

## **PTA GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

**January 10, 2018 at 9:45 AM**

### **Meeting Open and Welcome Remarks**

Meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 9:52AM

Christina Walsh opened the meeting and turned the floor over to Mrs. Dano

Mrs. Dano introduced Mr. Adcock, who announced that he would be presenting the 2018 Bond and proposal information, and Mrs. Iconis was running late but would be joining.

Mr. Adcock:

- Both he and Mrs. Iconis will be presenting at all the elementary school PTA meetings. They are heading to Unqua following this meeting.
- This is an exciting opportunity that has been presented to the community and the community will have the chance to vote on these proposals on Tuesday, January 23.
- Some schools were built in the 1950s, so those classrooms are in essence 60 years old.
- Mr. Adcock said that it is basically much needed renovations to the classrooms, bathrooms, and possibly getting air conditioning
- Mr. Adcock welcomed Mrs. Iconis. Mrs. Iconis apologized for being late and reiterated that the propositions include much needed improvements to our schools.
- Video was put up on the website a few days ago and I would like to show it to you.
- They then showed the video presentation (which can be viewed on the district website)

Mrs. Iconis said following the video - as you can see this is very exciting and these are much needed renovations to our facilities. As Alan said, this is an exciting time. There are 2 propositions up there, the first one includes renovations of the classroom spaces in all 6 of the elementary schools, Berner and bathrooms across the district, as well as the raised practice field at Berner Middle School. Some questions have come our way, why was this raised practice field not included in the original field renovation at Berner? It just was not. I kind of liked, at PTA Council meeting the other night, the analogy that, It's like redoing your entire kitchen, but not replacing your refrigerator. We really need that at Berner. So that's proposition 1.

Proposition 2 is air conditioning. We have approximately 500 classroom spaces. It has been very controversial - do we or don't we? We grew up in a time where air conditioning was not around. It has become very important. We know everyone works better when it is climate controlled. We have so many individual window units throughout this district that it has just not been cost effective. So you are going to have the opportunity in just 2 weeks to vote on these propositions.

Mr. Adcock added we have about 220 individual window units. Those units have been put in classrooms for a variety of reasons - 504 accommodations as a result of IEPs, special needs, staff, etc. Our facilities staff over the summer spends a large block of time moving those units, because as children progress from, for example, 3rd grade to 4th grade, our staff needs to move this unit from one classroom to another. Not only are we putting more units in on an annual basis, but also a large chunk of time is spent moving these units from one class to another. From an efficiency and an operations standpoint it is so much better. It is certainly better for all students. Also, from a safety factor, during the summer rec program, it is hot out and doors are open for ventilation. So during the summer time, you can pretty much walk into any school during the day. For climate control, it would be more secure to build it into the summer program. We would probably be able to put into place the security program that we use during the 10-month school year. We did last year add a dedicated security guard at each elementary school. So safety and efficiency and operations.

Iconis added another point I would like to raise is that a who child needs air conditioning and then they move to Berner, where as you know they change classes, so that is now multiple classroom units. It has been discussed before, but this feels like the right time and many districts have had AC for a good number of years and this is where most districts are headed. It isn't going to be running 12 months out of the year. We will control it.

### Questions

Q: Christina Walsh - can you clarify, every building is going to have air conditioning in every classroom?  
Each building, every classroom?

A: Mr. Adcock responded every classroom will have a split unit. So basically, one compressor can accommodate up to 6 classrooms, so they are basically central AC units in and of themselves. Much more efficient way.

Q: Sheila Grauling following up - does that include the common areas, like the auditoriums, the library, the gym?

A: Mr. Adcock responded - Some of the common areas are already air conditioned. Typically would not include gymnasiums and not include the auditoriums and elementary libraries, MakerSpace, etc. The library at Berner - yes. It will be a larger central AC system.

Q: Ilene Hellman - for summer rec, for really hot days, i know they use the gym, but since the gym won't have AC, will they be able to use classroom space that has AC?

A: Mrs. Dano said they use classrooms for summer rec., and would be able to utilize.

Q: Ilene Hellman - You specify general classroom repairs - not necessarily specialty rooms like art. Do the repairs and upgrades include special Education rooms?

A: Mrs. Iconis clarified and said yes, special education classrooms are included

Mr. Adcock said one question that has come up is why is the raised practice field packaged with the classroom renovations? Why is it packaged?

It has to do with the state and building aid. Basically the state says if you do a field reno and it's a "stand-alone" project it is not eligible for building aid. And the district will get 53% on the dollar back from NY State when you do a project, but fields are not eligible. But, when you have work going on such as classrooms, AC, and then you are also doing the fields at the same time everything is eligible for building aid. So the reason it is packaged in the Proposal #1, is so the district is afforded the building aid including the field.

Q: Christina Walsh asked what is the cost to the taxpayer?

A: Mr. Adcock said approximately \$28 a year for 15 years

Q: Sheila Grauling asked what is the timeline for the work to be done. For example in Fairfield we are still waiting on our windows from the 2014 bond?

A: You are talking about a 3-5 year completion, because obviously you can't do all classrooms at once. We would need to schedule to do a number of classrooms a year, after hours during the school year, and many during the summer. Mrs. Iconis said it would be a tremendous amount of coordination particularly at the elementary level. Secondary is a little different. We would be looking at summer work and vacation period work.

Q: Christina Walsh added - since the bond hasn't passed, how do you get a vendor? Do you already have a vendor in place?

A: Mr. Adcock: No, we have a construction manager, not a construction manager specifically for this project, but the district does have a construction manager for the 2014 bond. Once the community approves it, we do have a

district architect and we would be looking at the BOE for a construction management firm. Possibly the same firm that is doing the work now.

Q: Christina Walsh followed up by asking - would you send it out for an RFP?

A: Mr. Adcock - they might. We did the first time. Boces does that work for us, they have several construction management firms that have gone through the RFP process. When we selected the current firm, we interviewed some construction management firms that had already gone through the RFP process with BOCES.

Q: Christina Walsh followed by asking - and then there is a contractual agreement in place that they can go ahead and do the work, and have to complete the project in "X" amount of time.

A: Mr. Adcock - yes, that's correct.

Mrs. Iconis added, just to bring to your attention, everything has to go up to the state education department for their approval.

Christina Walsh commented - But that's why I'm asking, because we have approval on window and several years later we are still waiting.

Why are we starting new projects when others have not been completed?

Mr. Adcock added windows here should be coming very shortly.

Christina Walsh added we are waiting and you are asking us to approve new projects that will take 3-5 years and we are waiting on new windows that were approved 2013/14

Mr. Adcock - I will speak to our facilities director and our architect to find out. I believe it has already been bid, I will find out when the work will start here and get back to you.

Q: Sue Foran - so if this is approved, when will the work start? In 5 years?

A: Mr. Adcock - It will probably take about a year or so for the work to start. First of all what has to happen is the architect has to draw up detailed plans on all the projects and coordinate with principals and administration, then those plans and specs go up to the State Education Dept. With the 2014 bond issue, the state was taking over a year to review and approve. It was horrible, basically they were taking on average 62 weeks.

Q: Sheila Grauling asked - what is the norm now?

A: Mr. Adcock: The norm is 24-30 weeks is about right. The state hired outside architectural firms to work at the State Education Department, so it is going quicker now. Still anticipated that it will take 30 weeks to get approval from the State. Once that happens, the district has to go out for bids. Those bids would go out and be due back at a certain time, and the bid would go to the lowest responsible bidder. That process takes about a year

Q: Christina Walsh -2014 was a bond also? So we are still paying that? What is the cost to the taxpayers?

A: Mr. Adcock - when that happened we had debt services expiring, so I believe that was at no additional cost to the taxpayer. Mrs. Iconis confirmed no additional cost. There was debt service that was being paid off on a previous bond so we asked the community to approve to continue to do construction work that was needed at no additional cost. In this particular case, the financing is a hybrid - we would be using \$9 million of our capital improvement fund, which we already have sitting in a savings account, and so once we start to utilize that money the state starts to pay us back 53% of that money back in state aid.

Q: Sheila Grauling asked - so we get that 53% back over the life of the bond?

A: You get that over the life of the project, so for State purposes is about 15 years.

The rest of it would be funded with a bond issue. The net cost \$28 per household, with the average house assessment of \$375K.

Q: Christina Walsh asked - so we are getting 53% of the \$9 million or 53% back on the total project?

A: Mr. Adcock stated the total project, which is \$42 million

Q: Lisa Brzezinski asked for clarification - is it all the bathrooms in all of the buildings?

A: Mr. Adcock: Yes, but in regards to the high school, in the 2014 bond there was authorization to approve some in the high schools. Approval to do Berner, Ames and elementary school schools and any that have not been updated.

Q: Lisa Brzezinski followed up by asking - in order of priority the projects already approved for 2014 bond are those "green lighted" to get done ahead of the new projects if they get approved?

A: Mr. Adcock: Basically, what would happen, the planning that would take place would start for the new projects and the 2014 projects would keep moving forward. We do not need to finish the 2014 projects before beginning planning.

Q: Sheila Grauling asked, but will the windows be done before we get new bathrooms?

A: Mr. Adcock: Yes

Q: Lisa Brzezinski asked are the auditoriums in Berner and the high school, are they in the old bond? The new bond?

A: Mr. Adcock - there is no approval for auditorium upgrades at this point.

Mrs. Iconic added, but at Berner, there are lighting upgrades, and air conditioning

Q: Keri Kubat pointed out that the ceiling was literally falling down/paint chips on the kids.

A: It is getting fixed. That is what we can call minor renovations - painting, lighting, AC. With regards to the seating there is no approval or that type of renovation. At MHS there is no approval for auditorium renovations. But may be something down the road.

Q: Keri said I know there was a bond for the pool?

A: Mr. Adcock said that has been postponed until May and that is its own separate proposition. It has been deferred because there are outstanding questions from the district and the community that were brought up. We are in the process of answering those questions, so it will likely be at the same time as the school budget vote. It would be a separate proposition to vote on "yes" or "no" for the pool.

Q: Marie Festa - I have a question about 2014, I understand, we didn't budget enough money for that and there is a lot of numbers being thrown around. 8% was thrown around. Can you get me up an update on that, I was not at that Board meeting?

A: Alan Adcock - Sure, about 6 wks ago they architect made a presentation at a school board meeting about the 2014 bond. And since the costs in construction have risen significantly, so at this point in time they are looking at an 8% as a cost overrun., but at this time we have not gone out and assigned contracts for all of the 2014 projects. So we are anticipating that the architect will come back to us with what work associated will need another funding source. I have some ideas in regards to that, because there is some additional funds in the capital reserve fund. And certainly we would recommend to the Superintendent and the BOE that we could use some of the money on the capital reserve fund to address these projects.

Mrs. Iconis added that at the next Board meeting they will be giving the community an update.

Q: Marie Festa - asked about the fields. Didn't we sell TOB the fields by Carmen Road School?

A: Mrs. Iconis answered that TOB presented at a town forum, and it was something that we were discussing and literally the day after that meeting it was not going through

Mr. Adcock clarified we sold the building to Nassau Boces, but the fields around it we still own. And with regards to the Town of Oyster Bay deal they had this big elaborate presentation, that the Superintendent just mentioned at Berner, with a lot of town officials were there, people were asking questions, they were very "gung-ho" about it, literally the next day it kind of fell off the table. We made numerous calls, they said they were in the process of prioritizing the capital improvement work, and it never came to fruition. I will tell you if the snow and zero degree temps had not occurred last week, you would actually have the turf down on the Berner fields. It is really coming together quickly.

Q: Marie Festa: So the new area that you are proposing to do for the Berner Fields - is that going to be grass or artificial turf?

A: Mr. Adcock replied artificial turf.

Mrs. Festa added that I am concerned about the young children and now the 6th graders there. I have not read any reports that artificial turf is good for young children. I am firmly against that.

Mr. Adcock - When turf came out many years ago it was put down on top of concrete, there is a tremendous amount of cushioning put down now.

Marie Festa commented that I am concerned about what the turf is made out of. I understand the cushioning, but what the turf is made out of? It is not good for small bones.

Mrs. Iconis - We do have a lot of research that was provided to the BOE, National Studies that contradict that. I understand where you're coming from, and I know there are many questions about it. They do have the research that supports it.

Marie Festa added - I do not want to doubt you Mrs. Iconis, but I have read the opposite.

Mrs. Iconis added, I absolutely understand, and so have I.

Q: Christina Walsh asked, is there a place on the district website, for transparency purposes. where we can see the open bonds, which projects that have been completed and which have projects still have to be done? Since we still have unfinished projects from the 2014 bond issue with not having the work done and costing us more money.

A: Mrs. Iconis answered we do have that. It is all updated on the district website.

Mr. Adcock added that the State Education Department put the district behind on the 2014 bond by probably over a year. With regard to that we are in the last 25% of completion, I know you haven't gotten your windows, but they have been bid on and I will get you a date on that.

Sheila Grauling pointed out - it's like we are spending more money, but we haven't gotten our first order.

Mrs. Iconis responded by saying because the windows aren't here at Fairfield, if the windows were here, you may not feel that way. Absolutely, I understand that, but the 2014 bond is progressing. I just texted Mr. O'Donnell and said, "OK, Tim, when are these windows getting to Fairfield?"

Q: Sheila Grauling asked given the problems we are running into with the 2014 bond is there a way to build that into the expected costs so that we do not run into these problems again?

A: Mr. Adcock responded - We don't come up with the cost, the architectural firm comes up with the cost.

There was a tremendous boom in construction costs between 2014-2017, so yes they have built that in. They typically do build in a contingency, but the contingency they built into the 2014 wasn't enough.

Q: Sue Foran pointed out, I'm sorry to bring up the windows again, but you allocated a certain amount of money for them "way back when", now has it way exceeded that price by the time they install them?

A: Mr. Adcock answered: No, we have plenty of money in the bond to take care of the project here.

Q: Tatum Salembier: How is the rest of the community being informed? I saw you said there was going to be a mailing, early January. I know we all know about it sitting in this room, but I am pretty sure that a lot of people in the community do not know about it.

A: Mr. Adcock said that there is a mailing that some people received, it was delivered to the post office last week, but, due to the weather I think there was a delay. Everyone should get in the next few days.

Mrs. Iconis added the video is featured on the district website and all the info

Mrs. Iconis then updated the group on the windows per a response from Mr. O'Donnell - they have been ordered and are slated to be produced in April and then they will schedule installation.

Mr. Adcock reminded everyone that the vote is January 23. Same location as a budget vote. And hopefully we will be able to move forward with these projects.

Sheila Grauling and Christina Walsh thanked Mrs. Iconis and Mr. Adcock for attending.

Christina Walsh asked that the group read through the minutes and announced that we will have a presentation on the Blood Drive.

Diane from NY Blood Center

- Thanked Fairfield for their participation last year's in the Blood Drive
- Every pint of blood is incredibly important, saves up to 3 lives
- The interesting thing about this year's blood drive is you are going to be educating your 5th Grade students on the blood drive and we will include them in trying to get people to donate blood. Of course they cannot donate blood, but we are going to push into the 5th Grade classrooms and teach them about the blood drive and have them ask parents, grandparents, family, etc. and get the involved in recruiting
- Reasons why people do not donate:
  - The #1 reason people have not donated blood is no one has asked them
  - I have a busy day - I don't want to feel bad -- need to be hydrated and have eaten
  - People are scared
  - People say - they need their blood. There are 8-12 pints of blood in your body and reproduces in about 24 hours and your red blood cells in 42 hours.
- Would each one of you be able to ask 3 people to donate - group answered yes
- Sheets can be dropped off at the main office and PTA agreed to make copies to distribute
- Sheila asked - how do we get more people involved. Diane answered it is 1-1 contact. It is the direct ask. People will have the conversation. Email, social media will remind people to come that were already coming, but that will not get new people to come.

How Diane got involved - she was part of the PTA in RVC and a little boy was diagnosed with leukemia and the PTA wanted to do something for the family. They offered to cook, clean, etc. The mom said, thank you, but they had that covered. So as a community, they decided to run a blood drive. We invited everyone who wanted to to come over to plan and then 20 ppl met to plan, and the mom of the little boy attended to help also. The mom said she wanted to do something to feel like she was helping too. The mom told a story, how her son was not feeling well one day so she took him to Winthrop Hospital and they gave him 1 unit of red cells. A couple of hours later he was up, eating, playing. Why did the red cells give him energy - because of the oxygen that those blood cells give you.

The little boy is now in school to be a Pediatric Oncologist. Diane said, after she hadn't worked outside the home in 13 years, she approached the Blood Center and she mentioned she had volunteered for them before and they gave her a job and she has been there for 13 years.

Ilene Hellman said class parents should be receiving information and should call their class to get participants. 16 year olds can participate with parental consent.

### **Meeting Minutes**

The November 2017 meeting minutes approved by Sue Foran and seconded by Lisa Brzezinski

### **Teacher's Report**

#### **Mrs. Crimarco**

- Thanked the PTA for the Holiday Luncheon and the Holiday Fair
- STEAM Program has started in Kindergarten with spaghetti towers
- 1st Grade studying planets and the moon
- 4th Grade working on SS and learned that Manhattan was purchased for \$24. They love that fact. Journeys into American Indians coming in soon for 4th grade also.

### **Principal's Report**

#### **Mrs. Dano and Mrs. Gerhard**

Mrs. Gerhard

- Mrs. Gerhard pointed out that Josephine Speciale (4th Grader) won the Spelling Bee and is advancing onto Hofstra in February
- Also talked about the "Submerge Storytelling" and Emmy's Bedroom for 3rd Grade. They loved it. They transformed a classroom into a bedroom. Kids loved it.
- Sheila Grauling asked about the mini-workshops. Mrs. Dano said the program was great, but would not do the workshops again.

Mrs. Dano

- Welcomed everyone and wished them a Happy New Year.
- So many programs going on
- 5th Grade going to see mock trials at MHS. School event vs. PTA
- Parents raised frustration with the drop and go lane and people still getting out of their cars. Mrs. Dano said she is out at main doors most days and Mrs. Gerhard is at Prospect, but she will let security know also.

Q: Keri Kubat asked Mrs. Dano about the book fair conflicting with the Bond Vote on 1/23.

A: Mrs. Dano said she didn't realize, but will look into it.

### **Treasurer's Report**

#### **Kathleen Romano**

November 2017

- Opening balance: \$22,700.40
- Closing balance: \$15,267.94

December 2017

- Opening balance: \$34,146.56
- Closing balance: \$26,647.50

Motion to approve November and December 2017 Treasurer's reports  
Sue Foran and seconded by Lisa Brzezinski

### **Corresponding Secretary Report**

#### **Presented by Sheila Grauling**

Ms. Meininger sent a Thank you for the holiday luncheon

### **President's Report**

#### **Sheila Grauling**

- Thank you to Allison DeLuccia and Keri Kubat for chairing the holiday fair, they did a fantastic job
- We have completed our Spelling Bee and have a 4th grader moving onto Hofstra. Thank you to Ilene Hellman for all her hard work
- We had 23 Reflections submissions, thank you to Ilene Hellman for her continued support of this program
- We had Submerge Storytelling come in the week of 12/18 for the 3rd grade
- The PTA and SADD raised \$660 for Jeans for Troops
- We have Mad Science Planets & Moons coming in on Wed., 1/17 for our 1st grade classes
- We have Journey's coming in on 1/17 for our 4th grade
- We are preparing for our Book Fair and PARP starting on 1/23
- Our membership is currently at 406 as of 1/8

### **Plan of Works**

#### **Arts in Education - Nalini Hayes**

- The Journeys program coming 1/17
- Wonderful activities and great experience for the children

Motion to approve Sue Foran and seconded by Keri Kubat

### **BOE Reports**

Marie Festa

### **November 16, 2017**

- There was a discussion concerning the transfer of \$4,500,000 from the Retirement Contribution Reserve Fund to the Capital Reserve Fund
- Fire Inspection Report presented by Kevin Herbst = all ok
- MHS received the 2017 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence and has been ranked 121 of 1,270 high schools in NYS
- There were questions regarding the 2014 Bond Issue and the higher costs = approx. 10% higher than estimated by H2M architects
- Mrs. Iconis then spoke on the BOE goals for the 2017-18 school year:
  - Curriculum Instruction, Assessment & Technology
  - Budget, District Operations and Facility Projects
  - Social and Emotional learning
  - At the elementary level new science program grades K-5
    - STEM expansion grades K-4
    - 3 literacy coaches grades K-5
    - Discussion of new report cards and all info on elementary homepages
- There was a big discussion about bringing the 6th grade back to the elementary school

- A resolution authorized the transfer of \$4,500,000 from the Retirement Contribution Reserve Fund
- A resolution calling for a Special District Meeting on Tuesday, January 23, 2018 to authorize the expenditure of monies for school purposes and the levy of taxes

**December 7, 2017 meeting**

- Our Superintendent of Schools, Lucille Iconis recognized our World Language Department with a special award
- Dr. Fasano presented the analysis of courses and course content booklet proposals. He mentioned critical thinking and problem solving
- Alan Adcock presented a resolution to readapt the District Financial Reserve and the Fund Balance plan. This is the 3rd year this has been adopted
- Lisa Silveri proposed policy revisions to #5420 regarding Student Health Services per the administration of non-patient epinephrine in MSD buildings

Meeting adjourned at 11AM (due to another meeting in the room)

**Meeting Attendees**

Sue Foran, Lisa Brzeinnski, Patricia Diana Misita, Melisa Byrns, Nalini Hayes, Marie Festa, Patricia Despagni, Agnes Agnieszka Sulawa, Kerri Kubat, Sheila Grauling, Christina Walsh, Kathleen Romano, Kelly Rowland, Mrs. Crimarco, Mrs. Gerhard and Mrs. Dano