



**NORTH BELLMORE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 8, 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, September 8, 2022, in the All Purpose Room of the Martin Avenue School at 2616 Martin Avenue, Bellmore, New York, and via Zoom Video Conference.

The following members of the Board of Education were present:

Melissa Cmar-Grote, President
Christine Malloy, Vice President
Rosemarie Corless
Nina Lanci
Christopher Nardo

Also present:

Marie Testa, Superintendent of Schools
Janet Pollitt, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Jacqueline Rehak, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Christopher Powers, District Counsel
Laurice Gunnels, District Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m. Motion was made by Mrs. Corless seconded by Mr. Nardo to move into an executive session. Motion was carried 5-0. The meeting reconvened at 7:41 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Cmar-Grote led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. She called for a moment of silence to remember the victims of 9/11.

Mrs. Corless read the District's Mission Statement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the Business meeting of August 11, 2022. Mrs. Malloy seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS
John G. Dinkelmeyer School:
Sixth Grade Representatives

Mrs. Testa welcomed and proudly introduced the sixth-grade representatives from John G. Dinkelmeyer in attendance this evening:

Catherine Achan
William Gazey
Paige Harvey
Christian Truglio

Christian described the excitement of students returning back to school, positive sayings written in chalk on the sidewalks, signs on the lawn, and parents and teachers to greet and welcome them. Paige, Catherine, William, and Christian continued by individually speaking to grade level highlights over the past four days including the overall focus of getting to know each other, making new friends, learning classroom procedures, and practicing school routines.

Moving on, their excitement was evident as they described the challenges and adventures ahead for them and their classmates as sixth graders this year. They spoke of the return of Spanish instruction, team building experiences such as Project Adventure, the Canoe Trip, the Sixth-Grade Track Meet, and the new academic routine of changing classrooms this year for social studies.

In conclusion, they offered their gratitude and appreciation to the BOE, Mrs. Testa, and the Administrators for all the decisions that were made on behalf of them as students and expressed gratification of their experiences here in North Bellmore. Mrs. Testa on behalf of the Board of Education proudly congratulated the JGD sixth grade student representatives on their amazing presentation this evening, and presented them individually with certificates.

**NBNM Little League Lady
Rebels**

NBNMLL Lady Rebels 2021 and 2022 teams were honored this evening for their team spirit and dedication in the art of softball. Both teams in their respective years won district and sectionals permitting them to participate and represent NMNBLL in the state competition. Mrs. Testa on behalf of the Board congratulated and applauded them, and there was a presentation of certificates.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
(Agenda Items Only)

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Cmar-Grote advised that the Board received correspondence and it was discussed in Executive Session.

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

**BOARD COMMITTEE / HIGH
SCHOOL REPORTS**

Mrs. Lanci reported last evening was the first meeting back in person with staff, faculty, and parents in attendance. She indicated it was an interesting evening with the principals speaking about their experiences on the first day of school. She expressed the focus this year will be pathways or paths that have a purpose for the students. BMCHSD offers various paths including electrical and culinary

BOARD COMMITTEE / HIGH SCHOOL REPORTS
(continued)

programs affording all students the opportunity of success. Mrs. Lanci concluded her report by detailing upcoming events for September including homecoming celebrations and the high school back to school night on September 22, and the middle school on September 29. The next meeting will be held on October 12.

FINANCE

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

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT/BUSINESS REPORT

Mrs. Testa, with pride for her administration and teachers, congratulated them on the wonderful start to this new school year in welcoming back all the students with their shared passion and excitement for learning. She especially offered her gratitude to Mr. Russo, the custodial staff, and the building and ground maintainers for their hard work and amazing job in cleaning the buildings, constructing and relocating offices, setting up the classrooms, etc.

Mrs. Testa spoke to the following highlights district wide:

- Emergency parent and visitor guidelines were distributed to the families regarding health and safety.
- Back to School Night planning is underway within the respective buildings and more information will follow.
- The crossing location at Harrison Street and Jerusalem Avenue is closed, and utilization of the crossing location at Pea Pond Road and Jerusalem Avenue is encouraged. Mrs. Testa informed that she and Mr. Rosof were contacted by concerned families. In response she contacted the First Precinct and was informed it was due to survey results showing the underutilization of that location and the impact created by the shortage of crossing guards. In furtherance, Mrs. Testa expressed the concerns of the district as student's safety is paramount here, shared those with respect to same by the families of our community, and requested a reconsideration of this decision when possible.
- There has been a request by the Muslim community to separate the Eid holiday from Superintendent's Conference Day on the school calendar. The holiday has always been celebrated as such in the past so students would not be in attendance. The holiday as was explained by Mrs. Testa is based on the position of the moon and the amount of lead time to set such date would need to be taken into consideration out of respect for the other families within the North Bellmore community. In addition to Eid, there have been other requests to add Lunar New Year, etc., and should be considered. The Board indicated the calendar would remain as adopted for this year, but moving forward, beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, requested a report containing contractually the number of days teachers/students are to attend school, the holidays requested, the dates, etc. so an informed decision can be made on the various options.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT/BUSINESS REPORT
(continued)**

In closing, Mrs. Testa reminded all to wear red, white, and blue tomorrow in remembrance of those lives lost on 9/11 (Patriot Day) and their families, particularly those within the North Bellmore community, faculty, and staff.

**PROPOSED BOND
OVERVIEW PRESENTATION**

The focus this evening Mrs. Testa explained will be to share with the community the scope of work by building and the financial analysis of same included in the proposed \$40 MM bond. Before beginning the presentation, she briefly recapped the timeline of events leading up to this evening's presentation:

- July 7 – The district architect presented an overview of the five-year Building Condition Survey.
- August 11 – The BOE discussed the future of the district facilities, capital projects, and the overhaul to the HVAC system.
- August 30 – The BOE held a work session that was open to the public to review the financial analysis and impact of a potential bond. A directive by the BOE was given to move ahead with those plans.

Mrs. Testa presented an overview by building and categorized the scope of work into the major projects, Project A, and Project B, other work that can vary by building and will be performed if funds are available. A detailed comprehensive power point of this presentation can be viewed on the website.

Highlights of the proposed major projects are as follows:

- HVAC rehaul in all six buildings including central air and replacement of pipes (steam or hot water).
- Elevators and ADA accessibility – installation of an elevator in Saw Mill and JGD.
- One new playground structure per building.

Mrs. Rehak followed up by discussing the financial breakdown of the proposed \$40 MM bond based on the scope of work presented. In summary, Mrs. Rehak indicated the overall cost for the major work (Project A) of \$38,694,234 plus the additional work if funds are remaining (Project B) of \$503,000, combined with the soft costs of 18 percent equals the proposed bond of \$40 MM.

In furtherance of the proposed bond, Mrs. Rehak described the potential tax impact for the community by illustrating the increase upon an individual home based on the average assess values in this area ranging from \$403,000 to over \$800,000. She indicated a tax impact calculator would be made available on the website for homeowners to calculate the tax impact utilizing the assess value of the property. Mrs. Rehak indicated homeowners can view their assess values on the website, *mynassauproperty.com*, for that current figure.

**PROPOSED BOND
OVERVIEW PRESENTATION
(continued)**

In conclusion, Mrs. Rehak indicated the next step would be for the BOE to approve the resolution for the bond vote at the next board meeting on October 13, and if approved, the vote will be held on December 8. In furtherance of this, the district will begin to work on outreach plans such as:

- Updating the website with a bond page illustrating the information currently available as well as related items in the future pertaining to same including but not limited to FAQ's, newsletters, the tax impact calculator, etc.
- Legal notices to be placed in local publications.
- District Administrators will be attending community meetings including SEPTA, PTA and other local community groups.

Mrs. Testa in reiteration indicated the district is working diligently on outreach not only to the North Bellmore School District families but to all residents so everyone is aware of the upcoming vote and the potential financial impact.

Mrs. Corless raised the question regarding the fire walls or fire escapes listed under the B-list items, what makes this a B-list versus an A-list? Mrs. Rehak in response indicated the prioritization of the scope of work on the B-list versus the A-list was created from the five-year building condition survey, and working closely in conjunction with the architect and engineer. She described the work in question as interior and exterior masonry work, not actual replacement of fire escapes.

Mrs. Cmar-Grote inquired about the underground fuel tank located at the Newbridge Road School, the age and life expediency of it. Mrs. Rehak responded that the last replacement of the tank was in 1988, and the overall life expectancy is based on maintenance. Mrs. Testa did indicate that this was discussed with the architect, but she will raise the issue again with him regarding the priority of the work and will follow-up with the BOE.

Mr. Nardo inquired if the district planned on holding a "bond fair" and raised the concern regarding outreach in the community to those residents with no children and/or the general population. Mrs. Testa in response said the district is planning to present at the North Bellmore Public Library, The Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, and indicated she reached out to other Civic Organizations as well as the North Bellmore Fire Department. A newsletter will be distributed district wide to over 25,000 homes and there will be newspaper publications in the Bellmore Herald and South Shore paper.

Mrs. Malloy questioned if back-to-school night is being considered as a means of outreach. Mrs. Testa responded affirmatively and advised the principals will be speaking to their respective families regarding the scope of work to be performed and staff will be in attendance to distribute flyers.

**PROPOSED BOND
OVERVIEW PRESENTATION
(continued)**

Mr. Nardo indicated the tax impact would begin in 2025 based upon his understanding of the financial analysis, and questioned when the actual work will begin. Mrs. Rehak responded the district will be able to borrow beginning February 15, 2024. She explained building aid is not provided for just outdoor work and must be coupled with indoor work, and indicated the scope of work to be performed cannot be done with children in the building. Mrs. Rehak advised planning for the work and timing will vary building by building, project by project.

Mr. Nardo then questioned regarding a potential cap on the amount you can borrow and if this would impact the amount of work performed and the timeline. Mrs. Rehak responded that the project drives the borrowing, and the scope of the work planned and/or the phase of work impacts the amount we borrow at any one particular time. Mr. Nardo, in furtherance to that, inquired when borrowing a fluctuating amount versus a flat amount each year, will that fluctuate the tax impact. Mrs. Rehak responded the amount borrowed and the interest rate at the time of borrowing are all variables that may affect the tax impact.

Mrs. Lanci inquired of the possibility for the district to secure a loan in advance of receiving the bond funds. Mrs. Rehak indicated that is a short-term borrowing option in advance of the bond and once the bond comes in it would be used to pay off the loan. Mrs. Lanci also spoke to other fluctuating variables that could ultimately affect the tax impact such as debt falling off, regular budgetary increases for the district as well as the high school and library of which the amount is unknown.

PERSONNEL REPORT

11.1 Mrs. Corless moved to approve the Personnel report dated September 8, 2022. Mrs. Malloy seconded and motion carried 5-0.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

11.2 Mrs. Corless moved to approve the Staff Development report dated September 8, 2022. Mrs. Malloy seconded and motion carried 5-0.

CPSE/CSE REPORTS

12.1 Mrs. Corless moved that the Board of Education approve the CPSE and CSE reports dated August 31, 2022. Mrs. Malloy seconded and motion carried 5-0.

**NEW BUSINESS
CONTRACTS**

13.1 Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve the following contracts for the 2022/23 school year. Mrs. Corless seconded and motion carried 5-0.

- Blue Sea Educational Consulting, Inc. (Skilled Nursing)
- Blue Sea Educational Consulting, Inc. (Related Services)
- Blue Sea Educational Consulting, Inc. (Academic Tutoring)
- Diana Haddad
- Horizon Healthcare Staffing (Skilled Nursing)
- Horizon Healthcare (Services)
- Island Trees UFSD
- Lawrence Public Schools (Services)
- Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf
- Lydia Qiu (2021/22)
- R.S. Adams & Co., LLP

CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. Lanci moved that the Board of Education approve Items 13.2 through 13.4. Mrs. Malloy seconded and the motion was carried 5-0.

TRANSPORTATION

13.2 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve the North Bellmore School District to enter into a piggyback contract with the Bellmore-Merrick CHSD and First Student Inc. for the transport of three students to an out of district non-public school. This would result in a cost savings to the North Bellmore School District, as the original contracted cost is substantially lower than new contracts that have bid out to schools of similar distance.

DONATIONS

13.3 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve the excess and recycle of 2,264 old textbooks and trade books through Academic Book Solutions. The District will be compensated \$20/ton of books and will receive a certificate of guaranteed destruction.

BOE MEETING DATE CHANGE

13.4 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve to change the date of the December Board of Education meeting from December 8, 2022 to December 6, 2022.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Malloy inquired if the sixth-grade students will be utilizing the Google classroom platform in preparation for the middle school. Mrs. Testa responded utilization of the platform for the students will begin in their Technology class under the instruction of our technology specialists, and once professional development for the sixth-grade teachers is complete with respect to same, the students will continue the experience within the classroom.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Zukaski (Oak Street) – *Why can't our kids celebrate birthdays with peanut free food?* Mrs. Cmar-Grote advised Ms. Zukaski to raise her concerns with her respective building principal and he/she will address it from there.

Ms. Zukaski (Oak Street) – *If cement work was just done at Martin why are there huge holes where kids enter and exit the school (south alley doors)? When will they be fixed?* Mrs. Testa explained the cement and asphalt/black top around the school and ceilings come under the Capital Reserve. Mrs. Rehak advised as a reminder that Martin and JGD are the first two buildings scheduled for this work and it will begin the summer of 2023 while students are not in attendance. In furtherance, Mrs. Testa did indicate that she and Mr. Russo will look at the area in question in terms of performing interim repairs if necessary while waiting for the project to start.

Mrs. Ciancarelli (Mona Court) – *If a school doesn't necessarily need a new playground are they still getting a new play structure?* Mrs. Cmar-Grote responded that all buildings under the proposed bond will receive a new structure.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS
(continued)**

Mrs. Ciancarelli (Mona Court) – *Is it possible to discuss removal of wood chips in the playground even though Board voted to keep it? I know as a parent my boys come home with wood chips everywhere and it sticks to their clothes. It's also given them splinters. I know custodians say they rake it through but when I look around I see so much mixed in with it. I would love to see the rubber as a possibility.* Mrs. Cmar-Grote indicated that the items contained within the bond were prioritized based upon the Building Condition Survey (BCS) as necessities and the rubber is considered cosmetic in comparison. The playgrounds, she shared, though not a part of the BCS, were requested by the community and thus added to the bond.

**POTENTIAL EXECUTIVE
SESSION**

None.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mrs. Lanci, seconded by Mrs. Malloy, and carried 5-0, the Board of Education meeting was adjourned at 9:19 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 13, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurice Gunnels
District Clerk