

April 19, 2017

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of South Huntington Union Free School District was held on Wednesday, April 19, 2017, in the Administration Building, 60 Weston Street, Huntington Station, New York.

Present: **Board Members:**
Vice President

Mr. Ciappetta
Mrs. Brieff
Mrs. Carey
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
Board Trustee

Mr. Kaden
Mrs. DeGaetano

Call to Order: Mr. Ciappetta opened the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

**2017/2018 Budget
Adoption
Presentation:**

Dr. Bennardo thanked the members of the audience for joining the Board of Education this evening. Dr. Bennardo acknowledged that the District was receiving an additional \$357,190 in additional state aid. He then reviewed the Tax Levy Cap Worksheet and provided a brief synopsis of the Cap and State Aid received for the past four years, with the 2017/2018 school year yielding a 1.42% Cap, a \$1,562,362 increase, with State Aid of \$1,635,271. Dr. Bennardo also shared that of the aid increase, \$543,319 were in the form of reimbursables; he then provided an explanation of reimbursables and how the state aid changed accordingly from year to year. For an example, the District can be reimbursed for items that were submitted two years ago. Moving on, Dr. Bennardo shared that the \$357,190 in additional state aid was recommended to be placed in Transfer to Capital, which would amount to \$1,057,190 allocated. Dr. Bennardo explained the Current Services Plan with the continuation of classroom staffing and programs at current levels with all accompanying salaries/benefits computed at next year's rates; staffing of district support staff, maintenance, custodial and grounds services at the same thresholds with all salaries/benefits computed at next year's rates; a roll-forward of district financial obligations with both increased (health care and fuel) and decreased (pensions) cost adjustments factored; and an ongoing pursuit of grant and other revenue opportunities that can be utilized to enhance current services, while remaining budget neutral.

Dr. Bloom provided a summary of what the District was able to do in this current school year—namely, adding new Science and Math Instructional

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support positions, enhancement of the high school Science Research Program, the addition of a 4th period lunch, as well as Saturday courses to expand course offering opportunities at Walt Whitman High School, the addition of Coding at the primary grades, expanded theater opportunities to a K-12 program, a middle school dance competition program; and increased services that included a Saturday Creative Arts Therapy program and Introduction to Dance from the tenants at the old library. Furthermore, additional high school course opportunities were reviewed that will take place in 2017/2018 with no new costs, as well as the various Technology purchases secured through the Smart Schools Investment Plan, and an after-school Coding program that had been offset by summer programs and grants.

Dr. Centamore provided an overview of the Facilities accomplishments that were made possible through an allocation of \$1,000,000 Transfer to Capital and an allocation of \$900,000 for the 2016/2017 school year. These projects included: Exterior/interior painting in all schools and the Teen Center, curbing and sidewalk repair at Countrywood, WWHS Track refurbishment, renovation of Stimson Boys Locker Room, the final finishes to the Walt Whitman High School's Performing Arts Center Canopy, the District Office Playground, the renovation of the Stimson Lobby, as well as projects to commence shortly. The Facilities planning for the 2017/2018 was reviewed. With the allocation of \$900,000 for buildings and grounds maintenance, as well as the \$1,057,109 (with Board approval), the following would be scheduled: Continuation of exterior/interior painting, curbing/paving/sidewalk refurbishments, the District Office Conference Room renovation, District-wide exterior lighting upgrades, Walt Whitman High School Student Services Suite renovation, Teen Center facility renovation, replacement of water heaters in various buildings, and the Main Office of the high school renovation. Dr. Bennardo shared that our high school has held tournaments with various outside groups, and the care and upkeep of our assets provided tremendous value to our community.

Dr. Centamore spoke regarding Transportation; the amount of \$221,000 had been budgeted for the purchase of two large propane buses. Dr. Centamore shared that there was an eye on the environment and fuel efficiency with these purchases. Dr. Bennardo shared that the Comptroller had "barked" at the District for its prudent savings, however, now the Comptroller's stance was to spend the reserves. Dr. Bennardo reported that the goal for 2017/2018 was to maintain, preserve and sustain the gains made, while continuing the collective efforts to build upon and enhance all programs and services in a fiscally prudent, yet creative manner.

Dr. Centamore provided a quick review of the projected class sizes, and gave credit to the past attention of the Board and Administration to bring the sizes down from several years ago. Dr. Centamore addressed the allocation of \$1,000,000 in the current budget; the same allocation was recommended for 2017/2018. Additionally, because of the low tax cap

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levy and the moderate state aid increase, an allocation of \$894,000 was also recommended from reserves, bringing the total use of reserves for 2017/2018 of \$1,894,000. Dr. Centamore stressed that the District was able to utilize these reserve funds due to prudent savings intended for a year such as 2017/2018, where revenues will be low. Dr. Centamore provided a review of the reserves from 2012 to 2016, and then shared the recommendation on the use of reserves as follows:

Employee Retirement System Reserve	\$1,000,000
Workers' Compensation	\$432,265
Employee Benefits Accrued Liability	\$300,000
Tax Reduction	\$161,488
Total Reserves (to be replenished where possible)	\$1,893,753

Dr. Centamore continued and provided a synopsis of the 2017/2018 Budget Expenditure with updated state aid projections as follows:

Taxation (Levy Cap)	\$112,183,534
State Aid	\$35,090,153
ERS Reserve	\$1,000,000
Tax Reduction Reserve	\$161,488
EBALR Reserve	\$300,000
Workers' Compensation Reserve	\$432,265
APPR Fund Balance	\$4,900,000
Other (Estimated)	\$8,727,400
Total Revenues	\$162,794,840
Expenditures	\$162,794,840
Budget for 2017/2018 School Year	\$162,794,840

Dr. Centamore spoke to the assessed value history for the past five years, which had steadily declined from just under \$44,500,000 in 2013/2014 to just less than \$43,000,000 for 2017/2018.

Dr. Bennardo concluded the presentation by reporting the budget for 2017/2018 recommended for adoption was \$162,794,840, with a tax cap levy of 1.41%, a 2.38% change from 2016/2017. There were no questions from the Board, nor any from the audience. Dr. Bennardo gave credit to the Board of Education for their trust and direction, and shared that it was a collective effort, and thanked everyone involved in the process.

**Adoption of
Agenda:**

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the revised agenda be adopted.
Motion carried unanimously.

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

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

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Minutes: Minutes of Board meeting held on March 15, 2017.

Schedule of Bills (Warrants):	General (A)	Schedule 87	\$208,304.48
		88	\$583,145.73
		V072	(\$500.00)
	School Lunch (C)	Schedule 42	\$1,560.96
	Special Aid (F)	Schedule 36	\$17,949.88

Approved – Weekly Packet of April 7, 2017

General (A)	Schedule 85	\$1,027,302.60
	86	\$11,666.67
School Lunch (C)	Schedule 40	\$20,834.35
	41	\$50.00
Special Aid (F)	Schedule 35	\$9,643.41

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.

Communications: 1. Invitation to the Board of Education and Cabinet to the Fifth-Grade Minithon, May 10, 2017, from Dr. Jim Wright.

Adoption of the 2017/2018 School Budget: Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, be it Resolved that the budget of \$162,794,840 be adopted, and the amount thereof, less state aid and other income, be raised by tax upon taxable property of South Huntington Union Free School District, Town of Huntington, County of Suffolk, New York, for the school year 2017/2018, a copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1515.
Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Ciappetta thanked Dr. Bennardo for the work involved with the budget process and concurred with the Transfer to Capital recommended. Mrs. Brieff shared that she thought it was the right decision for the reasons that were explained during the presentation. Mr. Nitkewicz stated that with the tax cap era, there was only so much decision making, but it required very creative thinking by the administration and Board members. He stressed the significance of advance planning by putting money aside for our facilities. He commented that “we were at the mercy of Albany.” He added that strangely we were punished by our own success. Mr. Nitkewicz thanked all involved with the budget process and remarked that there was no controversy, and he was very grateful for that. Mrs. Brieff commented that the District’s stability was something the Board and Administration should be proud of, and shared that she agreed that grants were an excellent source to move the District forward, and concurred with making the most of what we have.

Mr. Ciappetta asked the Board members if they concurred with the

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**Adoption of the
2017/2018 School
Budget:**

recommendations made during the presentation; Mrs. Brieff responded affirmatively, and stated that maintaining our facilities was paramount, not doing so would cost the District more in the long run. Mr. Ciappetta added that the transparency with the process was very much appreciated.

Mr. Nitkewicz took a few moments to address the fact that this was the last budget process that this Board will have with Mr. Kaden, as Mr. Kaden will no longer be on the Board of Education after June 30, 2017. He stated that Mr. Kaden was the most humble man he knew, and certainly the smartest. He remarked that it was almost intimidating to know that Mr. Kaden will no longer be a Board member. Mr. Nitkewicz further added that during previous budget processes, Mr. Kaden continuously was a great resource, accessible to all Board members, and this evening, Mr. Nitkewicz revealed that he felt an obligation to acknowledge what a phenomenal influence Mr. Kaden was to our community. He added, while we did not always agree, Mr. Kaden was one of those rare people who understood your position, explained his position, and continued the discussion without an argument. Mr. Nitkewicz concluded his comments and expressed his appreciation for having had the opportunity to work with Mr. Kaden on the Board of Education.

Dr. Bennardo expressed his gratitude for the trust that was placed with the development of the budget and for the civil and professional tone demonstrated throughout.

**Approval of the
2017/2018
Property Tax
Report Card:**

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 2017/2018 Property Tax Report Card, a copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1516.
Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the
Smart Schools
Investment Plan:**

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 Smart Schools Investment Plan, a copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1517-1525.
Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the
James Phillips
Scholarship:**

Motion by Mrs. LaCara, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the annual James Phillips Athletic/Academic Scholarship in the amount of \$500 with the selection criteria as outlined within the memorandum from Principal Murphy dated April 3, 2017.
Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Bennardo shared that Mrs. Phillips, who was also a Mathematics teacher at Walt Whitman High School, submitted this request in honor of her late husband, Jim. Dr. Bennardo added that the recipient must have a bona fide grade-point average and be a varsity baseball player. Mrs. Joan Phillips will choose the recipient each year.

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Approval of the Donation from Affinity Health Plan:

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the donation in the amount of \$1,200 from the Affinity Health Plan to be used exclusively for the April 27th Parent University.

Motion carried unanimously.

At Dr. Bennardo's request, Mrs. Harris spoke of the fine success Parent University has demonstrated year after year, and the forthcoming Parent University on April 27th will prove to be even more so. Mrs. Harris provided credit to Mr. Nober for orchestrating the donation and to the Affinity Health Plan for their generosity.

Mr. Nitkewicz shared that he had recently attended the West Hempstead Parent University, which when compared to the South Huntington Parent University, was in the beginning stages. Mr. Nitkewicz spoke highly of the keynote speaker, Father Frank Pizzarelli, and thanked Mrs. Harris for the efforts involved with this massive undertaking. Mrs. Brieff agreed with Mr. Nitkewicz's statements, and stated that it was a real community effort.

Recommendations for Placement by CSE/CPSE:

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District, having reviewed minutes of the Committee on Special Education dated February 8, March 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 2017, and the Committee on Preschool Special Education dated November 28, 2016, February 14, March 2, 23, 28, 29, 30, April 7, 2017, 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. 1526-1544.

Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the SHTA Sick Bank:

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 creation of an SHTA sick bank for the teacher discussed during executive session, a copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1545.

Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Bennardo asked the Board of Education, Cabinet, and audience members to keep this particular family in their prayers.

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Personnel:

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. Brieff, 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. 1546-1551, 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 19: Temporary/Seasonal Appointment (Non-Instructional)

Motion carried unanimously.

Information and Reports:

Information and Reports

1. Congratulations Letter to Reflections Recognition Recipients from Dr. Bennardo
2. The Long-Islander (1)
3. Letter of Appreciation to Students who Participated in the Raymour & Flanigan Showcase from Dr. Bennardo

Information Sent to Board Week Ending April 7, 2017

1. Student Enrollment Report, March 2017
2. Letter to Color Guard Members re Success at Competition from Dr. Bennardo
3. Letter to Cast/Crew of Aida re Outstanding Performance from Dr. Bennardo
4. Letter to CW has Talent Participants from Dr. Bennardo
5. Letter of Gratitude to Adam Slawitsky from Dr. Bennardo
6. Letter to Participants of the Suffolk County Math Teachers Association MathContest from Dr. Bennardo
7. Personnel Postings (11)
8. The Countrywood Chronicle, April 2017
9. The Silas Scoop, April 2017
10. Letter to Seniors and Senior Parents re Senior Prom and Yearbook Day Letter from Principal Murphy

Comments from Board Members and Staff:

Mr. Nitkewicz reported that he had participated in Silas Wood's Career Day, and added how much he enjoyed the students. He jokingly shared that his career as an attorney appeared to be quite boring when compared to a video-graphic designer.

Mr. Ciappetta spoke to the additional \$300,000-plus in state aid that was provided to South Huntington, and also to the various "powers" that the Governor received during the budget process. The Governor now has unilateral control of the budget process if the Senate and Assembly do not concur within 60 days. This was now a reality, and a dark cloud on the horizon. Mr. Ciappetta also shared that Mr. Nitkewicz was recently

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honored at the Woodbury Ball for Autism for his great work with Autism Awareness and fundraising, and congratulated Mr. Nitkewicz accordingly.

Mr. Nitkewicz thanked Mr. Ciappetta, and then thanked members in the audience for what they did for his son. He praised our community as well, and spoke tenderly of his son.

Voice of the Residents:

Visitors were invited to participate.

Adjournment:

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

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:45 p.m.



Nicholas R. Ciappetta, Vice President



Laura McLean, District Clerk

Attachments made part of these legal minutes, pages 1515 through 1551.