

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
HALF HOLLOW HILLS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL MEETING OF OCTOBER 21, 2013**

APPROVED AS WRITTEN – OCTOBER 28, 2013 – OFFICIAL COPY

MEMBERS PRESENT: James Ptucha, President
Diana Acampora
Betty DeSabato
David Kaston
Paul Peller, M.D.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Frank Grimaldi, Vice President
Eric Geringswald

ALSO PRESENT: Kelly Fallon, Superintendent
Patrick Harrigan, Deputy Superintendent
Anne Marie Marrone Caliendo, Assistant Superintendent for
Finance and Facilities
John O’Farrell, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education
Mary Rettaliata, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education
Rosanne Marini, District Clerk

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting, held at Candlewood Middle School, was called to order by
Mr. Ptucha at 7:10 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mr. Ptucha commenced the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Ptucha announced that tonight’s Worksession will be follow-up by another Worksession of the Board on Thursday, October 24, 2013 at 7:30 a.m. at the Fran Greenspan Administration Center. The Board is having two of these meetings since not all Board Members could be in attendance this evening.

Mr. Ptucha stated that the Board has received many passionate letters from the community regarding the potential closing of elementary schools; and he thanked the community for their feedback.

Mr. Ptucha thanked the Steering Committee who worked throughout the summer researching the effective use of present school facilities in light of declining enrollment and budgetary concerns. They have done an outstanding job and their recommendation to the Board is a two elementary building closure: Vanderbilt or Forest Park; and Chestnut Hill

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or Signal Hill. Mr. Ptucha emphasized that this action is not just a budgetary one, but necessary because of declining enrollment as well. At the last Board Meeting, the Board of Education asked Central Office Administration to put together some numbers for their review. Mr. Ptucha asked to see the elementary enrollment since 1995 and projected through 2020. He also asked to see ratios pertaining to secondary feeding patterns since 1995 and projected ratios for secondary feeding patterns through 2020.

Dr. Peller commented on the decline in middle school and high school enrollment and questioned if we would be able to maintain the programs that we have now.

The Board discussed the leasing of a vacant building and how that would weigh into making a decision to close a building. There are approximately 18 vacant school buildings already in Suffolk County – would a building in Half Hollow Hills be more desirable than in other areas. Mrs. DeSabato suggested the Board look at which buildings are the best for our children to learn in; and not focus on the best building to lease.

The Board discussed summer school in our elementary buildings. Summer school has rotated throughout elementary buildings in the District depending on activities in buildings, i.e. construction, etc. The mechanics of closing a school building would be the same across the board.

Mrs. Acampora stated that the District has just completed the Energy Performance Contract and all of our buildings have upgraded lighting, heating and are equitable.

Mr. Ptucha stated the Board will do their best to keep schools familiar for children being moved such as keeping the same peers, teachers and staff.

The Board discussed possible building within the District. Mrs. Fallon reported two areas of growth within the District: 1) the golf course next to the Fran Greenspan Administration Center with 20 to 25 homes; and 2) Schmitt Property with possibly 60 units.

Security and custodial personnel for closed facilities was discussed. Maintenance and Grounds Crews as well as Patrol Guards would be assigned to all District facilities including any closed buildings.

Evacuation Plans were discussed. The District maintains an Emergency Management Plan which states where schools evacuate to. Drills are held throughout the District in a non-emergency situation.

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Transportation was discussed and bus routes are being cleaned up to be more efficient.

Mrs. Fallon stated that start times have been discussed at the middle school level to get students to school in a more timely fashion; and this discussion has nothing to do with the closing of any facilities.

Geographic areas and demographic density was discussed. A large area of land does not necessarily mean there are large numbers of children.

Mrs. Fallon stated that Administration has prepared a map that works with all four options that the Steering Committee worked on. This map does not change any student feeding patterns for secondary school; and affects as little children as possible. Mrs. Fallon stated that even if a school stays open, that doesn't mean there wouldn't be change. Students may still move to a new school. Mrs. Fallon stated that this map is a *draft* at this time and there would probably be changes going forward.

Mrs. Fallon displayed the map on a projection screen for the Board and the community. Population density of each area was reviewed.

Mr. Ptucha stated that the Board of Education will meet again on Thursday, October 24, 2013 at **7:30 a.m.** at the Fran Greenspan Administration Center.

Mr. Kaston commended Central Office Administration for the tremendous amount of information they have put together for the Board.

Mr. Ptucha reminded everyone that in the end, we are all part of the Half Hollow Hills community and to keep a positive and respectful attitude. The Board of Education is working to do the best for *all* children in Half Hollow Hills.

ADJOURNMENT:

A Motion was made by Dr. Peller, seconded by Mr. Kaston, and carried unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosanne Marini, District Clerk