

RyeNeck Schools

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**RYE NECK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
300 HORNIDGE ROAD
MAMARONECK, NEW YORK 10543
BOARD OF EDUCATION PLANNING SESSION
SEPTEMBER 6, 2023**

Present: President Rebecca Mansell
Trustee Jason Carmel
Trustee Gloria Golle
Trustee Patty Nashelsky
Trustee Erica Wagner
Trustee Elizabeth Yong
Dr. Eric Lutinski, Superintendent of Schools
Carolyn Mahar, Assistant Superintendent for Business
Corinne Ryan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Mary Ellen Chiera, District Clerk

I. Opening of Meeting

President Mansell called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes of August 23, 2023 Board of Education Meeting

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Nashelsky and seconded by Trustee Wagner, it was

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby approves the Minutes of the Board of Education Meeting held August 23, 2023, as submitted.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

III. Discussion

Fire Fighters

Mrs. Mahar explained to the Board that New York State passed a new law in December of 2022 allowing firefighters and ambulance workers to receive a 10% property tax exemption, subject to certain specifications. Rye Neck currently does not offer this tax incentive. The Village of Mamaroneck has a volunteer fire department and ambulance corp, and the City of Rye has a volunteer fire department. Mrs. Mahar noted that the exemptions are not State funded programs, so the taxes saved by those who qualify are redistributed to the other taxpayers in the municipality. She advised that the Rye Town and Rye City municipalities have adopted this exemption, and informed the Board that

they must decide whether or not to adopt the exemption for Rye Neck school taxes. The Board discussed both the fact that it would put further tax burden on other taxpayers if adopted, but also, the fact that not having paid firefighters reduces the tax burden. Following discussion the Board voted 3 to 2 not to adopt the exemption. One trustee abstained from the vote.

Technology Advisory Committee

Dr. Lutinski advised the Board that the District will be forming a technology advisory committee as a direct result of the tech issue from the Spring stating that the process has to be better in the future. The district's current committee consists of administrators, teachers and our IT department and deals largely with educational technology. This new committee will include community members and will look at emerging technology related to security. He explained the process by which the Facilities Advisory and HEAC committees were formed and advised that this committee would be put together in the same way, with a charter, mission statement and attendance requirements for the members. Discussion followed regarding how the committee is created and what its role will be, whether or not a particular area of expertise will be required, where the committee would fit in through the technology procurement process, what services our IT company currently provides and what is outsourced. Finally, Dr. Lutinski stated that he would draft a plan and mission statement for the Board to review.

Policy Committee Goals

Trustee Yong discussed with the Board what she feels is the Board's role with regard to the district's policies and her concerns with regard to combining policies and streamlining the policy manual. In addition, she stated that she would like the Policy Committee to consider aligning the policy manual with NYSSBA's policies and engaging NYSSBA to perform a compliance review and manual overhaul. Trustee Nashelsky explained that the committee acts solely on the recommendations of our attorneys who specialize in school board policies and who make recommendations based on NYSSBA's policy updates. Following discussion regarding the above, as well as policy development and the goal of the committee, it was requested that this be added to the agenda for the September 20th Policy Committee meeting.

Contract Review Process

Mrs. Mahar reviewed with the Board the district's purchasing policy. She explained what triggers an RFP or RFB and reviewed the current maintenance contract list. Discussion was had regarding the business practices used to evaluate contracts and whether or not the Board should have a voice in selecting vendors who directly impact the Board (i.e., auditors, lawyers, and board development and strategic planning consultants). It was requested that the contract and professional services review be added to the Board's work calendar.

Intra-Board Communications

Trustee Golle expressed her concerns about the way the Board is communicating with each other. Discussion was had in this regard, and it was agreed that communication will take place through email. Texting will only be used in the case of an emergency.

DEI Update

Trustee Wagner informed the Board that all Rye Neck staff participated in an implicit bias awareness workshop with speaker Paul Forbes who discussed what it is and how to identify it, as well as educating about the dangers of the “single story”. She thought it would be beneficial for high school students to take part in an abbreviated workshop with Mr. Forbes. Dr. Lutinski reported that he received a lot of positive feedback from the staff.

Next, Trustee Nashelsky showed the Board a t-shirt which she purchased from a Rye Neck High School student who has his own website to sell t-shirts he designed which promote changing the world. The website is gliym.com (Get Lost In Your Mind World). She thought it would be beneficial for the High School to have an entrepreneur club for students like this to encourage them and help them become successful.

Heat Update

Dr. Lutinski addressed the concerns received with regard to this week’s heat wave. He stated that the forecast shows that the heat will break Friday. With regard to sports, NYSSPHA has rules for outdoor contests. Due to the heat, the start of modified sports was pushed until Monday which allows varsity and JV sports to practice indoors or later in the afternoon. In addition, the High School staff relocated the classes in the hotter areas of the building to air conditioned rooms. Since Daniel Warren and F.E. Bellows have fewer options, whenever possible they tried to bring classes to the auditoriums and gymnasiums which have air conditioning, or outside under a shady tree in the mornings.

IV. Executive Session

Upon Motion duly made by Trustee Yong and seconded by Trustee Carmel, it was

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Rye Neck Union Free School District hereby agrees to move into executive session to discuss a particular person.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

V. Adjournment of Executive Session, Reopening of Public Meeting and Adjournment of Public Meeting

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Nashelsky and seconded by Trustee Golle, it was

RESOLVED, that the executive session be adjourned and the Public Meeting be reopened; and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that there being no further business before the Board and upon motion duly made by Trustee Carmel and seconded by Trustee Wagner, it was

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education Planning Session of September 6, 2023 be adjourned.

AYES: All Present

NAYES: None

President Mansell adjourned the meeting at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ellen Chiera
District Clerk