



General Library Item

Name July 6, 2017

Content

Scarsdale Board of Education Meeting Highlights July 6, 2017

Reorganization Meeting

At 8:30 a.m. the Board of Education convened its annual Reorganization Meeting, at which re-elected Board members were sworn in, and Board Officers were elected. William Natbony was elected President and Scott E. Silberfein was elected Vice President. The Board acted on a number of annual requirements, including appointment of District Officers, District Consultants, and the Audit Committee; certification of payroll registers; designation of Board Officers to appoint impartial hearing officers; designation of Depositories and Official School District newspapers; bonding of employees; and authorization of various reimbursement rates, expenditures, bid procedures, and Board Policies (as a whole). The Board then adjourned into a Public Hearing on the Code of Conduct, and a Business Meeting.

Public Hearing on Code of Conduct

At 9:00 a.m. Board of Education President, William Natbony called to order a Public Hearing on the Code of Conduct. As there were no requests to speak, Mr. Natbony closed the hearing.

Business Meeting

At 9:15 a.m., Mr. Natbony convened the Business Meeting, reporting that all Board members were present with the exception of Chris Morin, and thanked the Board for the honor of electing him as President. He declared that the Board will endeavor to proceed with its work this year while being committed to treating all opinions with respect. Mr. Natbony then saluted the Scarsdale High School graduating class of 2017, noting that the full roster of graduates will be read into the minutes, as is customary.

Dr. Thomas Hagerman, Superintendent of Schools, also extended his congratulations to the graduating seniors, congratulated Mr. Natbony and Mr. Silberfein for their election as Board officers, and thanked the staff and leadership of the Scarsdale Public Schools for their work throughout the year.

Drew Patrick, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Leadership Development, presented the Personnel Report, in which he provided an update on District enrollment projections, and reported that the hiring process for 2017-18 is near completion with all but two of the 31 positions filled.

Dr. Hagerman and Stuart Matthey, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Facilities, introduced representatives of BBS Architects & Engineers, the District architects, to give an update on their work, which included a revised proposal on Greenacres renovations. Their PowerPoint presentation may be viewed [here](#).

Dr. Hagerman and Mr. Matthey then presented a history of the District's work to date in considering a Bond proposal and an analysis of the BBS presentation, and reviewed factors the administration considered in making a recommendation to the Board, including:

- Demographic trends showing a decrease in projected enrollment;
- Consistency with the past work of the Greenacres Feasibility Committees;
- The engagement of experienced architects, construction managers, and environmental engineers to assure project health and safety through construction;
- Financial analysis demonstrating the cost effectiveness of a renovated and expanded Greenacres Elementary building versus a new building;
- Adherence to an at-, or near-, tax neutral project, recognizing the obligation to address District-wide priorities 1, 2, and selected 3 facility projects in the interest of providing healthy, safe learning environments and the maintenance of the District's infrastructure;
- Responsiveness to community feedback; and
- The recommendation of BBS, whose extensive study of previous reports and their own in-depth analysis of the building led them to the conclusion that the extensive renovations and expansion of Greenacres will provide students and teachers alike with a beautiful building to support 21st century teaching and learning.

Dr. Hagerman presented the District Administration's recommendation that the Board of Education:

- Move forward with plans as presented by BBS Architects to renovate and expand Greenacres Elementary School as proposed;
- Address District-wide facility needs focusing on roofs, building systems, electrical upgrades, code compliance and health and safety issues;
- Add or upgrade security vestibules at all elementary schools and the Middle School;
- Provide a final scope of a bond project at or near the tax-neutral level; and
- Move forward with a study on a potential Energy Performance contract.

Dr. Hagerman made these additional recommendations:

- Consider a second, separate, bond proposition, addressing air conditioning for instructional spaces District-wide;
- Hold a public vote on December 14, 2017;
- Defer additional work for prioritization in future budgets;
- Form District and building committees to study and make recommendations for the delivery of food service; and
- Form District and building committees to study potential work commensurate with the District's Master Facilities Plan.

Their full presentation documents may be accessed here:

[2017 Bond Project Planning Recommendation](#)

[Factors for Consideration & Recommendation of GA scope of work in Proposed 2017 Bond](#)

Community members were invited to address the Board, and 17 did so:

- David Schwartz, 17 Oakstwain Road, questioned the financial analysis presented in support of renovation.
- Linda Doucette-Ashman, 148 Nelson Road, speaking as co-President of the Scarsdale League of Women Voters, along with Mary Beth Evans, 16 Edgewood Road, speaking as Chair of the League's bond proposition committee, posed several questions to the Board concerning the capital projects process.
- Jim Rogan, 108 Brewster Road, requested a specific plan for student/teacher/staff health and safety in relation to a renovation at Greenacres.
- Madeline Hauptman, 150 Brewster Road, spoke in support of renovation at Greenacres.
- Greg Loten, 6 Montrose Road, spoke in support of renovation at Greenacres.
- Chris Marvin, 14 Elm Road, questioned the decision-making timeline, and asked for a consideration of Huntington Avenue closure.
- Mona Longman, 8 Varian Lane, questioned the decision-making timeline.
- Barbara Wenglin, 152 Brewster Road, spoke in support of renovation at Greenacres.
- Paulina Schwartz, 17 Oakstwain Road, spoke in opposition to the new renovation proposal.
- Harriet Sobol, 10 Claremont Road, urged the District to educate the public on the importance of flexible space in education.
- Diane Greenwald, 2 Oak Lane, urged the Board to consider going beyond tax-neutrality as warranted.
- Tony Corriggio, 157 Brite Avenue, urged either placing all students in trailers during a renovation, or constructing a new building for Greenacres.

- Michael Levine, 54 Walworth Avenue, asked for details on the construction timeline, questioned the cost analysis for renovation, and was critical of the new renovation plan.
- Bill Weinstein, 3 Claremont Road, inquired about student relocation options, and urged pursuit of Huntington Avenue closure or reconfiguration.
- Richard Streicher, 37 Montrose Avenue, spoke in support of renovation at Greenacres.
- Mitch Kahn, 198 Brewster Road, questioned the decision-making timeline and the financial analysis.

The Board approved items on the consent agenda, including the Personnel Report presented by Mr. Patrick.

The Board conducted a detailed discussion of the BBS presentation and the Administration's recommendations, and posed questions to the architects and administrators on classroom size, construction timing, relocation options, construction cost and debt service estimates, and the configuration of the Energy Performance Contract.

Dr. Hagerman provided a detailed explanation as to why a Huntington Avenue closure is off the table and that such a closure is not up to Scarsdale Village. It would take a Special Act of the New York State Legislature, which must first be reported out favorably by the Transportation Committee: sources say it is highly unlikely that the committee would do so. Beyond the legalities, there is the ethical question of the serious impact on emergency services created by closing the road.

After extended discussion, the Board came to a consensus that it would accept the Administration's recommendations. Mr. Natbony summarized, noting that the District has substantial facilities needs; and that it is right to focus on Greenacres, but that Greenacres work cannot take up the whole of a tax-neutral bond proposal. He further noted that although there are still implementation issues to resolve, the Board is giving the Administration guidance to go forward with a renovation plan for Greenacres, rather than a new building, which the Board deems is neither financially prudent nor educationally necessary.

The Board then considered other information items, including the selection of a construction management firm, a SEQRA assessments update, a December 2014 Bond Project construction update; a review of Board policies on interscholastic athletics, tutoring, school admissions, admission of non-resident students and foreign exchange students, and student withdrawal from school; and a letter from the Scarsdale High School Compact Committee expressing concern about the new High School schedule.

Community members were invited to address the Board a second time, and two did so:

- Mary Beth Evans, 16 Edgewood Road, speaking as Chair of the League of Women Voters' bond proposition committee, posed clarifying questions on Greenacres construction, including cost benefit analysis, the model program, and community input.
- David Schwartz, 17 Oakstwain Road, urged review of the financial analysis of construction.

The Board approved the annual Professional Development Plan; adoption of the 2017-18 tax levy; food service contract renewal; lease-purchase agreement for instructional computers; appointment of Park East Construction Corporation as the District's construction management firm; a revision of the Board policy and regulations on school admissions; a Memorandum of Agreement with SAES, the District secretaries' union; and side letters with SAES and MADSA, the District's middle management union.

The Board accepted with thanks a gift from the Greenacres PTA for progressive furniture at Greenacres, and a gift from Friends of Music and the Arts in support of arts programs at all seven schools.

Mr. Natbony conducted a wrap-up of the meetings and announced upcoming meetings, including a resumption of the Business meeting for later in the afternoon after the Board adjourns into a Retreat, and business meetings scheduled for Thursday evening, August 24, and Monday evening, September 11.

At 3 p.m. the Board adjourned into a Retreat, at which no public business was conducted.

Business Meeting Resumption

Mr. Natbony reconvened the Business Meeting at 4:15 p.m. The Board discussed their function as liaisons to various entities, reviewed a list of current liaison assignments, and discussed whether to drop any of those assignments or to add new ones. The Board then discussed the protocol for responding to questions raised during Public Comment

sections at Board meetings. Possibilities included a Board discussion following Public Comment, addressing questions at the end-of-meeting wrap-up, as an addendum to Board Highlights, on the Website FAQ section, or in the form of a Board President article in 'Dale Dispatch.

The Board then adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

The Board Reorganization and Business meetings may be viewed [here](#).