

December 14, 2016

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of South Huntington Union Free School District was held on Wednesday, December 14, 2016, in the All Purpose Room at the Countrywood Primary Center, 499 Old Country Road, Huntington Station, New York.

**Present:      Board Members:**

Vice President

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

**Staff:**

Superintendent of Schools  
Asst. Supt. for Business & District Operations  
Deputy Superintendent  
Asst. Supt. for Instruction & Curriculum  
Interim Personnel Administrator  
District Clerk

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

**Absent:**      President

Mr. Kaden

**Call to Order:**      Mr. Ciappetta opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

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

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, be it Resolved that the Executive Session be adjourned.  
Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Ciappetta opened the Business Meeting at 7:40 p.m. and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Musical  
Presentation:**

Dr. Bennardo thanked everyone in the audience for attending this evening, he expressed holiday greetings, and then introduced the Countrywood singers led by Mr. Adam Slawitsky. The performance was charming; the children's voices projected strongly and in full harmony. Each face was completely focused on their teacher, donned in a Santa hat, and each student followed his lead with every song. The children were especially animated during the song, "Blitzen's Boogie" to the absolute delight of their parents and grandparents. At the conclusion, Mr. Ciappetta thanked the singers for the heartwarming performance.

December 14, 2016

**Public Hearing on  
Proposed Cold War  
Veterans Tax  
Exemption for  
Qualifying  
Residential Real  
Property:**

Dr. Bennardo reported that New York State legislation was passed last year that provided an exemption for Cold War Veterans. While the legislation was passed, it was not funded by the State, and Boards of Education across the state can choose whether or not to approve this exemption. A public hearing was required in that the exemption affects the tax base. Dr. Bennardo then asked Dr. Centamore to provide additional information.

Dr. Centamore explained that he was in contact with the Town Assessor to secure the cost of this exemption for Cold War veterans that reside within our district. Dr. Centamore further shared that the “basic maximum” was the ‘middle of the road’ exemption, and as such, had two levels, one at 10% and the other at 15%. The Town Assessor’s office shared there were 83 Cold War veterans living within our boundaries. Additionally, there were 300 veterans that have not availed themselves to the current exemption, who would need to be re-canvassed; the Town will send letters and provide additional information when known to Dr. Centamore’s office. Based upon what would be the maximum number of veterans, 383 in total, the following represented the cost increase for taxpayers:

At 10% - \$5.23/year

At 15% - \$7.74/year

An elderly gentleman in the audience questioned where the number of 83 Cold War veterans referenced came from. Dr. Bennardo responded that the Town Assessor’s office had furnished the information. Discussion ensued between the gentleman and Dr. Bennardo regarding the number of veterans that qualify for the military exemption and how veterans apply for same; the gentleman felt the 83 number could be higher. The gentleman also added that he was one of the first classes that graduated from the district, the class of 1930. The Board expressed delight in hearing this information.

Mr. Ciappetta asked if there were any other questions from the Board or the audience. Mr. Ciappetta stated that if the Board wished to approve the resolution for this Cold War Veterans exemption, a motion to have the agenda amended would be required.

**Public Hearing on  
Proposed Cold War  
Veterans Tax  
Exemption for  
Tenant-  
Stockholders of  
Cooperative  
Apartment  
Corporations:**

Dr. Centamore provided information consistent with the residential real property public hearing and added that currently there were no cooperative apartment corporations, therefore, the information cited for real property owned by Cold War veterans applied. The resolution offered does provide specific language that would address such circumstances should a cooperative apartment corporation be approved within the boundaries of the South Huntington School District.

December 14, 2016

**Amendment to Agenda:** Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves amending the agenda to add the Cold War Veterans resolution on the agenda.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Adoption of Agenda:** Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. DeGaetano, be it Resolved that the revised, amended agenda be adopted.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Motion on Minutes through Schedule of Bills (Warrants):** Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, 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 November 9, 2016.

<b>Schedule of Bills (Warrants):</b>	General (A)	Schedule 47	\$219,618.04
		48	\$12,190.32
		49	\$217,368.32
	School Lunch (C)	Schedule 21	\$25,646.93
		22	\$20,847.08
	Special Aid	Schedule 19	\$70,101.26
	20	\$25,119.70	

Approved Board Packet of December 2, 2016

General (A)	Schedule 46	\$5,544,345.00
School Lunch (C)	Schedule 20	\$5,408.21
Special Aid (F)	Schedule 18	\$52,073.80

**Vote on Minutes through Schedule of Bills (Warrants):** Mr. Ciappetta asked for any additional comments or questions on the above items, and then called for a vote on the motion.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of District-Wide School Safety Plan:** Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the District-Wide School Safety Plan for the 2016/17 school year.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Resolution for Examination:** Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. Carey, WHEREAS, the District has administratively assigned the custodian referenced in Executive Session to his home pending a designated physician's examination;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves and authorizes, pursuant to Section 913 of the New York State Education Law, a physical examination to be completed by a physician designated by the district, a copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 907-908.

Motion carried unanimously.

December 14, 2016

**Approval of MOA  
for the South  
Huntington  
Professional Nurses  
Association:**

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. DeGaetano, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the Memorandum of Agreement made between the South Huntington Union Free School District and the South Huntington Registered Professional Nurses Association on November 28, 2016;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools are authorized to sign a more formal agreement in conformity with the above referenced agreement, a copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 909-918.  
Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Bennardo shared his appreciation for the nurses unit and the negotiating teams for a fair and responsible agreement. Mr. Ciappetta echoed Dr. Bennardo's sentiments.

**Approval of MOA  
for UPSEU  
Security Unit**

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. DeGaetano, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the Memorandum of Agreement made between the South Huntington Union Free School District and the UPSEU/Security Unit on November 14, 2016;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools are authorized to sign a more formal agreement in conformity with the above referenced agreement, a copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 919-923.  
Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Bennardo expressed his appreciation for the successful negotiations with the "blue" coat security guards. He cited Security Guard Salvatore Lupinacci in the audience and expressed his gratitude for the work our guards performed.

**Recommendations  
for Placement by  
CSE/CPSE:**

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District, having reviewed minutes of the Committee on Special Education dated October 13, 20, November 4, 9, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, December 1, 2016, and the Committee on Preschool Special Education dated November 3, 9, 17, 18, 28, 29, December 8, 9, 2016, 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. 924-940.  
Motion carried unanimously.

December 14, 2016

**Field Trip Request:** Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the National Junior Honor Society trip to Washington D.C. for 120 eighth-grade students April 19 through April 21, 2017.  
Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Bennardo remarked that he had the opportunity to visit the group that had traveled last year with Mr. Seth Goldman in Washington, D.C., and he was extremely impressed with the maturity of the students and the level of supervision of the advisors; he added that the students were totally engaged. Dr. Bennardo commented that our teachers are to be commended for taking on such great responsibility, as well as the parents in trusting their children to the district. Mrs. DeGaetano shared that her son went on the trip last year and had a great time.

**Donation of Sneakers to Boys Varsity Basketball Team:** Motion by Mrs. Brieff, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the donation of 15 pairs of sneakers, valued at \$1,200, to the Boys Varsity Basketball team from the Two Brothers Memorial Fund.  
Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of WWHS Main Office Renovation:** Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. Carey, WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District desires to embark upon a capital improvement project at the Walt Whitman High School for the Main Office renovation at the existing facility; and

WHEREAS, said capital improvement project at the Walt Whitman High School, is subject to classification under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA); and

WHEREAS, replacement, rehabilitation or reconstruction of a structure or facility, in kind, on the same site, including upgrading buildings to meet building or fire codes, unless such action meets or exceeds any of the thresholds in Section 617.4 of this part, are classified as Type II Actions under the current Department of Environmental Conservation SEQRA Regulations (Section 6 NYCRR 617.5(2)); and

WHEREAS, the SEQRA Regulations declare Type II Actions to be actions that have no significant impact on the environment and require no further review under SEQRA; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District, as the only involved agency, has examined all information related to the capital improvement project and has determined that the capital improvement project for the Main Office renovation at the Walt Whitman High School is classified as a Type II Action pursuant to Section 617.5(2) of the SEQRA Regulations;

December 14, 2016

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby declares itself lead agency in connection with the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby declares that the Main Office renovation at the Walt Whitman High School is a Type II Action, which requires no further review under SEQRA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby shall forward an official copy of this Resolution to the New York State Education Department, together with a copy of the correspondence from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation in connection with its request for approval of the listed projects from the New York State Education Department.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of SHTA Agreement re NYSHIP:**

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. Carey, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the Side Letter of Agreement made between the South Huntington Union Free School District and the South Huntington Teachers' Association on December 8, 2016;

Be it Further Resolved, that the President of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools are authorized to sign the Side Letter of Agreement, a copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 941-943.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Discussion on Superintendents' Association's Request for Tax Cap Resolution:**

Dr. Bennardo explained that at a recent meeting of the Suffolk County Superintendent's Association, the subject of having each Board pass a resolution lobbying for the tax cap law to reflect a true 2% rather than the Consumer Price Index threshold, which was .01 last year and expected to be well under 2% for the 2017/18 budget season, was discussed at length. The resolution calls upon Governor Cuomo and the State legislators to remove the connection between the tax cap and the rate of inflation, which would result in a 2% tax levy cap. Dr. Bennardo shared that whether or not the resolution would influence the Governor's position on the tax cap was unknown. Dr. Bennardo added that a letter to the legislators and the Governor was prepared that spoke to this issue, and provided unique information regarding South Huntington Schools. Dr. Bennardo explained that our wealth ratio index reflected a middle class community, however, our free- and reduced-lunch rates had increased expeditiously. The letter addressed what one percent meant to our district specifically. The letters were similar to what was done last year, and Dr. Bennardo expressed that the letter campaign was a middle-of-the-road advocacy approach.

Mr. Ciappetta asked if the Board wished to pursue the resolution or the letter

December 14, 2016

campaign. Mrs. Brieff commented that she liked the letter idea, as did Mrs. Carey, Mrs. DeGaetano and Mrs. LaCara. Mr. Nitkewicz expressed his favor for the resolution; he shared the sad fact that the two percent tax cap was sold to the public as just that, and it was anything but a two percent cap. He stated that the resolution was a more substantial and collective statement from the Board, rather than sending a letter with only one or two signatures. Mr. Ciappetta stated that all Board members could sign the letter, however, Mr. Nitkewicz articulated that the resolution carried more weight in Albany. Discussion ensued regarding adding more forceful language to the letter. Mrs. DeGaetano preferred adding language for a true 2% cap in the letter. Mr. Ciappetta agreed and added that the Board needed to take a position of increased advocacy. Mrs. DeGaetano shared that the letter was appropriate with the 2% tax cap wording. Mrs. LaCara and Mrs. Brieff concurred with Mrs. DeGaetano's statement. Mrs. Carey added that she was comfortable with the letter as it was prepared. Mr. Ciappetta asked for a roll call to the issue, resolution vs. letter. The vote was 5-1, with Mr. Nitkewicz opposed.

Discussion ensued regarding the tax cap in Massachusetts; while the state had a tax cap, there was far more state aid provided to the districts in Massachusetts as compared to New York. Mr. Ciappetta stated that a tax cap of two, or even three percent, accompanied with state-aid of five million dollars, was quite a workable situation. Dr. Bennardo shared that the New York State Comptroller had already expressed that the state aid won't be as robust as in previous years. With consensus reached that the letter campaign would be initiated, Mr. Nitkewicz added that he would sign the letters to the Governor and New York State legislators.

**Approval of Cold  
War Veterans  
Exemption:**

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. DeGaetano, WHEREAS, New York Real Property Tax Law Section 458-b was amended to provide eligible Cold War veterans with a real property tax exemption from school taxes similar to exemptions offered under provisions of the real property tax law so long as the South Huntington Union Free School District in which the real property is located, after public hearing, adopts a resolution authorizing the exemption;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby authorizes the application of the Cold War Veteran Tax Exemption as contained in New York Real Property Tax Law Section 458-b, as amended in the amount of 15%, and such exemption shall be applicable to school taxes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the South Huntington Union Free School District, does hereby allow a cooperative corporation to be eligible to receive such exemption pursuant to Real Property Tax Law Section 458-b(7).

Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Bennardo expressed his gratitude to the Board and shared that the veterans organization had a planned holiday party this evening, and,

December 14, 2016

therefore, could not be present, however, Dr. Bennardo reported that he would be in touch with Mr. Armstrong and let him know the Board's decision to pass the resolution. Mr. Ciappetta added that he was happy to do this for our veterans.

**Personnel:**

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mrs. DeGaetano, 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. 944-953, and authorizes implementation thereof:

Schedule 7: Temporary Replacement Appointments (Instructional)  
 Schedule 9: Coaching/Extracurricular Appointments (Instructional)  
 Schedule 11: Terminations (Instructional)  
 Schedule 12: Leaves of Absence; Ext. of Sick Leave  
 Schedule 15: Appointments (Non-Instructional)  
 Schedule 16: Terminations (Non-Instructional)  
 Schedule 17: Leaves of Absence (Non-Instructional)  
 Schedule 20: Re-Appointments (Non-Instructional)  
 Schedule 22: Substitute Employee appointments (Inst./Non-Inst.)  
 Motion carried unanimously.

**Information and Reports:**

1. Thank you letter from OnTheGo Technologies CEO Noah Fleites with Angel Investor information included for the Board's use
2. Enrollment Report for month of November, 2016
3. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to student musicians
4. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to Mr. Modelewski's Performers
5. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to Rock Band students
6. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to Countrywood singers
7. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to Maplewood singers
8. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to J. Tartaro
9. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to student Eric Cajowski for work with craft table
10. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to Lisa Brieff
11. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to N. Ciappetta
12. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to Assemblyman Lupinacci
13. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to Dr. Bloom
14. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to Dr. Centamore and family
15. Barnes and Noble thank you letter from Dr. Bennardo to Mrs. Bennardo (mother)
16. Personnel Postings



December 14, 2016

17. The Countrywood Chronicle – December 2016
18. The Board & Administrator – December 2016
19. Letter to WWHS Students of the Month (November) from Dr. Bennardo
20. Letter to Girl Scouts from Dr. Bennardo re recycling proposal

Information Sent Week Ending December 2, 2016:

1. Court of Honor Invitation to Board from Brian Trifon for Dec. 16, 2016
2. Nawrocki Smith Reports
3. Letter from Principal Murphy re January Regents Testing
4. Letter from Principal Murphy to Parents re Saturday Academies/Regents Prep Classes
5. Letter from Principal Murphy to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents re 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Orientation
6. Personnel Postings
7. SHTA Minutes of Executive Board meeting, November 28, 2016
8. The Silas Scoop – December 2016
9. NYSIR News – November 2016
10. The Weekly Newsletter
11. The Long Islander (2)

**Comments from Board Members and Staff:**

Mrs. Brieff shared how wonderful the Barnes & Noble fundraising event was on December 2, 2016, and how pleased she was with the community participation. She commented on how the entire store was filled with an atmosphere of warmth and holiday spirit.

Mr. Ciappetta took the opportunity and wished everyone a happy holiday season.

**Voice of the Residents:**

Visitors were invited to participate.

**Adjournment:**

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

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:50 p.m.



Nicholas R. Ciappetta, J.D., Vice President



Laura McLean, District Clerk

Attachments made part of these legal minutes, pages 907 through 953.