

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**January 3, 2006**  
**Albany High School**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Edward H. Brown, Jr., President  
Teneka Frost, Vice President  
Barbara Gaffuri, Secretary  
William Barnette  
Judy Doesschate  
Jackie Jenkins-Cox  
Susan Kushner

Dr. Eva. Joseph  
Jeffrey Honeywell  
Terrance White  
Joseph Dragone  
Kathleen Wetmore  
Linda Jackson-Chalmers

**ABSENT:** None

**Call to Order:**

Board Counsel, Jeffrey Honeywell, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Selection of Chair Pro-Tem**

Mr. Honeywell called for a motion to appoint the Chair Pro-Tem for the meeting. Upon motion by Mr. Barnette and second by Ms. Kushner, the board voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Honeywell Chair Pro-Tem for the meeting.

**Board of Education Elections**

Mr. Honeywell announced that at the general meeting held on November 8, 2005, Judy Doesschate and Barbara Gaffuri were each elected to four-year terms from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2009. Jacqueline Jenkins-Cox was elected to fill the remainder of the term vacated by Scott Wexler from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2007.

**Administration of the Oath of Office to newly elected Board Members**

Mr. Honeywell proceeded to administer the Oath of Office to Ms. Doesschate, Mrs. Gaffuri and Ms. Jenkins-Cox.

**Election of Officers for the 2006 Calendar Year**

Mr. Honeywell called for nominations for the office of President of the Board of Education. Ms. Doesschate nominated Ms. Kushner for the office of President. Ms. Kushner accepted the nomination. Ms. Frost nominated Mr. Brown for the office of President. Mr. Brown accepted the nomination. Hearing no additional nominations, Mr. Honeywell declared nominations closed. Mr. Honeywell called the vote for the nomination of Ms. Kushner.

The Board voted 3 ayes.

Ms. Doesschate, Mrs. Gaffuri and Ms. Kushner voted for Ms. Kushner.

Mr. Honeywell called the vote for the nomination of Mr. Brown.

The board voted 4 ayes.

Mr. Barnette, Mr. Brown and Ms. Cox and Ms. Frost voted for Mr. Brown.

Mr. Honeywell declared Mr. Brown as President of the Board of Education.

Mr. Brown called for nominations for the office of Vice President of the Board of Education. Mrs. Gaffuri nominated Ms. Kushner for the office of Vice President. Ms. Kushner accepted the nomination. Ms. Jenkins-Cox nominated Ms. Frost for the office of Vice President. Ms. Frost accepted the nomination. Hearing no additional nominations, Mr. Brown declared nominations closed. Mr. Brown called the vote for the nomination of Ms. Kushner.

The board voted 3 ayes.

Ms. Doesschate, Mrs. Gaffuri and Ms. Kushner voted for Ms. Kushner.

Mr. Brown called for the vote on the nomination of Ms. Frost.

The Board voted 4 ayes.

Mr. Barnette, Mr. Brown, Ms. Jenkins-Cox and Ms. Frost voted for Ms. Frost.

Mr. Brown declared Ms. Frost the Vice President of the Board of Education.

Mr. Brown called for nominations for the office of Secretary of the Board of Education. Ms. Kushner nominated Ms. Doesschate for the Office of Secretary. Ms. Doesschate declined the nomination. Ms. Kushner nominated Mrs. Gaffuri for the office of Secretary. Mrs. Gaffuri accepted the nomination. Hearing no additional nominations, Mr. Brown declared nominations closed.

The board voted unanimously to approve Mrs. Gaffuri as Secretary of the Board of Education.

### **Appointment of Officers**

Mr. Brown called for a motion to appoint district officers as follows:

Clerk of the Board – Catherine Cutting

District Treasurer – Jerri Wassenaar

Deputy Treasurer – Kathleen Wetmore

Tax Collector – Christine DeWitt

Internal Claims Auditor – Nancy Sheldrick

Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve the appointment of officers. Ms. Frost seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously to approve the appointment of officers as stated.

### **Other Appointments**

Mr. Brown presented additional appointments for approval as follows:

Purchasing Agent – Beth Labunski

Records Access Officer – Kathleen Wetmore

Asbestos LEA Designee - Anthony Catalfamo

Independent Auditing Firm – Cusack & Company, Certified Public Accountants, LLC.

Board Counsel – Girvin & Ferlazzo Law Firm

District Physician – Jose F. Nebres, M.D.

Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve other appointments. Ms. Kushner seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously to approve other appointments as stated.

### **Designations**

Mr. Brown recommended the approval of designations as follows:

Official Bank Depository – Key Bank, N.A.

Official Newspapers – Times Union & Daily Gazette

Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve designations. Ms. Kushner seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously to approve designations.

**Authorizations**

Mr. Brown called for a motion to approve authorizations for the 2006 calendar year as follows:

1. The Board of Education authorizes the Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, to certify employee payrolls.
2. The Board of Education authorizes the Interim Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, to approve conferences, conventions and workshop attendance for the 2006 calendar year.
3. The Board of Education authorizes the Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, to approve property tax refunds and tax roll adjustments up to \$2,500 either mandated by court order or directed by the County of Albany Real Property Tax Service. (The Board of Education will be notified of all refunds and adjustments approved during the preceding month pursuant to this authorization at each regular board meeting.)
4. The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools, to approve budget transfers up to \$10,000. (The Board of Education will be given a report of all such transfers pursuant to this authorization at each regular board meeting. Transfers over \$10,000 will require board approval.)
5. The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools and, as necessary, the President of the Board of Education to execute grant applications.
6. The Board of Education authorizes the President of the Board to approve all overnight, out of state and out of country field trips.
7. The Board of Education authorizes the reimbursement of pre-approved transportation expenses for the 2005 calendar year at the current allowable IRS mileage reimbursement rate of **\$.445** per mile through December 30, 2006.
8. The Board of Education authorizes the District Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, and the Central Treasurer of the Extra Classroom Activity Fund as individuals designated to sign checks.

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve authorizations. Ms. Kushner seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**Bondings**

Mr. Brown called for a motion to approve the following bondings:

The Board of Education approves a blanket bond in the amount of \$100,000 for all district employees and the following additional bonds for specific positions noted:

1. District Treasurer – \$1,000,000
2. Deputy Treasurer – \$1,000,000
3. Tax Collector – \$150,000
4. Central Treasurer for Extra Classroom Activity Fund - \$150,000
5. Internal Claims Auditor - \$150,000

Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve bondings stated above. Ms. Frost seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**Schedule of Meetings for 2006**

Mr. Brown presented the schedule of Board Meetings for the 2006 calendar year, designating the first Tuesday of each month as the date of regular board meetings and the third Thursday of each month as the date for round table meetings. Exceptions are indicated on the schedule. Board members requested that consideration be given to holding round table meetings within the community and perhaps an additional middle school location. Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion for approval. Ms. Jenkins-Cox seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously to approve the schedule.

### **SUPERINENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Joseph extended congratulations to the new board members and to the new board officers. Dr. Joseph wished everyone present a Happy New Year. Dr. Joseph noted the district opened Eagle Point Elementary School earlier today in a very smooth, successful way. Dr. Joseph congratulated the facilities team and Mr. Catalfamo and the maintenance staff for their work in this effort, along with Mrs. Brown, the principal and her staff.

Dr. Joseph introduced Mr. Rawley, the Public Information Officer to be appointed later in this meeting.

Dr. Joseph noted the district would be continuing its strong focus on achieving excellence on many fronts and that means, absolutely, academic achievement, raising achievement and closing the achievement gap, school safety, a greater sense of connectedness and meaningful and productive relationships with our students and families, seeking an improved organizational climate of customer satisfaction, continuing the work of the long-range facilities plan, focusing on the needs and challenges of a restructured Albany High School and what that means both in short-term and long-term and an unmatched goal for each year, planning and delivering to our community an effective, efficient and responsible budget for the following school year.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Minsoo Lee noted in behalf of the student body, he welcomed and congratulated Ms. Doesschate, Ms. Jenkins-Cox and Mrs. Gaffuri on their election to the Board. Mr. Lee advised several of his fellow students have expressed feelings of resentment towards the administration due to the fact that the student body was not informed of the reasons for the implementation of a new random locker search policy. Mr. Lee noted many students feel that the creation of this policy and those similar to it, their school is becoming a policy state rather than a productive learning environment. Mr. Lee advised he applauds the fact that Albany High and the district are making an effort to improve the educational experience for students. However, many students would like to know why these things are happening to them. Mr. Lee noted he is pleased with the fact that the district held an open forum with students concerning the problems at Albany High. This is only a small step. Improving education for students is still a long way off. Mr. Lee emphasized the fact that communication with students is essential in overcoming the obstacles with which they are faced.

### **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Ethraney Robinson-Graves addressed the Board relative to transportation of students to private schools outside of the district.
2. Charles Touhey addressed the Board relative to a proposal for recruitment/training of teachers to live in the district and teach in district schools, proposing to fund 1/3 of the cost of the program.
3. Bill Ritchie addressed the Board relative to school safety and collaborative development of a plan to improve conditions for teaching at Albany High School.
4. Nolene Smith addressed the Board regarding the transition of Hackett Middle School during renovations at that school.
5. Mary Ingram address the Board relative to an assault on her mother, a teacher at Albany High School.
6. Anne Pope addressed the Board relative to the NAACP working closely with the district in addressing violence and the academic standards in the district.

7. Mark Mishler congratulated new board members and extended best for a Happy New Year to all present. Mr. Mishler noted on behalf of the City Council PTA and Mr. Frank, the Co-President, he pledged their commitment to work with the board and the administration to make the district what it can be to insure that all of the children receive the high quality education that we know is possible for this district to offer. Mr. Mishler also reminded those present about the PTA's Founder's Day Celebration scheduled for February 10<sup>th</sup> this year.

### **ROUTINE CONSENT ITEMS**

Mr. Brown presented the Routine Consent Items, including Proceedings of Meetings, November 17, 2005, December 6, 2005 and December 15, 2005; Resignations; Termination, Transfers, Creation of Position (Public Information Officer) Appointments (Regular Substitutes, Miscellaneous, Civil Service, Tenure and Emergency Conditional Appointments); Treasurer's Report, Extra Classroom Activity Report, Budget Transfers over \$10,000, Budget Transfers under \$10,000, Budget Status Report, Real Property Tax Adjustments and Tax Collector's Report. Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve Routine Consent Items. Ms. Jackie Jenkins-Cox seconded the motion.

The board unanimously approved the motion.

### **FACILITIES PROJECT REPORT**

#### **Action Items Related to the Facilities Project**

##### **Approval of Change Orders**

Mr. Brown presented a resolution to approve change orders for Schuyler Achievement Academy, Montessori, North Albany Academy, Eagle Point Elementary School, School 16 and School 18. Ms. Doesschate made a motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Kushner seconded the motion.

The board unanimously approved the motion.

##### **Budget Reconciliations**

Mr. Brown presented the budget reconciliation for the facilities project, discussed at the December 15, 2005 meeting for approval. Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion for approval. Ms. Frost seconded the motion. Following discussion, Mr. Brown called the vote.

The board voted 6 ayes and 1 opposed. Mr. Barnette was opposed.

### **ACTION ITEM**

#### **Board Committee Membership & School Liaisons**

Mr. Brown presented a listing of board committee assignments and school liaisons. Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve the committee assignments and school liaisons for 2006. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion. Following discussion, which included several changes, Mr. Brown advised a new listing would be distributed to board members and called the vote.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**Board Committee Reports**

Ms. Kushner advised the Audit Committee met briefly to review the revised rollover budget that now reflects full enrollment of charter schools that are scheduled to open next year. Ms. Kushner advised the committee also discussed the utility tax that is based on consumption. However, there is a possibility that this might be a lagged increase. Ms. Wetmore advised the initial rollover projected stable enrollments in the charter schools, as a base point to start building the budget. The second rollover budget projected full enrollment of the charter schools, which accounts for the increase in the rollover budget. Ms. Wetmore also noted the increase in utility tax revenue, which is based on consumption. Ms. Wetmore noted at this point the district is not seeing a great increase in those revenues this year. There is still a large portion of the year remaining because there are lagged revenues. Ms. Wetmore advised when those revenue amounts are confirmed, the district will be able to project revenues for next year.

Mr. Brown advised the Policy Committee would be reviewing the roles and responsibilities of the school liaisons for board member clarification.

**Board Member Items**

Mr. Barnette suggested the Board consider the formation of another committee to focus on student health and safety. Mr. Barnette there are a number of issues related to health and safety in the district that may warrant a board committee, that would receive on-going reports efforts in the district related to student safety. Mr. Barnette advised he would be willing to serve on this committee.

Mr. Honeywell reminded the board it is important to distinguish between a board committee and a district committee. Mr. Honeywell explained that a board committee is a sub-committee of the board that tentatively operates subject to the open meetings law, requiring two of the three members present in order to take action, recommendations, etc. a district committee of which a board member or two maybe a member of, but also has broader membership. That is not a subcommittee of the board. Mr. Honeywell suggested the board might want to look for a recommendation from the superintendent as to what kind of committee and what the make-up of that kind of committee might be.

Dr. Joseph noted there is a Health Advisory Committee that does exist. Dr. Joseph noted she would look into the possibility of that committee being expanded and recommendations would be presented to the board.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to adjourn. The board adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine L. Cutting  
Clerk of the Board