

Public Hearing on Veterans Tax Exemption

A Special Meeting of the Board of Education of the Northport-East Northport Union Free School District was held on Monday evening, March 3, 2014, beginning at 6:00 p.m., in the Board Conference Room at the William J. Brosnan School, 158 Laurel Avenue, Northport, New York, with Mr. Stephen V. Waldenburg, Jr., Chairperson, opening the meeting and presiding.

Members present: Mr. David Badanes, Ms. Julia Binger, Mr. James Maloney, Mrs. Lori McCue, Mr. Andrew Rapiejko, Mr. Joseph Sabia, Mrs. Jennifer Thompson, Mrs. Tammie Topel (arrived at 6:09 p.m.), Mr. Stephen V. Waldenburg, Jr.

Members absent: None

Also present: Dr. Marylou McDermott, Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Kathleen Molander, Assistant Superintendent for Business  
Mr. Matthew Nelson, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Administration  
Ms. Rosemarie Coletti, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources  
Mr. John Gross, Board Counsel, Ingerman Smith LLP  
Ms. Regina Cafarella, Board Counsel, Ingerman Smith LLP

1. President Waldenburg called the meeting to order.

Motion was made by Trustee McCue, seconded by Trustee Sabia, to convene into Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to the employment history of particular persons and matters pertaining to negotiations.

Unanimously carried by those present.

At 7:20 p.m. the Board reconvened in public session in the Cafeteria at the William J. Brosnan School.

Public attendance: There were approximately 100 persons present.

2. Mr. Waldenburg led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance; and
3. Pointed out the emergency exits.
4. SPECIAL REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

4.01 Accomplishments of Staff and Students

4.01.1 Mr. Michael Genovese, Norwood Avenue Elementary School Principal. Presented a school fundraising project undertaken by the following Norwood Avenue Students: Ava Lynch, Avery Orofino, Lisa Kovacs, Hailey Roethel, Jackson Scandalis, Emma Brazier, Avery Symons, Tristen Reilly, Kelly Holden, Matthew Cruise, Lucy Goldner, Cameron Tyrer, Grace Berkery, Scott Stehlik, Erin Navas and Emily Segur. The students fundraised to purchase a table with benches to be placed on Norwood's playground in memory of Gia Gangemi, a Norwood Student, who passed away in July.

5. PUBLIC HEARING ON REAL PROPERTY TAX LAW 458-A

5.01 Certain Exemptions from Real Property Tax for School Districts to Eligible Veterans

President Waldenburg stated that Chapter 518 of the laws of 2013 extends the real property tax exemption for veterans to school tax bills. Prior to this law, which was passed on December 18, 2013, the exemption

was only available on county, city, town and village taxes.

5.01.1 Letter from The American Legion Greenlawn Post 1244, received February 24, 2014. President Waldenburg read the letter in support of the District authorizing the Veterans Tax Exemption.

5.01.2 E-mail from Mr. Mike Kostrewski, received February 27, 2014. President Waldenburg read the e-mail in support of the District authorizing the Veterans Tax Exemption.

5.01.3 E-mail from Ms. Lori Kerman, received February 27, 2014. President Waldenburg read the e-mail asking the District to opt-out of the Veterans Tax Exemption

5.01.4 E-mail from Mr. Joe Schuvart, received February 27, 2014. President Waldenburg read the e-mail in support of the District authorizing the Veterans Tax Exemption and asking for the yield of such exemptions in total reduction of the school budget and or the increase in each of the community's home owner's tax bill.

5.01.5 E-mail from Mr. & Mrs. Weber, received February 28, 2014. President Waldenburg read the e-mail not in support of the District authorizing the Veterans Tax Exemption.

5.01.6 E-mail from Ms. Allison Noonan, received March 3, 2014. President Waldenburg read the e-mail in support of the District authorizing the Veterans Tax Exemption.

5.01.7 E-mail from Mr. James Teeple, received March 3, 2014. President Waldenburg read the e-mail in support of the District authorizing the Veterans Tax Exemption.

5.01.8 E-mail from VFW Post 1469 of Huntington, VFW Post 9263 of Elwood, American Legion Post 694 of Northport, and American Legion Post 1244 of Greenlawn. President Waldenburg read the letter in support of the District authorizing the Veterans Tax Exemption.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Henry Murer Resident	Stated that to honor those who were lucky enough to come home from wars the Board should approve the Veterans Tax Exemption
Bruce Brennen Resident	Stated that we can never fully repay those who have risked their lives during military conflict and the Board should approve the Veterans Tax Exemption.
George Doll Resident	Stated he supported the Veterans Tax Exemption
Jeffery P. Sullivan Resident	Asked the Board to vote with their hearts and approve the Veterans Tax Exemption
John Byrne Resident	Asked the Board to take into consideration the retirees and fixed income veterans who need a tax break after their children already left the school district and approve the Veterans Tax Exemption
Gene Leavy Resident	Stated that he was a combat veteran and was opposed to the Board approving the Veterans Tax Exemption because the rest of the public is going to have to pay for it.
Darryl St. George Teacher	Stated that this is financially sound and we are morally obligated to approve the Veterans Tax Exemption as an investment in the future of the men and women who have sacrificed so much.

There was a discussion regarding the level of exemption the Board would chose to vote upon. Several trustees stated that they were comfortable with the town adopted level. Vice President Thompson stated that the standard exemption allows the Board to wade into the waters honoring the veterans but also keeping in mind some concerns with regard to the financial impact.

6. ADJOURN PUBLIC HEARING AND CONVENE INTO SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING

At 8:15 p.m. the chair adjourned the public hearing and convened into regular business meeting.

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Beth M. Nystrom  
District Clerk

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