

MINEOLA UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
MINEOLA, NY

**Business Meeting MINUTES**

*The Mission of the Mineola Union Free School District is to inspire each student to be a life-long learner, pursue excellence, exhibit strength of character and contribute positively to a global society.*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Board Goals – 2010-2011**

- ***Educational***
  - *To further expand the district initiative of differentiated instruction specifically focusing on individual student achievement.*
  - *To continue our growth as professional learning communities focusing on common formative assessments to demonstrate individual student growth*
  - *To continue to provide the resources to attain a Intel finalist within the next three years*
- ***Facilities***
  - *To investigate and embrace projects that incorporate 'green' technologies that over time will decrease our dependency on fossil fuels*
- ***Finance***
  - *To continue the district initiative to actualize a five year plan to maintain a stable tax levy*

\*\*\*\*\*

**DATE: February 17, 2011**

**LOCATION: Willis Avenue School**

**OPEN BUSINESS MEETING**

**7:00 p.m. 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Staff Lounge**

**Board of Education**

Terence Hale, President  
Christine Napolitano, Vice President  
John McGrath  
William Hornberger  
Irene Parrino

**Central Office**

Dr. Michael Nagler, Superintendent of Schools  
Jack Waters, Asst. Supt. for Finance & Operations  
Patricia Burns, Asst. Supt. of Curr., Instr., Assessment  
Donna Martillo, District Clerk

**A. Call to Order**

At 7:03 p.m. the meeting was called to order by President Hale.

At 7:05 p.m. Mr. McGrath joined the meeting.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

**C. Reading of Mission – Irene Parrino**

- D. **Moment of Silent Meditation**
- E. **Dais & Visitor Introductions**
- F. **High School Student Organization Report**

The HS Student report: Boys Basketball won their first round in playoffs; Girls Basketball won their first round; four wrestling team members were named All County and will be competing in Albany; Marching Band will be going to Disney World during February break; Winterguard Home Show; a domestic violence campaign organized by Ms. Burke went well; the Change for Change Program is selling baked goods for a school in Guatemala; and Bethanne Bartscherer made it to the second round in the Intel Competition.

G. **Old Business**

Mr. Hale inquired as to the status of Policy 5470. The Superintendent of Schools responded he is still waiting to speak with the physician as recommended by Mr. McGrath.

H. **New Business**

None

I. **Consensus Agenda**

1. **Accepting of Minutes**

- a. That the Board of Education accepts the minutes of January 6, 2011 (Workshop); January 20, 2011 (Business) Meetings, as presented.

2. **Instruction**

a. **Resignation**

- 1. That the Board of Education accepts the resignation of Dale Bennett, effective February 11, 2011.

b. **Appointments**

- 1. That the Board of Education approves the appointment of the following coaches for the Spring Interscholastic Season for the 2010-2011 school year:

<b><u>SPORT &amp; LEVEL</u></b>	<b><u>NAME</u></b>	<b><u>STEP</u></b>	<b><u>SALARY</u></b>
Varsity Baseball	Helms Bohringer	3	\$8,291.
Varsity Baseball Asst.	Barry Silverstein	3	\$5,637.
JV Baseball	Christopher Collins	2	\$5,076.
Varsity Softball	Melissa Skupp	3	\$8,283.
Varsity Softball Asst.	Daryl Whitmer	1	\$4,356.
JV Softball	Caitlin Orlando	1	\$4,559.
Boys Varsity Lacrosse	Michael Perro	3	\$8,283.
Boys Varsity Lacrosse Asst.	Anthony Barone	3	\$5,635.

Boys JV Lacrosse	Thomas Oswald	2	\$5,076.
Girls Varsity Lacrosse	Frank Massaro	3	\$8,283.
Girls Varsity Lacrosse Asst.	Katherine Bennett	3	\$5,635.
Girls JV Lacrosse	Meghan Nelson	3	\$5,741.
Boys Varsity Track	Michael Santamaria	3	\$7,770.
Girls Varsity Track	Zachary Sabatino	1	\$6,251.
Spring Track Asst.	Thomas Leninger	2	\$4,704.
Boys 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Baseball	William DiGennaro	3	\$5,406.
Boys 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Baseball	Dominick Tolipano	3	\$5,406.
Girls 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Softball	Vanessa Ricci	3	\$5,025.
Girls 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Softball	Anthony Tramonte	3	\$5,025.
Boys 7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lacrosse	Mark Miller	3	\$5,388.
Boys 7 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup> Grade LX Asst.	Matt Antoniou	3	\$4,740.
Girls 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lacrosse	Danielle Adams	1	\$4,230.
Girls 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Lacrosse	Diana Kohl	3	\$5,377.

2. That the Board of Education approves the following additions to the Per Diem Substitute Teacher List at a daily rate of pay, \$90.00:

Susan Browdy	N-6
Cara Schmier	Math 7-12

**2.1. Instruction: Committee on Special Education Actions**

- a. That the Board of Education approves the CSE/CPSE/SCSE recommendations for programs and services for students with IEPs for the time period from January 1, 2011 to January 31, 2011 as set forth in Confidential Attachment "A".

**2.2. Instruction: Contracted Instructional Services**

- a. That the Board of Education approves a contract between the Mineola Union Free School District and the Herricks UFSD to provide Special Education services to students who are parentally placed in non-public schools for the 2010-2011 school year.
- b. That the Board of Education approves the following IDEA Flow-Through Allocations Contracts between the Mineola UFSD and Henry Viscardi School for the 2010-2011 school year.

**2.3. Instruction: Student Actions**

**2.4. Instruction: Other**

**3. Civil Service**

- a. Resignation(s)/Leave of Absence(s)
  1. That the Board of Education accepts the resignation of John Wigand, Cleaner, at the Willis Avenue School, effective February 11, 2011.

2. That the Board of Education approves the termination of Catherine Moraglia, part time Bus Aide, effective January 28, 2011.
3. That the Board of Education approves the paid Medical Leave of Absence, using accumulated sick days, for Gonzalo Gonzalez, effective February 8, 2011, due to surgery. He is expected to be out approximately two to three months.

b. Appointments

1. That the Board of Education approves the appointment of Gloria Romero-Toro to the position of part time Typist Clerk as Registrar to replace Kristen Ryan, effective February 8, 2011. Salary will be \$21.03 per hour on Step 1. Probation is 26 weeks. (2009/2010 Clerical salary schedule)
2. That the Board of Education approves the appointment of Mary Beth Miceli to the position of part time Bus Aide in Transportation to replace Janet Ross, effective February 18, 2011. Salary will be \$10.75 per hour on Step 1. Probation is 26 weeks. (2008/2009 Teacher Aide salary schedule)
3. That the Board of Education approves the appointment of Maria Condoleo-Peitler to the position of part time Teacher Aide at Jackson Avenue School to replace Lilly Balasubramanyam, effective February 18, 2011. Salary will be \$13.74 per hour on Step 1. Probation is 26 weeks. (2008/2009 Teacher Aide salary schedule).
4. That the Board of Education approves the following positions for the 2011/2012 Summer Language Program:

<u>Principal/Administrator</u>		<u>Rate of Pay</u>
1	Principal/Administrator – Administrative Certification Required	Stipend per AMSA Contract
<u>Elementary</u>		
6	Elementary, Reading and/or ESL Teachers	Per MTA Contract
2	Teacher Aides	Hourly Wage/Step of Teacher Aide Contract
<u>Middle School</u>		<u>Rate of Pay</u>
4	Elementary, Secondary, Reading and/or ESL Teachers	Per MTA Contract
<u>Willis Avenue/Jump Start Program</u>		<u>Rate of Pay</u>
3	Elementary, Reading, and/or ESL Teachers	Per MTA Contract

5. That the Board of Education approves the appointment of Karin Weidlein to the position of part time Teacher Aide Sub effective February 18, 2011. Salary will be \$13.74 per hour.

4. **Business/Finance**

a. **Treasurer's Report**

1. That the Board of Education accepts the Treasurer's Report for the period ending December 31, 2010 and directed that it be placed on file.

b. **Approval of Invoices and Payroll**

1. That the Board of Education approves the Invoices and Payroll for the period ending January 31, 2011.

Warrant #13	\$1,199,083.99
Warrant #14	\$ 468,151.35
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,667,235.34</b>

**PAYROLL #13 & #14**

General	\$4,184,915.64
Fund F	\$ 107,642.89
<b>TOTAL PAYROLL</b>	<b>\$4,292,558.53</b>

4.1. **Business/Finance: Contract Approvals**

4.2. **Business/Finance: Bids**

5. **Other**

a. **Donation**

1. That the Board of Education accepts a donation from the Thomas and Jeanne Elmezzi Private Foundation in the amount of \$5,000.00 in support of Mineola High School's Life Skills Program.

**RESOLUTION #58** – **BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Board of Education approves Consensus Agenda items I.1.a. through I.5.a.1. as presented.

**Motion:** John McGrath

**Second:** Christine Napolitano

**Discussion:** Mr. Hornberger requested an explanation regarding Item I.5.a.1. (Donation). The Superintendent of Schools stated that this foundation heard of the life skills program at Mineola High School and wanted to make a donation to set up a room for students who need to work on life skills.

**Yes:** Irene Parrino  
William Hornberger  
John McGrath

**No:** None

Christine Napolitano  
Terence Hale

**Passed:** Yes

**RESOLUTION #59** – **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Education of the Mineola Union Free School District approves of the following:

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education has been informed of the impending assessment of sewer fees by the County of Nassau; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board has been informed of the impending commencement of litigation by other educational institutions in the County of Nassau to challenge the imposition of said sewer fees;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education authorizes its attorneys, Ingerman Smith, LLP (the Firm), to commence legal action against the County of Nassau and other proper parties on a cooperative basis with other educational institutions and/or to intervene, if appropriate, in pending litigation commenced by other educational institutions to challenge said sewer fees; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board authorizes the payment of a maximum of \$225 per hour as compensation to its attorneys, subject to a separate letter of engagement with the Firm.

**Motion:** John McGrath

**Second:** William Hornberger

**Discussion:** Mr. Hale requested an explanation regarding this resolution. The Superintendent of Schools explained that the Nassau County Legislature past a tax on the district's water and sewer usage and being an entity that does not pay taxes it is suspect if they can do this. Irrigation won't be charged because it isn't going into the sewer. This resolution is to join a consortium of districts challenging if this tax is legal. Mr. McGrath inquired as to the number of districts participating. Mr. Hale responded there isn't a number yet. The Superintendent of Schools stated it is based on a per gallon use. Mr. McGrath inquired as to the cost in digging our own wells. The Superintendent of Schools responded, \$5,000. Mr. Hornberger inquired if they would need to drill at all fields. The Superintendent of Schools responded yes. Mr. Hale inquired as to how the County plans to charge the district. The Superintendent of Schools responded, taking 3 months (February, March, April) of usage and multiplying it by 4, will be the district's history. The Superintendent of Schools also stated that all the buildings have water meters. It is his recommendation to join the consortium.

**Yes:** Irene Parrino  
William Hornberger  
John McGrath

**No:** None

Christine Napolitano  
Terence Hale

**Passed:** Yes

At this time President Hale stated that the Board will be going out of order of the Agenda and public comments will follow the Superintendent of Schools' presentations.

**J. Board of Education Reports**

- Comments from Board President

Mr. Hale read a statement of his feelings regarding Mr. McGrath's conflicting behavior to the Board majority during the process of reconfiguration of schools. Mr. Hale stated that a Board Member is to be an advocate for all children not only a few and that *truth always overcomes lies*. Mr. Hale stated that 3 things last: faith, hope and love. He has faith in the Superintendent of Schools, staff, children, and the entire community, and hopes to proceed with respect and dignity.

- Board Committee Report
- Superintendent of Schools' Reports & Comments

The Superintendent of Schools stated there were 2 presentations this evening: preliminary budget and issues raised in a letter to the editor.

Mr. Waters presented the first draft of the 2011-2012 Budget. He discussed the following: another year of a 2.5% or lower tax levy; increase in major expenses (TRS, ERS, Health Insurance) impacting the budget; 3 year comparison of expenses; salaries are down by \$300,000 for 2011-2012; 7 retiring teachers; undetermined if retirees will be replaced; inclusion of step increases; not replacing one administrative position; revenue comparisons; reduced State Aid (\$600,000); current budget at \$82.2 million; tax levy under \$75.7 million (2.6%); no staff excessing as yet; Cross Street lease revenue is not included; \$500,000 in capital reserve has been used to fix buildings; the district needs to reduce another \$770,000 to get to a 2.5% tax levy; bring in more revenue or reduce expenses. Mr. Hale inquired if there was any chance State Aid would go up. Mr. Waters responded that the district has not heard of an increase. Mr. Hale inquired if there was a chance it could go down. The Superintendent of Schools responded that the district uses the Governor's proposal and anticipates the State having a budget in place by April 1<sup>st</sup>. The Superintendent of Schools further discussed: If there is a tax cap it would not be in effect until August; the Hampton Project numbers are not included; 2 million dollars will be placed in the budget bringing the budget-to-budget increase to 5.1%, but it won't affect the tax levy, because the money will come from the undesignated fund balance; size of buildings; scenario if the budget should fail (take \$2 million out and place in capital reserve fund); not allowed to fund and spend capital reserve funds in the same year; requirements in what capital reserve funds can be spent on; scenario if revote fails (Designate Willis as the South PreK-2 building). Mr. Hornberger inquired as to the where the outdoor space would be located. The Superintendent of Schools stated the parking lot. The Superintendent of Schools also discussed: Hampton project will not affect the budget; scenario if budget fails (Removal of equipment); doesn't know yet,

if going to a contingency budget will affect programs; district needs to get to a million dollars in cuts and/or revenue.

The Superintendent of Schools reported on attending a meeting of school districts and they discussed the following: reducing the tax levy, i.e. reserves; massive layoffs; Mineola reserves went to pay down Bond saving the taxpayer \$4.4 million; scenario if reserve money were returned to the taxpayer this year, would result in a 6.1% tax levy for 2012-13 school year; reserve funds and amounts that are in each; anticipate generating more reserve this year; enough room for students after 2 buildings are closed; school zones not established yet; closing buildings necessary to maximize staff reduction in order to keep programs and desired class size guidelines. Ms. Parrino requested clarification about using reserves for purposes other than what they were originally designated for. The Superintendent of Schools responded that reserves can only be used for the purpose of the reserve. Mr. Waters explained that employee funds can only be used to pay for employee retirement and benefits. Legal Counsel stated that a specific reserve fund cannot be accessed for something other than its original designation, but the undesignated fund balance can be accessed. The Superintendent of Schools stated that capital reserve money cannot be taken out without voter approval and is set up for a particular time period. Mr. McGrath inquired about after 10 years. The Superintendent of Schools responded that it would have to be removed.

Mr. McGrath inquired if both the bond and budget fail is it the Board's intention to use Willis instead of Hampton. The Superintendent of Schools responded that this was agreed upon a year ago. Mr. McGrath did not remember the Board authorizing the default option as using Willis. The Superintendent of Schools stated that was his understanding, but the Board can be asked.

Mr. McGrath inquired as to the length of time the district had been paying down the BAN. Mr. Water responded 4 years, paid with the surplus funds. Mr. McGrath inquired about this year's anticipated surplus. Mr. Waters responded around a million dollars, but it is too early to know. The surplus could either go toward the reconfiguration plan or pay down the BAN.

Mr. McGrath inquired about the major expense category of Mr. Waters' presentation. Mr. Waters explained the 14% increase (ERS 1.9%; TRS 4.2%; and Health insurance 8.7%) and Social Security was included in the 18.9 million dollars. Mr. Waters explained that interest income is down.

Ms. Napolitano inquired if the budget failed, how Willis (South school) compared to Meadow. The Superintendent of Schools explained that Willis doesn't have a media center, or a computer lab and would have to be built; and Willis' library is inadequate for a PreK-2 building.

Ms. Napolitano pointed out that Ms. Parrino and Mr. McGrath did not speak to administration about their plan.

Mr. Hornberger discussed the Finance Committee's recommendation over the years to pay off the BAN. Mr. Hornberger also addressed a letter to the editor written by Mr. McGrath and Ms. Parrino regarding their plan.

Mr. Hornberger inquired of the Superintendent of Schools his feelings. The Superintendent of Schools responded that his desire is to have financial security for the district and preserve as many programs as possible.

Mr. Hornberger reflected on Mr. McGrath's past practice as a Board Member and noted the increase of tax levies and contract settlements since his tenure on the Board. Mr. Hornberger discussed the following: Board is trying to preserve programs; alleviate tax burden on the residents; and read excerpts from the NYSSBA Code of Conduct for Board Members (*...selected by our fellow citizens and entrusted with the authority and obligation to strive to provide all students of our communities and state with equal opportunity for educational excellence; work with fellow school board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that arise during vigorous debate of points at issue; base decisions upon available facts in each situation; to base each vote upon honest conviction, un-swayed by partisan bias; thereafter, to abide by and uphold the final majority decision of the board; communicate concerns and public reaction to board policies and school programs to the superintendent and other board members in a professional manner; remember that as individuals, school board members have no legal authority outside the meetings of the board, and that this must be reflected in all expressions with staff, the local citizenry, and the media; resist temptation and outside pressure to use our positions as school board members to benefit either ourselves or any other individual or agency apart from the total interest of our school districts; agree to honor our positions and the people who elected us by maintaining high ethical standards and by not engaging in any activity which presents a conflict of interest, or an appearance of impropriety; publicly disclose the nature and extent of any interest we as school board members have in any proposed contract or agreement which comes before the board; keep confidential matters pertaining to the schools, which are either legally required to be kept confidential and/or, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools; follow the dictates of the state's Open Meetings Law; recognize that the primary function of a school board is to establish policies (which are in conformity with applicable law and regulations) by which the schools are to be administered, but that the administration of the educational program and the conduct of school business shall be left to the superintendent of schools and his/her staff; strive to build and exercise a relationship with the superintendent that is constructive and positive...).* Mr. McGrath responded as follows since his tenure on the Board: addressed the tax levy from 2000 to the present; buildings were in horrendous condition; there was limited technology in the schools, i.e. Mac computers at the High School; Central Office was located at the Middle School; community agreed that the 2000 Bond would resolve those conditions; Board was limited in what could be negotiated in the employee contracts because of the Taylor law; Mineola is penalized because of the more wealthier districts surrounding it as it relates to contract increases compared to Mineola; contracts were approved at the recommendation of Administration; the current contract was negotiated in part by this Superintendent; and no one would have liked the district to have remained as it was before he came onto the Board (1997).

Mr. Hornberger commented that Mr. McGrath was not following the recommendation of this Superintendent of Schools as he had in the past. Mr. McGrath responded that

previous Superintendents of Schools would make modifications if he had an issue with their recommendations.

The Superintendent of Schools discussed the following pertaining to the transition into the new configuration: changed the current configuration that is on the website to address parents' concerns; new plan (For 2011-12: Willis PreK-K; Hampton - next year's grades 1, 2, and 4; Jackson – next year's grades 2, 3, 4 with all of Cross' 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders going to Jackson; Meadow - next year's 1, 2, and 4 with all of Cross' 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders going to Meadow; Middle School – all 5<sup>th</sup> grade will move there; High School – all 8<sup>th</sup> graders will move there), the plan will be on the website tomorrow. Mr. Hornberger inquired about Cross Street. The Superintendent of Schools responded that the current 3<sup>rd</sup> graders will move twice, which is the only section to move twice.

The Superintendent of Schools also discussed: discussion with MTA prior to finalizing school start times; Middle School will be referred as an upper level elementary school (Intermediate School); Middle School will have the greatest change of all the buildings.

Mr. Hornberger inquired about the iPads being piloted at Jackson. The Superintendent of Schools responded that the pilot has been successful and he hopes to initiate it across the entire 6<sup>th</sup> grade next year.

The Superintendent discussed the following: giving testimony at the courthouse, at the request of Senator Martins, if the Mineola District even with the reconfiguration of schools could reach a 2% cap; mandate relief; no way to meet a 2% cap without cutting into program; employees don't make contributions to the Retirement System after 10 years; Wrestling Team Nassau County Champions; addressed the letter to the editor from Mr. McGrath and Ms. Parrino; 2 different opinions on the Board pertaining to school configuration; believes in the direction he is taking the district; information is disseminated to each Board Member; does not like to be accused of upsetting students when Mr. McGrath knew he was on vacation; bothers the Superintendent that he must address this in writing; more productive to ask for a presentation on closing just one building. Mr. McGrath interjected that he will print a retraction.

- Superintendent Comments
- Capital Updates
- Table Reports
  - Finance and Operations Report
    - Monthly Financial Report
    - Building & Grounds Report
      - Building Usage
      - Vandalism
      - Work order status
    - Transportation Report
- Special Reports

\*Public Questions - Board Committee Reports; Student Organization Report; Superintendent's Report; Table Reports (All Finance & Operation Functions); and Special Report

**K. Public Comments**

President Hale requested that when addressing the Board to state their name, address and to keep it respectful.

- ❖ A resident inquired about the 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders participating in drama at the Middle School. The Superintendent of Schools stated that the 8<sup>th</sup> graders will return for drama and 8<sup>th</sup> grade sports; and the 5<sup>th</sup> grade drama would be a very different performance.
- ❖ A resident commented that the Board has set history because the district will no longer have to address elementary redistricting. Every child will have the opportunity to attend classes that are the same size. The resident inquired as to the number of classrooms needed. The Superintendent of Schools responded, a minimum of 62. The resident commented that this Board should be congratulated for closing one building; commented on busing the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders to Jackson, and suggested looking at the Middle School in order to fill buses.
- ❖ A resident commented that the last 3 weeks presented such negativity due to a letter that appeared in the local newspaper. The resident believes that it was insulting and rude and requested not to publicly slander anyone. The resident feels the district will be better.
- ❖ A resident directed his comments toward Mr. McGrath that he used his position to undermine and betray the Board he sits on. He also stated that true leaders stand up and stand together to unite a community, and stated he didn't believe Mr. McGrath was a leader.

The Superintendent of Schools stated he was in need of an executive session.

**L. Executive Session**

At 8:59 p.m. a motion was made for the Board of Education to go into executive session to discuss the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation.

**Motion:** John McGrath  
**Second:** Christine Napolitano

**Yes:** Irene Parrino  
William Hornberger  
John McGrath  
Christine Napolitano  
Terence Hale  
**No:** None

**Passed:** Yes

President Hale stated that the Board may return at any time.

At 9:40 p.m. the Board returned to open session.

**M. Adjournment**

At 9:40 p.m. a motion was made to adjourn this meeting of the Board of Education.

**Motion:** John McGrath

**Second:** William Hornberger

**Yes:** Irene Parrino  
William Hornberger  
John McGrath  
Christine Napolitano  
Terence Hale

**No:** None

**Passed:** Yes

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Martillo  
District Clerk