAS, the District has been provided with a copy of the Initiative, a copy of an advisory and memorandum prepared by bond counsel to the District describing the Initiative, and a copy of the Questionnaire released by the Enforcement Division; and

WHEREAS, if an issuer takes advantage of the Initiative by self-reporting possible materially inaccurate statements and if any of such statements are determined to be materially inaccurate by the Enforcement Division, the Enforcement Division will recommend to the SEC a settlement in which (i) the issuer consents to a cease-and-desist order, (ii) the issuer neither admits nor denies the findings of the

**Resolution Relating
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SEC and (iii) there is no payment of any civil penalty by the issuer; and
WHEREAS, any such settlement will require the issuer to (i) establish appropriate policies and procedures and training regarding continuing disclosure obligations within 180 days, (ii) comply with existing continuing disclosure undertakings, including updating past delinquent filings within 180 days, (iii) cooperate with any subsequent investigation by the Enforcement Division regarding the false statement(s), including the roles of individuals and/or other parties involved, (iv) disclose in a clear and conspicuous fashion the settlement terms in any final official statement for an offering by the issuer for five years and (v) provide the SEC staff with a compliance certification regarding the applicable undertakings by the issuer in one year; and

WHEREAS, the Initiative cautions that if an issuer does not take advantage of the Initiative by submitting a Questionnaire identifying any possible materially inaccurate statement with respect to prior compliance with a continuing disclosure obligation and the Enforcement Division later determines that such a materially inaccurate statement was made, then the Enforcement Division will likely recommend and seek financial sanctions against the issuer; and

WHEREAS, in light of the foregoing, the District has requested its financial advisor to examine and review the District's Continuing Disclosure Obligation and previous continuing disclosure filings and to report to the District any noncompliance with its Continuing Disclosure Obligation; and

WHEREAS, the District has received such report, and such report has been reviewed with its bond counsel; and

WHEREAS, as a result of such review, it may be desirable for the District to take advantage of the Initiative by submitting one or more Questionnaires to the Enforcement Division identifying a statement with respect to prior compliance with its Continuing Disclosure Obligation that is potentially materially inaccurate; and

WHEREAS, after consultation with its financial advisor and bond counsel, the District is desirous of authorizing the submission of one or more Questionnaires to the Enforcement Division;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE SOUTH HUNTINGTON UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT, IN THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLK, NEW YORK, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Authorization to Submit Questionnaire. The President of the Board of Education, the Vice-President of the Board of Education, and Assistant Superintendent for Business are each hereby authorized to take advantage of the Initiative by executing and submitting on behalf of the District one or more Questionnaires to the Enforcement Division by the December 1, 2014, deadline established by the Initiative.

Section 2. Various Incidental Actions. The President of the Board of Education, the Vice-President of the Board of Education, and the Assistant Superintendent for Business are each hereby authorized to execute and deliver all documents and instruments and to do all matters

Resolution Relating to Continuing Disclosure Matters Application to Bonds and Authorizing Certain Actions: (Continued)

and things as may be necessary, useful, convenient or desirable in connection with the foregoing.

Section 3. Prior Action. All action heretofore taken by the District relating to the foregoing is hereby ratified, confirmed, adopted and approved, including without limitation requesting the financial advisor to undertake the continuing disclosure review described in this resolution and seeking advice and assistance of bond counsel in respect thereto.

Section 4. Effective Date. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Motion carried unanimously.

2014 Winter Conference:

Motion by Mr. Ciappetta, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves Board attendance at the 2014 Winter Conference scheduled for January 14, 2015, at the Islandia Marriott. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Stimson's Local Assistance Plan:

Dr. Bennardo reported that the local assistance plan is required to address the poor ESL Math scores noted at the middle school and spoke of his concern for the ESL English, as well, and concern for closing the achievement gap for the ELL population. Discussion ensued; Dr. Bennardo commented that the lack of achievement within the ELL student population was a wide-spread problem in the country. He mentioned that Mrs. Harris had researched and learned of a school in Union City, New Jersey, that had reported strategies that have proven to be very successful in dealing with ELL. Both he and Mrs. Harris hope to visit the school in the near future. Mr. Kaden asked who worked on the local assistance plans; Dr. Bennardo responded that Dr. Bloom, Mr. Smith, various middle school teachers, parents and district-level administrators contributed. Mr. Kaden asked what the final goal of the plan was; Dr. Bloom responded that it was to close the achievement gap. Discussion ensued regarding the implementation of various measures to achieve the goal. Dr. Bennardo shared that the goal would not be reached until ELL were working at the same rate as all students.

Motion by Mrs. Brieff, seconded by Mrs. Carey, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the Local Assistant Plan (LAP) for Stimson Middle School.

Motion carried unanimously.

Field Trip Request:

Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the field trip to the Youth Leadership Academy scheduled for December 7-10, 2014, in New Orleans, Louisiana. Motion carried unanimously.

Field Trip Request: Motion by Mrs. Brieff, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the field trip to the NYSSMA All-State Conference in Rochester, New York, scheduled for December 4-7, 2014. Motion carried unanimously.

Recommendations for Placement by CSE/CPSE: Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. Carey, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District, having reviewed minutes of the Committee on Special Education dated September 11, 19, October 8, 14, 16, 21, 22, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, November 3, 5, 6, 7 and 10, 2014 and the Committee on Preschool Special Education dated August 15, October 15, 21, 28, November 3, 5 and 10, 2014, is satisfied that the procedures of Chapter 853 of the Education Law were followed and accepts the recommendations for placement set forth, copies made part of these legal minutes, pp. 592-606. Motion carried unanimously.

Personnel: Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mr. Ciappetta, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District, having reviewed the recommendations of the Chief School Administrator, is satisfied that the provisions of Section 3012 of Education Law were followed, and thereby accepts those recommendations as set forth in schedules made part of these legal minutes, pp. 607-615, and authorizes implementation thereof:

- Schedule 2 - Probationary Appointments (Instructional)
 - Schedule 7 - Temporary Replacement Appointments (Instructional)
 - Schedule 9 - Coaching/Extracurricular Appointments (Instructional)
 - Schedule 10 - Tenure Appointments
 - Schedule 12 - Leaves of Absence; Ext. of Sick Leave
 - Schedule 15 - Appointments (Non-Instructional)
 - Schedule 16 - Terminations (Non-Instructional)
 - Schedule 22 - Substitute Employee Appointments (Inst./Non-Inst.)
- Motion carried unanimously.

Information and Reports:

1. Memo to Board Policy Manual Holders from Dr. Bennardo re Board Policy §7213 – Response to Intervention
2. Letter to Parent/Guardian from Dr. Bennardo re Emergency Management Plan Early Release and Crime Stoppers Contact Info Card
3. Memo to Dr. Bennardo from Mr. Light re Facilities Committee Agenda
4. Congratulatory letter to the varsity soccer team members from Dr. Bennardo re outstanding varsity soccer season
5. Congratulatory letter to Marching Band members from Dr. Bennardo re outstanding marching band season
6. Congratulatory letter to students involved in the fall drama production from Dr. Bennardo

**Information and Reports:
(Continued)**

7. Letter to Parent/Guardian from Mr. Smith re Parent-Teacher Conferences
8. Memo to the Board of Education and Cabinet from Mr. Smith re Upcoming Events
9. Personnel Postings (3)
10. Confidential Documents from Ingerman Smith, L.L.P. (2)
11. News articles: *The Long-Islander*, 11-6-14

Information Sent to Board Week Ending November 7, 2014

1. Invitation to Western Suffolk BOCES Annual Board Dinner to be held on Thursday, December 4 (Board Members Only)
2. Memo to Board President of Component District from Dr. Michael J. Mensch, Western Suffolk BOCES, re Western Suffolk BOCES 2014-2015 Goals (Board Members Only)
3. Congratulatory letter to Whitman's Students of the Month for October from Dr. Bennardo
4. Congratulatory letter to Birchwood's Booster for the months of September and October from Dr. Bennardo
5. Memo to Mr. Kaden from Mr. Light re Audit Committee Agenda
6. Memo to Dr. Bennardo from Mr. Light re Meeting Minutes of Facilities Committee meeting of October 22, 2014
7. Memo to Dr. Bennardo from Mr. Light re 2013/2014 State Aid Estimations
8. Memo to Dr. Bennardo from Ms. Harris re School Grade Enrollment Report for the Second Attendance Period October 1, 2014, through October 31, 2014
9. Letter to Parents/Guardians from Ms. Acker re Progress Report Nights
10. Personnel Posting (1)
11. *Countrywood Chronicle*, November 2014
12. *November 2014 Calendar*, Oakwood Primary Center
13. *NYSIR News*, October 2014 (Board Members Only)
14. News articles: *The Long-Islander*, 10-30-14

Comments from Board Members and Staff:

Dr. Bennardo stated that he was pleased to share that the newly appointed high school administrative dean, Mr. Christopher Patronaggio, was in the audience; Dr. Bennardo asked Ms. Acker, principal of Walt Whitman High School, to make the formal introduction. Ms. Acker reported that she is extremely pleased to introduce Mr. Patronaggio, and looks forward to working with him. She thanked the Board of Education for their support with this process.

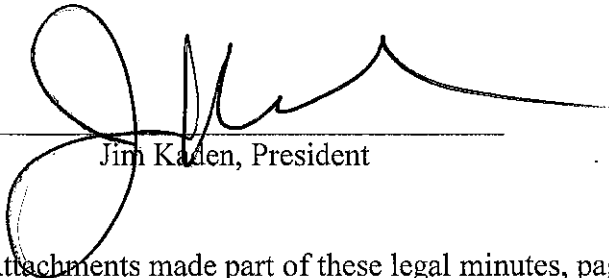
Mr. Kaden reported that the Board will be attending the Western Suffolk Annual Dinner on Thursday, December 4. Several board members expressed they were looking forward to the event.

Voice of the Residents:

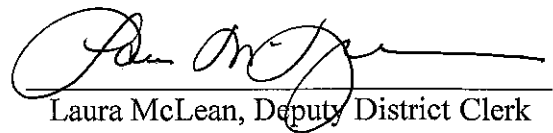
Visitors were invited to participate.

Adjournment: Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, be it Resolved that the meeting be adjourned.
Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:40 p.m.



Jim Kaden, President



Laura McLean, Deputy District Clerk

Attachments made part of these legal minutes, pages 592 through 615.