



**NORTH BELLMORE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES – MARCH 10, 2022**

Business Meeting	Martin Avenue School 2616 Martin Avenue, Bellmore, NY 11710	7:30 PM
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The Business meeting of the North Bellmore Union Free School District Board of Education was held on Thursday evening, March 10, 2022, in the All Purpose Room of the Martin Avenue School at 2616 Martin Avenue, Bellmore, New York, and via livestream.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

Rosemarie Corless, President
Jo-Ann Erhard, Vice President
Melissa Cmar-Grote
Nina Lanci
Christine Malloy

Also present:

Marie Testa, Superintendent of Schools
Janet Pollitt, Assistant Superintendent For Curriculum and Instruction
Jacqueline Rehak, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Jason Fischetti, Executive Director of Technology, Data and Information Services
Leyna Malone, Executive Director of Pupil Personnel Services and Special Education
Steven A. Goodstadt, District Counsel
Laurice Gunnels, District Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:43 p.m. Motion was made by Mrs. Erhard at 6:45 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Malloy to move into an executive session. Motion was carried 5-0. The meeting reconvened at 8:03 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Corless led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Corless then asked all to remain standing in a moment of silence for the crisis in Ukraine in hope of a peaceful resolution to this conflict.

Mrs. Erhard read the District's Mission Statement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Cmar-Grote moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Business meeting of February 10, 2022, and the Special Meeting of February 24, 2022. Mrs. Lanci seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION:
TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT HIGHLIGHTS**

Mrs. Testa opened the presentation by welcoming the staff of the Technology Department, and she and the Board then took a seat to view the technological journey depicted in a presentation created and narrated by the department.

Mr. Fischetti began by proudly introducing the Technology team present this evening.

- Mr. Michael Bevilacqua
- Ms. Leslie DiChiara
- Ms. Alexa Laskowitz
- Ms. Kerry Penteck
- Ms. Cathy Schlaich

Mr. Fischetti spoke to a vision of North Bellmore, a mission that started in 2015, and with great pride stated that mission one is now complete. Each staff member spoke individually to the collaborative work of the team, the training and support of teachers and families, and ultimately describing the technological advancement in North Bellmore that will carryover out of the classroom setting to the preparedness of students transitioning to Grand Avenue or Merrick Avenue Middle Schools.

The technology advancements were described through narration coupled with a detailed slide show and video presentation. Highlights to name a few included the installation of the wireless network, the one-to-one I-Pad initiative for the entire student body Grades K through 6, the new module furniture allowing for a creative learning environment, and a video depiction of the collaborative teamwork among students, faculty, and staff illustrating 21st century education through a detailed curriculum created by the North Bellmore Technology Department including computer science and robotics.

In closing, Mr. Fischetti spoke to the future advancement goals of the North Bellmore Technology Department to maintain alignment with the curriculum at the middle and the high school levels. Mr. Fischetti with pride stated that with the successful completion of mission one, the Technology Department of North Bellmore is now onto mission two.

Mrs. Corless and Mrs. Lanci on behalf of the Board expressed their gratitude and appreciation to Mr. Fischetti and the Technology Department for their presentation illustrating the technological advancements of the North Bellmore School District through their steadfast time, dedication, and planning for the students of North Bellmore.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Corless advised that the Board received correspondence and it was discussed in Executive Session.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mrs. Erhard moved that the Board of Education approve the Treasurer's report for the month ended January 31, 2022. Mrs. Malloy seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

**BOARD COMMITTEE /
HIGH SCHOOL REPORTS**

Mrs. Lanci reported that the Board met last week for an exciting evening. The CHAMP, the Culinary and Hospitality Applied Management Program, began by spicing the evening up for the Board by cooking and treating them to an excellent cajon style Mardi gras dinner. The Bellmore-Merrick Broadcasting Program filmed and interviewed the Board President. With pride she noted that though the broadcasting program began just six short years ago it is already recognized on a National level for their work. Mrs. Lanci shared the Board honored Jennifer Verwys, a Merrick Avenue Middle School STEM Teacher, for receiving the New York State Master Teacher distinction award. Along with the regular course of business she indicated the Board approved donations and excessed a golf cart. The next Board meeting will be held on April 6th.

FINANCE

The Board of Education acknowledged the review of the warrants that have been approved by the Claims Auditor for the month of February 2022.

The Superintendent of Schools recommends approval of all resolutions included in 11.1 through 14.8.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT**

Mrs. Testa began by sharing a quote to describe proudly the technological advancement of the District – *"Visions without action is merely a dream, action without vision just passes time, vision with action can change the world"*. Mr. Fischetti, the District, and the community had a shared vision, and through support of our entire board and administrative team, the teachers who have continued to learn, and our technology team that were handpicked from within North Bellmore and beyond created what is now one of the best elementary computer science programs. Mrs. Testa further extended her gratitude to Ms. Eskew, Mrs. Pollitt, Mrs. Rehak, and the Board sitting here tonight and those before it who valued the importance of technology for our students of North Bellmore, and with pride congratulated Mr. Fischetti and his entire team.

Before moving on to the budget presentation, Mrs. Testa asked Mrs. Pollitt to share information regarding Erin's Law. Mrs. Pollitt informed all that Erin's Law is now a mandate that schools teach into increased awareness of child sexual abuse in age-appropriate lessons. She shared that professionals from the Safe Center of Long Island are pushing into the classrooms via Zoom and the Health & Wellness teachers are there along with the support staff, i.e., psychologists, social workers, and school counselors. Mrs. Pollitt spoke to the parental feedback she has received with respect to the program, thanked the parents for their input, expressed an understanding of their concerns, and indicated the District moving forward will be mindful of their recommendations.

PERSONNEL REPORT

Motion was made by Mrs. Lanci to approve the Personnel Report dated March 10, 2022. Mrs. Cmar-Grote seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

PERSONNEL REPORT
(continued)

- A. Appointments
- B. Leave Requests
- C. Resignation
- D. Termination

A second motion was made by Mrs. Lanci to approve the addendum to the Personnel Report dated March 10, 2022. Mrs. Erhard seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Motion was made by Mrs. Cmar-Grote to approve the Staff Development Report dated March 10, 2022. Mrs. Lanci seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

BUSINESS DEPARTMENT REPORT

Mrs. Testa and Mrs. Rehak together presented the budgetary presentation for 2022-2023 (a copy is available for viewing on the website under the Business Office Department).

Mrs. Testa opened up by proudly describing in detail an overview of the academic studies, services, and programs for the North Bellmore students for the 2022-2023 school year including the return of Spanish language instruction in school, world language study after school, health and wellness, art, library/technology, Alpha, chorus and instrumental music. She expressed her gratitude to Mrs. Pollitt, Ms. McNamara, and the Social Studies Committee who met yesterday and will meet again on March 23 viewing demonstrations and providing feedback on the potential new Social Studies curriculum resources.

Mrs. Rehak presented a detailed breakdown of the fiscal year 2022-2023 proposed budget in comparison to the current year and beyond. Overall, in summary, the tax cap proposed increase is 2.22 percent with a budget-to-budget proposed increase of 3.44 percent citing the rate of inflation impacting rising costs of benefits, transportation, and utilities. With that being said, Mrs. Rehak illustrated the tax levy increase in actuality is an average of the last five years with the highest in 2018-2019 of 3.2 percent and the lowest in 2021-2022 of 1.54 percent.

Mrs. Rehak explained in detail the need for the two additional propositions on the ballot this year and noted do not result in an increase to the tax levy.

- Proposition Two – expend money from the *existing* Capital Reserve for ceilings and pavement replacements and reconstruction.
- Proposition Three – establish and fund a *new* Capital Reserve for districtwide bathroom and sidewalk renovations as well as supplement ceiling and pavement replacements.

With respect to the budget, Mrs. Rehak shared the following important dates:

- March 21, 7:30 p.m. – Meeting with PTA Coordinating Council (virtual).
- April 7, 7:30 p.m. – BOE Meeting/Budget Adoption.
- May 9, 7:30 p.m. – BOE Meeting/Budget Presentation.
- May 17, 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. – Budget Vote & Annual Trustee Election at Newbridge Road School.

BOARD QUESTIONS

Mrs. Cmar-Grote inquired of Mrs. Rehak what would happen if the propositions did not pass. Mrs. Rehak responded with respect to Proposition Two, the money can only be used for the Capital Reserve and would remain there. In furtherance, Mrs. Rehak stated if the proposition for the new reserve doesn't pass, then we don't have a new reserve and those projects will not get done. She explained other avenues can be explored but stressed all capital projects have to go through voter approval unless deemed for an emergency purpose.

Mrs. Testa thanked Mrs. Rehak for the explanation. As to the proposition to expend, in furtherance Mrs. Testa indicated the establishment of that Capital Reserve was approved by the voters last year and reiterated if it is not passed, the district will be unable to utilize the funds.

Mrs. Corless then inquired regarding transportation, since the cost of gas has skyrocketed, does the gas price fall into the transportation contracts or will there be an additional cost for gas. Mrs. Rehak responded that the District has one-year extension contracts for most of the bus companies utilized and those will be extended for one year at the CPI. For the fiscal year 2023-2024, she indicated the possibility that the District may have to go out to bid for new contracts and there is the probability of larger increases in cost.

Mrs. Corless lastly inquired with respect to the digital data of personnel information, who is in charge of the cyber protection for that data. Mrs. Rehak responded that all of the programs utilized by the District must comply with NYS Ed Law 2d for protection of the data and this program has to comply with that regulation. In addition, she shared the program will be through BOCES and the District will receive aid with respect to it.

Mrs. Erhard inquired if there has been any discussion with respect to change in state aid on April 1, and Mrs. Rehak indicated as of the current time no. Mrs. Erhard followed up with regarding health insurance, if health insurance came in higher than projected in January (6 percent), where may you adjust the budget if necessary for the additional health cost. Mrs. Rehak explained that the District always projects an increase and the last increase was 13 percent. She did share that the District a few years ago actually had a decrease which is an extremely rare occurrence and that facilitated a cushion. With that being said, Mrs. Rehak explained budget to budget there is a projected 6 percent increase, but in actuality the district expects a 10 percent increase overall.

Hearing no further questions and moving on, Mrs. Corless explained due to the presentations conducted this evening there will be no individual departmental reports.

CPSE/CSE REPORTS

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the CPSE and CSE reports dated March 3, 2022. Mrs. Malloy seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, and carried 5-0 for the following consent agenda items: 14.1-14.8.

NEW BUSINESS CONTRACTS 14.1 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve the following contracts for the 2021-22 school year:

- Brentwood UFSD
- Hicksville UFSD
- Metro Physical & Aquatic Therapy
- Plainedge UFSD
- Rockville Centre UFSD

**SEQRA RESOLUTION –
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS** 14.2 WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District desires to embark upon the following capital improvements at the District’s facilities: (a) pavement/concrete/asphalt replacement at John G. Dinkelmeyer Elementary School and Martin Avenue Elementary School; (b) ceiling replacements at John G. Dinkelmeyer Elementary School and Martin Avenue Elementary School and (c) electrical upgrades at John G. Dinkelmeyer Elementary School and Martin Avenue Elementary School (hereinafter the “Projects”); and

WHEREAS, said capital improvements are subject to classification under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA); and

WHEREAS, maintenance or repair involving no substantial changes in an existing structure or facility are classified as Type II Actions under the current Department of Environmental Conservation SEQR Regulations (Section 6 NYCRR 617.5 (c)(1)); and

WHEREAS, replacement, rehabilitation or reconstruction of a structure or a 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 are classified as Type II Actions under the current Department of Environmental Conservation SEQR Regulations (Section 6 NYCRR 617.5 (c)(2)); and

WHEREAS, routine activities of educational institutions, including expansion of existing facilities by less than 10,000 square feet of gross floor area and school closings, but not changes in use related to such closings (Section 6 NYCRR 617.5(c)(10));

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

WHEREAS, the Board of Education, as the only involved agency, has examined all information related to the capital improvement projects and has determined that the Projects are classified as Type II Actions pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(1), (2) and (10) of the SEQR Regulations;

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

**SEQRA RESOLUTION –
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS
(continued)**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education hereby declares that the Projects are Type II Actions, which require no further review under SEQRA; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education 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 project from the New York State Education Department.

**PROPOSITIONS –
CAPITAL RESERVE FUND**

14.3 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Education shall present to the qualified voters of the North Bellmore Union Free School District at the annual meeting to be held on May 17, 2022 the following proposition in substantially the following form:

PROPOSITION

SHALL the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District be authorized to expend up to \$6,600,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund established on June 16, 2020 for the purpose of performing the following projects: (a) pavement/concrete/asphalt replacement at John G. Dinkelmeyer Elementary School and Martin Avenue Elementary School; (b) ceiling replacements at John G. Dinkelmeyer Elementary School and Martin Avenue Elementary School and (c) electrical upgrades at John G. Dinkelmeyer Elementary School and Martin Avenue Elementary School; all of the foregoing to include all labor, materials, equipment, apparatus and incidental costs related thereto.

14.4 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District hereby authorizes the following proposition to be placed on the ballot of the May 17, 2022 annual vote:

SHALL the Board of Education, pursuant to Education Law section 3651, be authorized to establish a Capital Reserve Fund known as the "Facilities Improvement Program 2022" for the purpose of performing the following capital improvements: district-wide ceiling replacements, districtwide pavement replacements, district wide electrical upgrades and district wide interior ADA accessibility or district wide bathroom renovations, all of the foregoing to include all labor, materials, equipment, apparatus and incidental cost related thereto. The maximum amount of the aforesaid Capital Reserve Fund shall be \$10,000,000, plus investment income. The probable term is to be ten (10) years; the funds are to be transferred from surplus monies, if any, remaining in the general fund including a sum not to exceed \$1,500,000 from the 2021-2022 budget and thereafter in an annual amount of not more than \$3,500,000 for each remaining year of the probable term. Upon the establishment and funding of said reserve, the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee shall be directed to deposit monies of this reserve fund in a separate bank account to be known as the "Facilities Improvement Program 2022."

**TECHNOLOGY/BOCES
CONTRACT
(Project 5-814598)**

14.5 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve three Technology Program Contracts for Project No. 5-814598 between North Bellmore UFSD and The Board of Cooperative Educational Services of Nassau County.

**DISPOSAL OF DISTRICT
PROPERTY**

14.6 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education excess the following instruments and mixer from the Saw Mill Road School inventory that are beyond/too costly to repair and are not being used at this time:

- s39 clarinet s/n 1261
- s50 flute s/n 1306135
- s30flute s/n 177027
- Yamaha audio mixer (district inventory sticker 2/n 20190184)

**PREFERRED CONSTRUCTION
CONTRACT**

14.7 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve a contract with Preferred Construction, Inc. for the 2021/22 school year.

EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

14.8 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education of the North Bellmore Union Free School District hereby approves the terms and conditions of the Superintendent's Employment Agreement and directs the Board President to execute such Employment Agreement on behalf of the Board.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Pascalli (Briggs Street) – *While I am all for technology it seems the children spend a lot of their day using I-Pads in school. Can screen protectors be put on the I-Pads to protect children from blue light that emits from the devices? Blue light is more harmful than UVA and UVB rays. Also, can we be sure there is a balance between I-Pad usage and pencil/paper usage in school? It's important that our children actually write and spell.* Mr. Fischetti expressed that the suggested usage of the I-Pad is intermittent as a tool along with pencil/paper, and the ideal usage of the device is to enhance those experiences digitally and to allow the student the opportunity to perform tasks not supported in other platforms. In addressing the UVA/UVB question, Mr. Fischetti shared the I-Pads purchased for education do have different glass, but indicated he will look into additional options with respect to enhancing that screen protection.

Ms. Galarza (Bellmore Road) – *Why were parents not given the opportunity to view the Child Abuse video prior to showing it to the students? That way it would give parents time to talk to their children. Children came home feeling uncomfortable. Moving forward will the district consider showing parents the video and conducting workshops pertaining to sensitive topics prior to teaching this in school?* Mrs. Pollitt responded by reiterating her previous discussion regarding Erin's Law and indicated the District moving forward will take into consideration all parental feedback.

Ms. Holmes (Logue Street) – *Regarding Section 14.1, what is the subject matter of these contracts?* Mrs. Corless responded that those contracts are for Special Education services as well as Health & Wellness contracts for North Bellmore students who are educated outside of the district.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS
(continued)**

Ms. Pascalli (Briggs Street) – *Can you add/enforce cursive writing into the curriculum? Can it be a requirement that all children be able to sign their name before graduating 6th grade? Every child needs to have a signature and be able to read and write in script (cursive writing).* Mrs. Pollitt shared she and Ms. McNamara understand the importance of cursive writing and are researching and evaluating available resources. She did stress it is in the forefront of planning and will provide an update on this moving forward.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mrs. Cmar-Grote, seconded by Mrs. Lanci, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education meeting was adjourned at 9:53 p.m. The next Business meeting will be held on Thursday, April 7, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurice Gunnels
District Clerk