

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF PORT JERVIS**  
PORT JERVIS, NEW YORK

MEETING MINUTES

***May 18, 2017 Meeting***

The Regular Meeting/Budget Workshop of the Board of Education was held Thursday, May 18, 2017 in the High School Cafeteria.

**Members Present:** Judith Amato  
Brian Dewey  
Deborah Lasch  
Valerie Maginsky  
Tanya Parker-Hughes  
Catherine Sadaghiani  
Florence Santini  
William Smith (left at 7:05 pm)  
Robert Witherow

**Members Absent:**

**Others Present:** Thomas Bongiovi, Superintendent of Schools  
Cynthia Benedict, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction  
Lorelei Case, Assistant Superintendent for Business  
Kristen Lopez, Clerk of the Board

**Agenda Item 1 - Call to Order**

President Lasch called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

**Agenda Item 2 - Motion to Enter into Executive Session**

William Smith moved, seconded by Florence Santini to enter into executive session. Motion carried with a 9-0-0 vote.

Brian Dewey moved, seconded by Tanya Parker-Hughes to close executive session at 7:05 pm. Motion carried with a 9-0-0 vote.

**Agenda Item 3 - Regular Session**

Tanya Parker-Hughes moved, seconded by Brian Dewey to call the Business Meeting to order at 7:12 pm. Motion carried with an 8-0-1(Smith) vote. Cathy Sadaghiani led The Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.

**Agenda Item 4 - Canvass of the Vote and Adoption of Resolution Declaring the Results of the Annual Election Held on May 16, 2017 – Roll Call Vote 4**

Tanya Parker-Hughes moved, seconded by Cathy Sadaghiani to bring the Canvass of the Vote to the floor and declare the results of the vote. The Roll call vote was as follows:

*Ayes:* Amato, Dewey, Lasch, Maginsky, Parker-Hughes, Sadaghiani, Santini, Witherow

*Nays:* None

*Absent:* Smith

## **Agenda Item 5 - Public Comment**

**Taxpayer Linda VanHorn** shared her views on the results of the budget vote, Board Member election, and the future good of the district.

## **Agenda Item 6 - Administrative Reports**

**Ms. Case** took the opportunity to thank her staff who assisted in the budget preparation and remained dedicated to revising the spreadsheets as many times as she requested so that an accurate and thorough budget could be presented to the board members and the taxpayers. She thanked Michele O'Donnell, Kristen Lopez and their helpers in securing and assigning the poll workers, putting together the ballots and election bags and closing down the polls. She extended a special thank you to the election workers who started their day at 5:30 in the morning and still had smiles on their faces at 9:00 pm. Finally, she thanked the B&G staff that set-up, tore down and did anything that was needed to assist the process. She stated that their effort and commitment to our district does not go unnoticed.

The Business Office staff are working on closing out the 2017 year and opening the 2018 year and Don Preiss and his staff are working out the details of the summer projects.

Ms. Case wished everyone a safe Memorial Day weekend surrounded by family and loved ones.

**Mrs. Benedict** provided an update of Education initiatives from NYSED that will impact school districts this coming school year. She stated that after a 2-year process, the state education department recently released the Next Generation ELA and Math Learning Standards. The ELA and Math Learning standards advisory committee reviewed every learning standard. They made modifications based on surveys, review committees and 4,100 public comments. Revisions that were addressed included:

- Grade level reading expectations for text complexity
- The use of more user friendly standards related to writing
- Reducing the number of anchor standards to eliminate repetitiveness
- Encouraged use of a variety of texts to balance literacy
- Connection of literacy in other content areas
- Changes in Math standards:
- Shifting math standards to different grade levels and clarification of the math standards

The new standards are available on SED's AimHighNY website. The SED is accepting public comment on the revised standards through June 2<sup>nd</sup>. It is expected that the Board will vote on adopting the standards at the June meeting. Once the standards are adopted, guidance and Crosswalks will be provided by the state to show the main difference between the new standards and the 2011 standards. The districts will then begin work on professional development for teachers to implement the new standards.

In addition to the new standards, the State Education Department presented to the Board of Regents the draft of the Every Student Succeeds Act plan (ESSA). This plan is to replace No Child Left Behind. Public hearings will be held across the state to gather feedback. Mrs. Benedict encouraged all who are interested to check out a draft of the plan on the NYSED website. They will also have a list of the public hearings.

Lastly, Mrs. Benedict announced that NYSED has reopened a brief survey to gather information on the issue of student and teacher technology literacy. They are gathering data to understand how we need to support students and teachers in regards to technology. NYSED has clearly communicated that technology should be utilized in everyday instruction to enhance teaching and learning as well as preparation to participate in computer based testing in 2020. She said you can find the link to the survey on the PJCS D website. The survey closes on Friday, May 26, 2017.

**Mr. Bongiovi** related that it was a very busy time of year! On May 10<sup>th</sup> he attended the National Honor Society induction ceremony. He thanked Deb Cassara, Jim Santos and Amy Hoverstock for organizing a great dinner and a wonderful ceremony. On May 11<sup>th</sup> he attended the ASK Dare Graduation ceremony. He thanked Brett Cancredi, Nicole Ey and their staff for a well done ceremony, and also expressed thanks to DARE Officer McGowan and PJ Police Chief Worden for participating in the ceremony. On May 12<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Bongiovi attended the ADAC Annual Countywide Substance Abuse Prevention Poster Design Contest Awards Ceremony. He announced all of the winners from our school district in each category, announcing the grand prize winner for the entire county was our very own PJHS student, Junior Shannon Klotz. Her poster will be hung all over the county as winner, and he showed Shannon's poster to the Members.

Mr. Bongiovi discussed the Interview timeline for hiring the new ASI. Discussion ensued. Board Members Amato, Parker-Hughes and Witherow wished to be included on the interview committee.

Mr. Bongiovi discussed the very serious drug epidemic in our community. He stated that we have a serious opioid epidemic in our community that the police department knows that they are not "going to arrest their way out of", and none of us are going to make it go away by pretending we don't have a problem. He applauded Port Jervis because, he stated, they certainly have not been ignoring the problem, they have been facing it head on in a multitude of ways. He talked about the three-pronged approach that the Chief said they are using: Prevention and Education/Treatment and Recovery/Enforcement.

Mr. Bongiovi attended a Community Drug Forum on May 16<sup>th</sup>, hosted by District Attorney Hoovler. All of the Superintendents in the county were invited to take part in this forum. Some of the "staggering" information that he shared with everyone from this forum:

- Orange County residents have 3 times as many deaths from heroin or prescription medication overdoses than any other county in the state
- Heroin use has increased in America 75% from five years ago
- The number of Americans who died because of heroin increased 248% from 2010-2014
- There are an average of 29 deaths per day from heroin overdoses

Mr. Bongiovi stated that the schools are an integral part of prevention and education, and he was proud to say that our schools have been doing a multi-faceted program approach through drug education. He stated that the deaths our community has experienced in recent weeks was devastating, but he wanted everyone to keep in mind what we don't usually hear about – all the lives that were saved – all of the young people who were able to resist the temptation of drugs because of the programs we have provided in our schools. He urged the members of the community to take an active role so that together, as a school community, we can all share a common goal – and that is to end the opioid epidemic.

## **Agenda Item 7 – Consent Items**

Judy Amato moved, seconded by Brian Dewey to approve Agenda Item 7 Consent items as follows. Motion carried with an 8-0-1 vote:

- a. **Minutes from the May 2, 2017 Meeting of the Board of Education (Section 1, Minutes)**

**b. Committee on Special Education Minutes (Section 1, Minutes)**

- **CSE Meeting Dates:** *March:* 21 (2017-18), 28 (2017-18), 29 (2017-18), 31 (2017-18)  
*April:* 3 (2017-18 Revised), 4 (2017-18), 5 (2017-18 Revised),  
18 (Revised), 18 (2017-18 Revised), 19 (2017-18 Revised),  
20 (2017-18), 21, 21 (2017-18), 24, 24 (2017-18), 25 (2017-18)  
26, 26 (2017-18), 27, 27 (2017-18), 28 (2017-18)  
*May:* 2, 3, 4, 5
- **CPSE Meeting Dates:** *April:* 18 (2017-18), 21, 21 (2017-18)  
*May:* 5 (2017-18), 8, 8 (2017-18)

**c. FMLA, Intermittent and Leave of Absences per Enclosures (Section 1, Personnel)**

**d. Resignation:**

**Name:** Dawn Altman  
**Position:** Teacher Aide  
**Assignment:** District Wide – MS  
**Effective:** April 24, 2017

**e. Approval to Accept donation of Training Equipment (Section 1, Other Consent)**

**Agenda Item 8 – Appointments (Section 1, Personnel)**

**A. Instructional Staff**

**Name:** Rebecca Fedorick  
**Type of Position:** Temporary  
**Position:** Secondary Summer School Principal  
**Assignment:** 209 Complex  
**Reason:** Vacancy No. 1979  
**Effective:** May 19, 2017  
**Salary:** \$6,777

**Name:** Kara Raap  
**Type of Position:** Temporary  
**Position:** Elementary Summer School Principal  
**Assignment:** 209 Complex  
**Reason:** Vacancy No. 1980  
**Effective:** May 19, 2017  
**Salary:** \$6,777

**B. Support Staff**

**Name:** Omar Henry  
**Position:** Food Service Helper - Substitute  
**Assignment:** District Wide  
**Reason:** Per Diem  
**Probation:** N/A  
**Effective:** May 22, 2017 (pending fingerprint clearance)  
**Salary:** \$14.46 – Step 1

**Name:** Jennifer Pagan

Position: Food Service Helper - Substitute  
Assignment: District Wide  
Reason: Per Diem  
Probation: N/A  
Effective: May 22, 2017 (pending fingerprint clearance)  
Salary: \$14.46 – Step 1

**Name: Laurie Renner**  
Position: Food Service Helper - Probationary  
Assignment: District Wide  
Reason: Vacancy No. 1969  
Probation: 8 - 26 weeks  
Effective: September 1, 2017 (pending fingerprint clearance)  
Salary: \$14.46 – Step 1 (2016-2017)

**Name: William Sweeney Jr.**  
Position: Cleaner - Substitute  
Assignment: District Wide  
Reason: Per Diem  
Probation: N/A  
Effective: May 19, 2017 (pending fingerprint clearance)  
Salary: \$15.07 – Step 1

**Name: John Tunney**  
Position: Cleaner - Substitute  
Assignment: District Wide  
Reason: Per Diem  
Probation: N/A  
Effective: May 19, 2017 (pending fingerprint clearance)  
Salary: \$15.07 – Step 1

**Agenda Item 9 - Approval of New PJHS Dramatic Arts Scholarship (enclosure no. 1)**

Cathy Sadaghiani moved, seconded by Flo Santini to approve Agenda Item 9. Motion carried with an 8-0-1 vote.

**Agenda Item 10 - Approval of Revised Scholarships as follows (enclosure nos. 2a & 2b):**

- a. Dawn Knight Memorial Scholarship
- b. Port Jervis Music Teachers Scholarship

Judy Amato moved, seconded by Brian Dewey to approve Agenda Item 10. Motion carried with an 8-0-1 vote.

**Agenda Item 11 – Approval of Award of Student Accident Insurance to Pupil Benefits (enclosure no. 3)**

Cathy Sadaghiani moved, seconded by Judy Amato to approve Agenda Item 11. Motion carried with an 8-0-1 vote.

**Agenda Item 12 - Approval to Award Bid for District Wide Security Upgrades as follows (enclosure nos. 4a & 4b):**

- a. Contract No. EC-1 – Foremost Electric Corporation
- b. Contract No. GC-1 – Foremost Development, LLC

Valerie Maginsky moved, seconded by Brian Dewey to approve Agenda Item 12. Motion carried with an 8-0-1 vote.

**Agenda Item 13 - Approval of Memorandum of Agreement between the Port Jervis City School District and the Port Jervis Association of Principals (enclosure no. 5)**

Cathy Sadaghiani moved, seconded by Valerie Maginsky to approve Agenda Item 13. Motion carried with an 8-0-1 vote.

**Agenda Item 14 - Policies: (enclosure nos. 6a & 6b)**

**First Reading**

Policy No. 6110 – Code of Ethics for Board Members and All District Personnel

Policy No. 7740 – Title I Parent and Family Engagement

**Delete from Policy Book**

Policy No. 2115 – Board Member Training on Financial Oversight, Accountability and Fiduciary Responsibilities

Policy No. 7517 – Fluoride Distribution

Cathy Sadaghiani reviewed the Policies in the first reading and also explained the reasons for the policies being deleted.

Flo Santini moved, seconded by Valerie Maginsky to approve Agenda Item 14. Motion carried with an 8-0-1 vote.

**Agenda Item 15 - Board Member Comments**

**Member Judy Amato** thanked the public for coming out to vote and for showing trust in her by re-electing her to another Board term. She promised to do the very best she can for the students of the district.

**Member Tanya Parker Hughes** expressed her opinion that she feels the timeline for accepting applications for the ASI is a bit rushed in her opinion and that it is a very important position to fill. She equated the ASI position to one of a President or VP of a large corporation and felt the deadline for accepting applications for the position should be extended. Discussion followed, and Mr. Bongiovi agreed to extend the deadline for applications.

Mrs. Parker-Hughes thanked Mr. Bongiovi for the short presentation in his Administrative report about the drug program. She said that she took it upon herself to contact a friend of hers in the county who works in the field to give us as much information on the resources that are available to the schools that they haven't been utilizing that wouldn't cost the district anything to access them. She also had a question on the informational item presented in the Board's Agenda book regarding the "Go Pro" cameras that the schools would like to purchase. She wondered if the district had done a comprehensive plan on how they would be utilized in the classroom, and also voiced her concern about the security measures that would be taken to make sure the cameras would be secured and a sign out procedure initiated so the cameras don't "walk". She feels that these things should be done before the consideration of purchasing the item. Much discussion ensued and Mr. Bongiovi agreed to look into policies that could be put into place to accommodate her request.

**Member Bob Witherow** voiced his opinion regarding the ASI search. He wanted all to note that it was a competitive position and was concerned that if we extend the deadline for applicants that we would run the risk of getting people who were already rejected by other districts and then we may not have a choice of the really good candidates who applied in the first round. He felt it was something that the Board should keep in mind.

**Member Flo Santini** thanked everyone from the bottom of her heart who came out to vote and appreciated their support of her. She stated that the only other comment on the subject was that it upset her that out of the two areas, PJ and Deerpark that there are over 8,000 citizens and less than 1,000 came to the polls. She wanted to remind everyone that people fought for the right for everyone to go to the polls and vote, and she urged the community to do their due diligence and come out and exercise their right to vote.

Earlier in the week, Mrs. Santini attended a Town Clerk meeting. There were two members from the Army and people from Emergency Management Services. They discussed emergency preparedness and discussed the items that people needed to have in their homes in case of a state of emergency. She stated that they would be willing to come and talk to the schools to get the word out and to help citizens learn the items to pack in their "go" bags.

Lastly, Mrs. Santini wished to send her sincere condolences to the family of Phil Chase, who passed recently. She said that she misses him tremendously on the various committees that they worked on, and he would be greatly missed.

**Member Valerie Maginsky** reminded the public that May 19<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm would be a PJ Pride event at Stop, Hop and Roll called "You're my Hero" family fun night which has many activities and will open the lines of communication between young people and their parents on drug use, abuse and avoiding it. On Saturday May 20<sup>th</sup>, there will be a sportsman's expo from 10am – 5pm at Riverside Park. Admission is free.

Mrs. Maginsky thanked everyone for the opportunity to be the guest speaker at this year's Kuykendall awards ceremony on May 5th, where she spoke on the importance of community service. She congratulated this year's recipients: Alexandria Oosterom from HBE, Penny Jones from ASK, Reyes Torres from the MS and Morgan Sicuro from the HS. She said that the focus of her speech centered around the importance of knowing your "why", because she has found through her experience that if you know your why, it is much easier to figure out your "hows" and "whats". So, in moving forward and welcoming new Board member Joan McBride, and re-elected members of the Board, Mrs. Maginsky stated that the whys will become very important. She stated that everyone may not agree, but she hopes that everyone will keep an open mind and have open discussions and move forward with the educational process for the good of our students.

**Member Brian Dewey** congratulated Judy Amato and Flo Santini on their re-election, and new Member Joan McBride. He thanked everyone responsible for this year's National Honor Society production that he had the privilege to attend and stated that it was a great event.

Mr. Bongiovi added that Board Members do not get paid for their service, and he thanks all Board Members for their dedication and volunteerism to the district, congratulated all who ran in this election, and thanked Member Bill Smith for his many years of service to the District. Mr. Bongiovi also showed everyone the framed memorabilia from Sullivan Avenue School and stated that his plan would be to distribute one or two of the framed blueprints to each of the schools and ask them to display them in a prominent place. He asked the Board for and was granted permission to purchase an additional frame to display the ADAC county-wide poster that PJCSJ Junior Shannon Klotz designed.

**Member Cathy Sadaghiani** thanked all who came out to vote in this election, and agreed with Mrs. Santini that the number of people who came out was nowhere near the number of eligible voters. She also congratulated Judy Amato, Flo Santini and Joan McBride. She hopes that everyone stands true to their promises, and she looks forward to working with them to continue to help provide a quality education for all our students. She hopes that someone will consider stepping up to the plate to replace Mr. Smith on both OCSBA and NYSSBA as he has made great strides in putting Port Jervis on the map, and we need to continue to be a presence on the state and county level.

Mrs. Sadaghiani stated she also had the pleasure of attending the Kuykendall awards, and thanked Mrs. Lain, Mr. Lazzaro and their staff for hosting a wonderful event. She congratulated this year's recipients and stated that this is one of the most prestigious awards given because it recognizes our students not only for academics and extracurriculars, but also for demonstrating good citizenship, which is a pillar of what our Mission Statement is based on. She also thanked Mrs. Maginsky for her words of wisdom to our winners, stating that she is the grown-up epitome of service to one's community. Mrs. Sadaghiani also had the pleasure of attending the National Honor Society ceremony, congratulated the new inductees and wished the seniors good luck as they pursue their dreams.

Mrs. Sadaghiani also mentioned the sad passing last week of Phil Chase. She stated he was a long-time teacher and Coach in the district, and she was blown away by the amount of winning seasons he had as coach; but more importantly, he was a community conservation activist, and she expressed condolences to his family, stating that he would certainly be missed. Mrs. Sadaghiani lent her opinion to the topic of purchasing the Go Pro cameras, stating that her husband is a photo enthusiast and loves the camera, and she is amazed at the wonderful pictures and videos that he puts together and thinks it is a wonderful gadget, but shares Ms. Case's concern of keeping track of them so they don't walk out the door. Lastly, Mrs. Sadaghiani wished everyone a safe Memorial Day weekend.

Member Debbie Lasch congratulated Mrs. Amato, Mrs. Santini and Mrs. McBride on their win, but also echoed the sentiments of other Board Members that she, too, was disappointed in the low turn-out of voters. She reminded the Members that the Board self-evaluation was due to her at this evening's meeting. She wished everyone a safe and happy Memorial Day weekend, and thanked those Board Members who reached out to her during the last ten days of family emergency, stating that it was very much appreciated.

#### **Agenda Item 16 - Dates to Remember**

President Lasch read the dates to remember.

#### **Agenda Item 17 - Adjournment**

Flo Santini moved, seconded by Brian Dewey to adjourn the Regular meeting at 8:16 pm. Motion carried with an 8-0-1 vote.

**The Port Jervis City School District Board of Education will hold a special Executive Session only on Tuesday, May 30 at 6:30 pm in the HS Guidance Suite and its next Regular Meeting on Tuesday, June 6, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Cafeteria.**

Transcribed by *Kristen M. Lopez*

Kristen M. Lopez, Clerk of the Board  
Port Jervis Board of Education