

March 14, 2018

A regular meeting of the Board of Education of South Huntington Union Free School District was held on March 14, 2018, in the Cafeteria at Stimson Middle School, 401 Oakwood Road, Huntington Station, New York.

**Present: Board Members:**

President  
Vice President

Mr. Ciappetta  
Mrs. Carey  
Mr. Bronson  
Mrs. DeGaetano  
Mr. Joyner  
Mrs. LaCara  
Mr. Nitkewicz

**Staff:**

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

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

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

**Executive Session:** Motion by Mrs. DeGaetano, seconded by Mr. Bronson, 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. Joyner, seconded by Mr. Nitkewicz, 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.

**STEAM Night with Art Portfolio**

Mrs. Carey welcomed audience members to this evening's STEAM presentation and stated that South Huntington School District prides itself on being one of the premier districts in the country providing a comprehensive STEAM program to K-12 students. Ms. Carey proudly shared that not only was STEAM robustly infused into the K-12 curriculum, after-school STEAM programs have been created. This evening's presentation, Mrs. Carey continued, provided the opportunity to see how the district is "creating the leaders of tomorrow!"

Countrywood teacher Mrs. Clancy introduced coding as part of "computational thinking" involving a set of skills students needed to learn in order to be prepared for future real-world challenges. Students had the opportunity to design specific actions with Dash Robots and learn the concepts of electrical

March 14, 2018

circuits with Snap Circuits. Complex lego-building was also utilized where children choose from various designs to construct. Six students demonstrated various activities, such as the Dash robots taking basketball shots and a flying saucer with Snap Circuits.

Oakwood teacher Ms. Jennifer O'Dougherty also demonstrated on coding activities learned at the after-school coding program. Ms. O'Dougherty spoke of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century "super skills" of communication, creativity, critical thinking and collaboration. Demonstrations by six students included littleBits—a circuit building activity whereby "eyes" of the unit glowed; ScratchJr—a "theater" that had figures dancing on a screen stage; and littleBits—a trigger that students program to sense a specific sound that then lights up the bargraph.

Birchwood teacher Ms. Correll and Librarian ("Technarian") Ms. Schlaich presented with four students the creation of each student's version of Roz the robot from the book, "The Wild Robot." The robots were created and designed by the students to walk and speak.

Maplewood teacher Dr. Beck and Librarian Ms. Teeter shared their work with three students creating hydraulic robots and 3D printing projects using Tinkercad, a CAD design tool. With the 3D printers, students provided their creations of Valentine's Day charms and their creations of dogs representing "The Year of the Dog" of the Chinese New Year.

Silas Wood teacher Ms. MaryEllen Loria, together with four students, demonstrated Codesters Coding, using Python, the computer programming Industry language, to build projects through structured lessons. South Huntington was the first school on Long Island to implement this coding program. Each student presented their interactive project—the Target logo, a Maverick design, and a dancing competition. The students who presented this evening also presented at the recent Suffolk ASSET Conference.

Stimson Middle School teacher Ms. Marlee Rice and Ms. Melissa Scafa assisted their students participation in STEAM competitions where students imagine, research, design and build cities of the future. Students won 2<sup>nd</sup> place in this year's competition. Students Brendan Joyce, Haley Sahadeowill and Gabriella Finochio shared their positive experiences.

Walt Whitman High School's Robotics Club members, under the leadership of Mr. Jaime Rogers, enthusiastically spoke of their success at the various Robotics competitions and the success with the orchestration of the St. Baldrick's event. This year \$25,000 was raised, and overall throughout the years over \$250,000 has been generated for this cause.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Mrs. Carey thanked everyone for sharing their STEAM experiences.

March 14, 2018

**Budget Work  
Session:**

Dr. Bennardo reviewed the current 2017/18 budget with the following information: Taxation was \$112,183,534; State Aid was \$35,090,153; Other (rents, etc.) was \$8,727,400; Total Revenues was \$156,001,087; Total Expenditures was \$162,794,840; Reserves Usage was \$1,893,753 and Appropriated Fund Balance was \$4,900,000.

Dr. Bloom reviewed the current year's instructional additions—the high school courses were added at no additional cost, as well as the technology and the after-school coding program for Grades 3-5 (offset by summer programs and grants). Dr. Bloom shared the additions for the 2018/19 school year that included several courses—Accelerated Geometry, Women Warriors (an English elective), AP Capstone and Research III (Syracuse University Credit). Additionally, Grades 6-10 will receive Chromebooks (1:1), and there was provision for replacement of flat panel Smart Boards and Smart Bond Equipment. The Smart Bond equipment was pending New York State's release of funds, and included a digital planetarium, additional Smart Boards, Chromebooks for elementary/intermediate schools, and security surveillance camera upgrades.

Dr. Centamore provided a recap of the 2017/18 Facilities upgrades whereby \$1,900,000 in combined funds for planned maintenance and Capital improvements was incorporated into this year's budget. Projects included the new garage at the Teen Center, the renovated Student Services suite at the high school, the terrazzo work outside of the forum at Stimson, the conference room renovation at the JKAO, tennis court repairs at Stimson, Walt Whitman and Memorial, as well as athletic field renovation at Stimson. Dr. Centamore added that for 2018/19, an allocation of \$900,000 for building/grounds maintenance was planned and \$1,000,000 in "Transfer to Capital" for various improvement projects. Both short-term and long-term needs of our various facilities were provided—potential infrastructure upgrades. Dr. Centamore shared that the architects will provide a five-year plan to address these upgrades. Energy performance contracts for lighting, heating and solar considerations were being looked into, as well as the potential for a future bond to address the costs associated with these short- and long-term needs.

Dr. Bennardo reported on the reality of the 2018/19 budget. The Governor's proposed State Aid was \$36,449,580 and it was hoped that there would be additional State Aid. Dr. Bennardo added that the current levy cap was 2.15% from 1.41% last year. Dr. Bennardo added that moving forward, 2018/19 will be a current services budget, and explained that this current services budget maintains what we currently have with the addition of security enhancements. Enrollment trends were provided for ten neighboring districts that reflected South Huntington and Huntington, two middle-class communities, as steady with their enrollment numbers from 2012 to present. The lower income communities—Brentwood and Wyandanch—reflected significant growth in their enrollment numbers, while Half Hollow Hills, Commack, Harborfields, Elwood and Deer Park had decreases to their student enrollment. Dr. Bennardo addressed the elementary Grade K-5 class projections with numbers holding steady. It was reported that the numbers reflected a good place to be compared

March 14, 2018

to what had existed in 2012 and earlier. Similar projections were reviewed for Silas Wood, Stimson and Walt Whitman High School.

For 2018/19 the revenue expectations were as follows:

Tax Levy	\$114,599,696
Proposed State Aid	\$ 36,449,580
Other Revenues	\$ 8,756,400

Dr. Bennardo communicated that the fund balance was from carry-over funds from the current year allocated to the subsequent year. For 2017/18 we allocated \$4.3 million in fund balance and an additional \$600,000 from OPEB funds, also considered fund balance. Dr. Bennardo reminded the audience that districts were not permitted to use “credit” to cover expenses, therefore, a modest cushion in the budget codes safeguarded emergency and unforeseen expenses. If the budget was underspent, the money was placed in reserves. If the budget allocations were insufficient, cuts were considered or reserves utilized. Dr. Bennardo addressed how the Governor preferred districts to budget to the dollar, without leaving much in reserves. However, auditors and Moody’s Investors Services believe budgeting without that modest cushion was bad fiscal practice. Dr. Bennardo quoted the State Comptroller that districts with “ample rainy day funds” would be better to navigate a low-revenue year—due to the tax levy and/or state aid—while those who do not will have to make tough decisions. In fact, the State Comptroller also stated, “A certain amount of the budget should be set aside for contingencies (either with a line item or through the use of fund balances or reserves), to allow for the smooth operation of government in case of emergencies or minor errors in calculating revenues or expenditures.” As such, Dr. Bennardo continued, in the event of available surplus funds at the end of 2017/18, the Board of Education will determine the best use of these funds in accordance with Policy §5511 and past practice, which included use of these funds to reduce taxes, maintain programs, fund the unassigned fund balance as allowed by law at a maximum of 4% of the subsequent year’s budget, as well as replenish reserves.

Dr. Centamore addressed two property propositions that will be placed on the ballot for voter consideration on May 15, 2018. The first was the sale of an obsolete piece of property owned by the district on Depot Road for \$150,000. These funds, if approved, would offset the \$365,000 proposed purchase of the land adjacent to Stimson Middle School on Oakwood Road. The remaining cost for this purchase would come from fund balance. The Oakwood Road property would be earmarked for future additional parking and field utilization.

Dr. Bennardo concluded the budget presentation by stating that the primary goal was to propose only carefully planned, researched and sustainable initiatives for the future. Budget decisions must be made through a prudent and protective lens on the future, honoring the judiciary responsibility to the taxpayers.

March 14, 2018

- Adoption of Agenda:** Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the agenda be adopted.  
Motion carried unanimously.
- Motion on Minutes through Schedule of Bills (Warrants):** Motion by Mr. Bronson, seconded by Mrs. DeGaetano, 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 January 31, 2018.
- Schedule of Bills (Warrants):**
- | <u>Schedule of Bills (Warrants)</u>              |             |              |
|--|-------------|--------------|
| General (A)                                      | Schedule 80 | \$147,450.00 |
|  | 81          | \$376,467.35 |
| School Lunch                                     | Schedule 33 | \$46,502.74  |
|  | V033        | (\$336.33)   |
| Special Aid (F)                                  | Schedule 34 | \$7,215.22   |
| Capital Checking (H)                             | Schedule 17 | \$5,014.80   |
| <u>Approved – Weekly Packet of March 2, 2018</u> |             |              |
| General (A)                                      | Schedule 76 | \$83,340.00  |
|  | 77          | \$2,412.70   |
|  | 78          | \$117,907.63 |
|  | 79          | \$3,360.83   |
|  | V054        | (\$3,042.10) |
| School Lunch                                     | Schedule 32 | \$14,855.50  |
| Special Aid (F)                                  | Schedule 33 | \$54,236.72  |
| Capital Checking (H)                             | Schedule 16 | \$9,701.42   |
- 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.
- Request to Remain in South Huntington Schools:** 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 parent request for her son to remain at the Birchwood Intermediate School for the balance of the current school year with parent transporting son to and from school each day.  
Motion carried unanimously.

March 14, 2018

**Request to Remain  
in South  
Huntington  
Schools:**

Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mr. Joyner, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the parent request for his daughter to remain at Walt Whitman High School for the balance of the student's senior year with parent transporting daughter to and from school each day.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Board of Education  
Meeting Dates for  
2018/2019:**

Motion by Mr. Nitkewicz, seconded by Mr. Bronson, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the Board of Education meeting dates for the 2018/2019 school year, a copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1172-1175.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Travel Conference  
Request:**

Motion by Mr. Bronson, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the travel conference request for the Board of Education President to attend the Tri-CYA 2018 Hall of Honor Dinner event on March 22, 2018, a copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1176.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Donation from  
SHEF:**

Motion by Mr. Bronson, seconded by Mr. Joyner, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the \$2,500 donation from SHEF that had been donated by BAE Systems, specifically for the District's use of the forthcoming First Annual Next Generation Science STEAM Competition scheduled for May 23, 2018, at the Cradle of Aviation Museum, increasing the budget code for this event accordingly.

Motion carried unanimously.

**New Course  
Approval:**

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 English elective course, Women Warriors, to start in the 2018/19 school year, a copy made part of these legal minutes, pp. 1177-1178.

Motion carried unanimously.

**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 January 31, February 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 26, 27, 28, March 1, 2, 5, 2018, and the Committee on Preschool Special Education dated February 6, 15, 20, 2018, 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. 1179-1187.

Motion carried unanimously.

March 14, 2018

**Approval of  
District-Wide  
Safety Committee  
Members**

Motion by Mr. Bronson, seconded by Mr. Joyner, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington Union Free School District hereby approves the addition of three new District-Wide Safety Committee members—a primary school, middle school, and high school teacher—effective immediately, a copy made part of these legal minutes, p. 1188.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Superintendent's  
Report on Snow  
Day Closings:**

Dr. Bennardo reported that the district's school calendar contained 182 instructional days and 3 conference days for a total of 185 days. Four snow days were used thus far, bringing the total down to 181 days, which was more than the New York State stipulation of 177 student days and 3 conference days. Dr. Bennardo shared that the Friday before Memorial Day, May 25, 2018, had already been converted to an instructional day from a conference day. The Board did not pose questions or concerns to Dr. Bennardo regarding this matter.

**Personnel:**

Motion by Mrs. Carey, seconded by Mr. Joyner, 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. 1189-1195, and authorizes implementation thereof:

Schedule 2: Probationary Appointments (Instructional)

Schedule 9: Coaching/Extracurricular Appointments (Instructional)

Schedule 12: Leaves of Absence; Ext. of Sick Leave

Schedule 16: Terminations (Non-Instructional)

Schedule 17: Leaves of Absence (Non-Instructional)

Schedule 19: Temporary/Seasonal Appointment (Non-Instructional)

Schedule 22: Substitute Employee appointments (Inst./Non-Inst.)

Motion carried unanimously.

**Information and  
Reports:**

Information and Reports

1. NEWSDAY Article re Vice Admiral John C. Aquilino's Presidential nomination to Commander of Pacific Fleet, Walt Whitman Graduate of 1979
2. Invitation from Principal Murphy to Board of Education to the ACT/SAT Scholar Ceremony on March 22, 2018, in South Cafeteria at WWHS
3. W/S BOCES Budget Packet re Annual Meeting, April 10 and Budget Vote and Elections on Tuesday, April 24, 2018
4. Letter to Board of Education from Salvatore Marinello, President of Western Suffolk BOCES Board of Education, requesting support for three-year term as Trustee
5. Letter to Board of Education from Sydney Finkelstein, Trustee of Western Suffolk BOCES Board of Education, requesting support for three-year term as Trustee
6. Enrollment Report for Period Ending February 28, 2018
7. Parent Letter re Emergency Response Protocols from Principal Murphy
8. The Countrywood Chronicle, March 2018
9. Personnel Postings
10. Parent Letter re Administration of Spring Assessments from Principal Smith
11. Congratulations Letter re Boys State Program from Superintendent

March 14, 2018

12. NYSIR News and NYSIR News Extra, February 2018

Information and Reports Sent Weekly Packet of March 2, 2018

1. Invitation from Congressmen Suozzi and King to Young People's Rally on March 24, 2018, 11 a.m. at Nold Hall Gym at SUNY Farmingdale
2. Ingerman Smith Memo re Student and Employee Walkout Demonstrations
3. Ingerman Smith Memo re Use of Armed School Personnel
4. NYSSBA Invitation to Addressing Mental Health Conference, March 15
5. School Safety Officer Personnel Posting
6. Personnel Postings
7. SHTA Executive Minutes from February 26, 2018, Meeting
8. Facilities Committee Agenda for March 5, 2018

**Committee Updates:**

Mr. Ciappetta reported that the Facilities Committee did not deal with action items at this meeting on March 5<sup>th</sup>, but rather reviewed the progress of ongoing projects. Moving forward, there was concern for the bleachers at Walt Whitman High School—quotes were being secured for the scraping and painting. Replacement of all the bleachers could be considered with a bond in the future.

**Comments from Board Members and Staff:**

Mr. Ciappetta shared with the audience that on Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Education hosted a legislative forum. South Huntington, Huntington, Elwood and Harborfields were represented by their respective superintendents and board members. Mr. Ciappetta proudly stated that the gathering was a powerful testament to the weight that South Huntington School District carries in the township—we have become the flagship of the Town of Huntington. Also present were elected officials from four levels of government, including Senators Marcellino and Flanagan. Mr. Ciappetta stated that it was impressive to have four levels of government together working collaboratively in a respectful manner. The main focus was safety with each district sharing what they were planning in response to the tragedy in Parkland, Florida. Funding for these additional safety measures was of concern to all present—one idea generated was adding an exemption for safety precautions to the tax cap. While Senators Flanagan and Marcellino thought it not feasible and a tough political reach, the discussion was civil and courteous. Discussion also ensued regarding the release of Smart Bond money from the State. Senator Marcellino planned to send a letter to Commissioner Elia requesting the processing of monies be expedited. Overall, Mr. Ciappetta was extremely pleased with the legislative forum. He also shared that Stimson student TaTiana Lane sang "I Believe I Can Fly" accompanied by Music teacher Mrs. Dana Cavanagh at the start of the meeting, which was immensely enjoyed by all.

**Voice of the Residents:**

Visitors were invited to participate.



March 14, 2018

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

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

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

The meeting was declared adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

  
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Nicholas R. Ciappetta, J.D., President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Laura McLean, District Clerk

Attachments made part of these legal minutes, pages 1172 through 1195.