

# MIDLAND PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION

## WORK MEETING MINUTES

**TUESDAY  
NOVEMBER 5, 2013**

**8:00 P.M.  
AUGUST C. DePREKER MEDIA CENTER,  
HIGHLAND SCHOOL**

*District policy states that anyone wishing to speak on an agenda item prior to its vote by the full Board will have an opportunity to do so without prior notice.*

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The meeting was called to order by William Sullivan, at 8:00 p.m. and the following statement was read:

"Adequate notice of this meeting was provided as specified in the Open Meeting Act. Notices of this meeting were sent to the Record, Ridgewood News and to the Midland Park Borough Clerk for the 2013 elective year. A notice was also posted outside of the office of the Midland Park Board of Education in a place reserved for such announcements. The Board announces that under its long-standing policy, it will not discuss in public any comments made by members of the public concerning individual staff members. In addition, all questions must be presented to the Board of Education during the public session and prior to the adjournment of the meeting."

### ROLL CALL

Present:	James Canellas	Sandra Criscenzo
	Richard Formicola	Brian McCourt
	Robert Schiffer	Maryalice Thomas
	Timothy Thomas	
	William Sullivan	

Excused: Peter Triolo

### **BOARD PRESIDENT ITEMS**

*Mr. William Sullivan*

#### ***Midland Park Public School District Mission Statement***

***The Midland Park School District as part of a strong, dedicated community, provides students with a comprehensive, adaptive education in a positive environment by maximizing all resources and empowering them to realize their individual worth and responsibility with the expectation that all students achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards at all grade levels.***

Discussion on Feasibility Study:

Mr. Sullivan thanked everyone who reached out with their thoughts about conducting a send/receive study. He received a total of 39 emails through last Thursday and copies were included in the Board member packets. The e-mails received and face to face conversations were both in favor and opposed.

Many people thanked us for the work we're doing and they realize that this is a difficult decision we face, one that will affect the children and residents of this town for decades to come, not to mention the staff.

Mr. Sullivan then opened the floor for Board Member comments:

Dr. Thomas commented that Midland Park comes out ahead in AP, rigor and GPA scores. Their fields may be better, but academics are what we need to focus on. We may have as many courses but not everyone will fit into slots provided. Most importantly is to serve the students better. Many factors are involved, and we need to look at the full picture.

Mr. Thomas stated that three of the Board members have graduated from Midland Park High School and all have done very well. In addition, he commented that each student is known by the administrators and teachers by name because of the smaller setting. If you attend school in a large district this is usually not the case.

Mr. Canellas commented that there are a lot of intangibles of this school district, some of which are a close community enabling good solid friendships. If we go ahead with a Feasibility Study, there will be many factors that will not show up on this report. A Study will cost upwards of \$25,000.00. The district can do a lot with this money. He did not believe that we should go ahead with this Feasibility Study just to get an un-bias opinion.

Mr. Schiffer asked if Northern Highlands would share in the payment of a Study.

Mr. Sullivan answered that we need to get something in writing stating that they are interested in participating in the study and/or contributing towards the cost.

Mr. Schiffer asked where the money would come from to pay for the study. Ms. Garvey answered that we need to re-examine the budget with the Finance Committee

A discussion ensued on what would be included in an actual study.

Dr. Cirasella commented that the next stop would be to begin discussion with the Northern Highlands administration and Board who would then have to go back to their community.

Mr. Sullivan suggested that we will need another meeting with NH to move forward and have more individuals involved.

Dr. Cirasella spoke about the District Assessment Report. Our achievement was unparalleled. I would like you all to know that we have a great high school that serves our children very well.

A straw poll vote was taken by Mr. Sullivan on whether the Board felt that there should be further discussion on a feasibility study. The Board voted and concluded not to move ahead at this time with a feasibility study for a send/receive relationship with Northern Highlands.

## **SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ITEMS**     *Dr. Marie Cirasella*

Motion – Mr. Schiffer, seconded – Ms. Criscenzo . . .

1. Approve the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby affirms the Superintendent's decision in HIB Investigation No. 100513329 for the reasons set forth in the Superintendent's Report to the Board and directs the Board Secretary/School Business Administrator to transmit a copy of the Board's decision to the affected students' parents forthwith.

Roll Call: 7 (Yes) Formicola, McCourt, Schiffer, Dr. Thomas, Mr. Thomas, Criscenzo, Sullivan

1 (Abstain) Canellas

Dr. Cirasella commented on the following items:

Congratulations to the Grant recipients and thank you to the Midland Park Education Foundation.

The School Safety Teams are being approved tonight.

The Annual Fall Drama- performing two different acts, Murder at the Banquet and Alice in Wonderland. The performances are Friday, November 15 and Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

Review of agenda items for the Regular Meeting to be held on November 19, 2013.

Mr. Schiffer asked when the Auditor would be presenting the CAFR to the Board. Ms. Garvey answered that the CAFR would be presented at the November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Open to Public** - Comments only for action items on the agenda.

### **Action Items:**

#### **A. Personnel- (M. Cirasella)**

Motion – Dr. Thomas, seconded – Ms. Criscenzo . . .

To accept the following block motion:

1. Accept the resignation of Joyce DeMartino as a Science/Special Education teacher in the high school, effective December 20, 2013.

Roll Call: All Yes

2. Approve the following revisions to previously approved Marching Band positions and stipends at the high school for the 2013-2014 school year:

Rescind a portion of Motion A-4 of the September 17, 2013 Board Agenda approving the appointment of Tim Vorderstrasse as the Marching Band - Assistant Director and Kim Ackerson as the Color Guard Director.

Revise a portion of Motion A-3 of the April 30, 2013 Board Agenda to reflect the following correct stipend amounts:

Kim Ackerson	Marching Band Assistant Director (1/2 stipend)	\$465
Tim Vorderstrasse	Marching Band Assistant Director (1/2 stipend)	\$465

Roll Call: 7 Yes (Formicola, McCourt, Schiffer, Dr. Thomas, Mr. Thomas, Criscenzo, Sullivan)

1 Abstain (Canellas)

Motion – Mr. Schiffer, seconded – Mr. Canellas . . .

1. Approve Bergen County Special Services-Educational Enterprises to provide ABA Home services for one high school special education student for 4 hours per week, plus approximately 40 missed hours, at the rate of \$77 per hour, effective retroactive from October 17, 2013 through June 30, 2014.

Roll Call: All Yes

Motion – Mr. Schiffer, seconded – Mr. McCourt . . .

2. Approve the Annual Contract for Non Public Nursing Services for the 2013-2014 school year with the Bergen County Health Department at Eastern Christian Elementary School, which is attached as an appendix.

B-2

Roll Call: All Yes

Motion – Mr. Schiffer, seconded – Mr. Canellas . . .

To approve the following block motion:

3. Accept the New Jersey Department of Education funding for the 2013-2014 school year, as follows:

a. Services Under Chapters 192 & 193 school year in the amount of \$141,529.00

b. Nonpublic Technology Aid in the amount of \$3,760.00

c. Nonpublic Textbook Aid in the amount of \$10,311.00

d. Nonpublic Nursing Aid in the amount of \$13,896.00

Roll Call: All Yes

4. Approve the transfer of \$13,340.00

from: 11-190-100-610-00-35 Supplies – Technology

to: 12-000-252-730-00-35 Equipment – Tech Svcs.

To purchase additional switches necessary to complete district security upgrades.

Roll Call: All Yes

## **LIAISON/BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- C. Curriculum- (S. Criscenzo, Chairperson)

No Report.

D. Policy Committee- (T. Thomas, Chairperson)

No Report.

E. Legislative Committee- (J. Canellas, Chairperson)

The following items were commented/reported:

A total of 1,853 candidates are running for election to school boards, with 1,501 total seats up for grabs. Some 34 communities decided this year to move their annual school elections to November, leaving only 40 going to the polls in April.

F. Buildings and Grounds Committee- (R. Formicola, Chairperson)

No Report.

G. Negotiations Committee- (B. McCourt, Chairperson)

No Report.

H. Public Relations Committee- (P. Triolo, Chairperson)

Dr. Cirasella stated that articles are written and have been submitted for review to the committee for Chalk Board.

I. Liaison Committee

High School PTA – (S. Criscenzo)

Invitation has been extended to the Board and parents to attend a PTA meeting on 11/13/2013 in the Media Center at the high school. Scheduled are presentations by the Midland Park High School Administration and Parent Organizations. Also, school tours will be provided.

November Market Day orders are due by Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. The pick-up for these items is on November 15<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. in the MPHS cafeteria.

Elementary School PTA - (P. Triolo)

No Report.

Booster Club – (T. Thomas)

Executive Meeting is scheduled for 11/6/2013.

Fall Sports are wrapping up.

Performing Arts Parents – (J. Canellas)

The PAP's news letter detailed the experience of the Marching Band in Syracuse, NY.

Special Education – (W. Sullivan)

No Report.

Education Foundation – (M. Thomas)

Trivia Night is sold out.

Board of Recreation – (B. McCourt)

Sports programs were discussed with the end of the season approaching.

Continuing Education Program – (R. Schiffer)

No Report.

Student Representative to the Board – (K. Peterson)

The following items were reported/commented on:

Halloween was a successful day emanating a lot of school spirit culminating in an award ceremony for best costumes.

November 6<sup>th</sup> is the end of the marking period- the last day for submissions.

Borough Town Council – (W. Sullivan, S. Criscenzo)

Meeting is scheduled for December 4, 2013.

## **ADDITIONAL BOARD ITEMS**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Nothing was discussed at this time.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Motion – Ms. Criscenzo, seconded – Mr. Schiffer . . .

To go into closed session before the meeting of November 19, 2013, for the purpose of personnel, negotiations and confidential student and association matters.

Roll Call: All Yes

### **Open to the Public**

Mr. Sullivan invited the public to address the Board.

Dianne Allen stated that she and her husband attended Northern Highlands and now live in Midland Park. They are a product of both communities. Their children are attending private school. The Board cannot make assumptions on how Midland Park students would be accepted in Northern Highlands.

If a referendum cannot pass, then the Board should do the study.

A discussion ensued on demographic differences between Midland Park and Northern Highland communities.

Ms. JoAnn Webb commented that the number of students per grade level seem to go down by high school level. It seems that parents are sending their children to private schools. By not passing a resolution, the Board is not taking into consideration a large part of the populations' interest.

Mr. John Peppes believe elected officials are obligated to reflect the community they serve. This Board has a bias view against the study. There is a significant interest in the community and a study would be an unbiased report. The first step is to see if Northern Highlands is interested in Send/Receive, then an unbiased study. We all want the best for the children. As children grow up not everyone is going to know their name or protect them – being exposed is a good thing for adult life.

Mr. Charles Tsocanos stated that he likes the small town feel, nothing against MPHS but it is not as strong as Northern Highland. The Board needs to take the opportunity for a better high school.

Mr. Duncan MacLean asked the Board why they will not look at doing the study. Mr. Sullivan commented that the Board members think we do not need to spend the money to know what the study would show.

Ms. Francine Caleca stated that she is a graduate from Midland Park High School. She had moved away but now returned to Midland Park. She expected what she had experienced in the past, but does not see it. The Board has to take a position that is objective and support the community.

Mr. John Peppes stated that everyone should reconsider the issue after the comments tonight.

Ms. Elaine Seals asked for an update on request for Open Space Funds.

Mr. Sullivan responded that at the conference he spoke to someone who is well versed in Open Space grants. The Mayor said he would consider any request we put in. There are no answers at this time. The field project may be too big. Mr. Formicola will be discussing at the next Building and Grounds meeting.

Ms. Patricia Fantulin asked for an update on ESIP and Honeywell.

Ms. Garvey responded that there are problems with receiving billing and account information from PSEG's so the proposal from Honeywell has not been submitted yet. We are hoping to receive something within the next few weeks. Mr. Sullivan asked what about the state grants. Ms. Garvey responded that we will not hear until December.

Ms. Christine Edamatsu asked if maybe Midland Park could be on the receiving end of a send/receive relationship.

Mr. Sullivan commented that he reached out to Maywood a few years ago and another district more recently, but he has not heard back.

Ms. Dianna Allen asked if Waldwick was open for discussion.

Mr. Sullivan stated there were discussions with Waldwick but they would not accommodate our students. He further commented that we will look at co-op on electives with Waldwick at this time. Dr. Cirasella discussed the Share & Grow Partnership. A senior can take electives at the other school.

Motion – Mr. Schiffer, seconded – Mr. Thomas . . .

To adjourn the meeting.

Roll Call: All Yes

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Garvey,  
School Business Administrator/  
Board Secretary