

**Bridgehampton U.F.S.D.
Board of Education
Minutes**

Date: October 22, 2007
Meeting: Board of Education - Workshop Meeting
Present: James Walker, Elizabeth Kotz, Joseph Conti, Susan Hiscock, Carol Kalish
Absent: Dr. Dianne B. Youngblood, Superintendent, Mr. Jack Pryor, Principal
Rick Delano, Joseph Berhalter, Michelle Romanosky, Business Admin.

I. ROUTINE MATTERS:

- a) Call to Order by the President upon his/her having ascertained the presence of a Quorum and Roll Call at 7:07 P.M.
- b) **Resolved** that the Board of Education of the Bridgehampton UFSD approves the Proposed BOE Agenda, dated October 22, 2007.

Motion: Hiscock Seconded: Kotz Vote: 5-0

II. DISCUSSIONS

- 1) Springs School Update – James Walker, president of the Board of Education, reported that he thought the Springs District was still doing a lot of researching regarding where they will send their high school students for the 2008-2009 school year. Dr. Youngblood shared that Tom Quinn, Supt. of Springs wanted to know, how much work had been done regarding their request. Dr. Youngblood shared with him that for the 2008 school year, it would be possible for the 9th graders to attend with minor changes occurring. But that our Board was looking for ore concrete directives from the Springs Board of Education, and that that for the 2009-2010 and beyond it would require a lot more study and consideration. Dr. Youngblood said she suggested that a meeting between the both Boards and the Superintendents be arranged for further discussion.
- 2) Policy Committee Review – Mr. Walker reported that the Policy Committee meeting had just met at 6:00 p.m. before tonight's meeting and reviewed 4 policies; Policy 1120 – School District Officer and Employee Code of Ethics; Policy #4511 – Textbook Selection and Adoption; Policy #4513 – Library Materials Selection and Policy #1130 – News Media Relations. He said they would present the revisions to the Board at the next scheduled Board meeting for the 1st reading. The Committee also talked about meeting more frequently so that more work get done in order to complete this project. Mr. Walker asked Elizabeth Kotz to serve as an alternate for him while he's away so that work will continue progress. The next meeting is scheduled for Nov. 5th at 6:30 pm.
- 3) Public Relations (RFP) – In Michelle Romanosky's absence, Dr. Youngblood reported that the RFP for the Public Relations was ready for advertisement.

The Board suggested that the RFP be submitted in the newspapers as well as given to individual merchants. Dr. Youngblood said she would try to see if they could make the current week deadline for advertising the RFP, but if not it will have to run next week.

- 4) Auditing Services (RFP) – Elizabeth Kotz requested that Phyllis Davis, the Audit Committee Chairperson give an updated report on behalf of the committee.

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Phyllis Davis, chair of the Audit Committee reported to the Board that it unanimously (Member Joe Berhalter by telephone) recommended the appointment of the external audit firm of Coughlin, Foundotos, Cullen & Danowski, LLP (CFC&D) for the fiscal years 2008 thru 2013 which must be renewed on an annual basis.

Mrs. Davis reported that the committee agreed to recommend CFC&D after completing the following required RFP and due diligence processes:

All committee members, the District Superintendent and the Business Administrator met on October 16 to discuss the two RFP submissions from R. S. Abrams and CFC&D. The attendees unanimously agreed that due to the legal requirement that the District be responsible for closing its financial books, it will be critical to have an auditor who is educated about the District's organization, personnel, size and its progress in implementing extensive financial controls and separation of duties. In addition, the group agreed that Jill Fichter, Partner of CFC&D, who has conducted the past three audits, was very professional, responsive to questions and challenges and knowledgeable about the new financial controls and processes required by various governmental and professional organizations. Following its discussion, the attendees of the mtg. requested that the Superintendent and the committee chair should call Abrams and CFC&D to discuss their questions and concerns before a final recommendation is made.

1. CFC&D – The critical issue identified was the unanticipated and substantial cost increase proposed for the 2008 audit and the fact that, despite moderate annual increases the following four years, made them the higher bidder.
2. Abrams - The attendees biggest concern was just the reverse of CFC&D.....that their year-one cost was unrealistically low based upon: (a) our knowledge of the requirements laid out for public schools by the State accounting procedures, State compliance standards, Federal standards and American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (b) the slow progress of the District in being able

to close its own books (c) and Abrams lack of first-hand experience with the financial issues peculiar to the District.

The second concern related to the fact that no Partner's name was shown as being in charge of the District's account and the hours of Partner's time were fewer than CFC&D.

The District's Superintendent and the chair of the Audit Committee spoke to both firms by telephone on October 16, 2007 and reported out the following to the meeting attendees and the Board:

CFC&D – Did not break even in the first two years of auditing the District. In 2007 they lost substantial money. Their RFP commitment was \$25,400 but came in at \$52,101.66 based upon 413.2 billable hours which did not include any hours spent by the Partner, Jill Fichter. Jill also stated that she believed that their estimate for the year of 2008 (an increase of \$6,900) was fair and that the minimal increases the following four years would allow the firm to continue to serve the District with the same quality of service.

In addition, when asked, Jill committed to serving as Partner on the District's business for the next five years if the District renews CFC&D's annual contract. She also stood by

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her commitment of 35 hours time on the account which exceeded Abram's partner's by five.

R. S. Abrams - Marianne Van Duyne, Partner, provided the following information:

The 25 schools they service includes Greenport which is about the same size as Bridgehampton. They too do not have the inside staff available to comply with the conflict of interest rules and therefore are unable to close their books without hiring an outside accounting firm. This firm reports to Greenport's management who in turn provides the closed books to the outside auditor. Sachem which is the biggest in the State has 15 people in its business office and is able to provide all the accounting skills and separation of duties that are required.

Marianne was asked about the fact that they listed both a Partner and a Manager assigned to the District's audit, i.e. could they tell us who would fill the role of Partner and what was the difference between a Partner and a Manager. She said that they planned to assign two Partners (she as one of them) and they would divide responsibilities.

After weighing the above facts against the current and future needs of the District, it was agreed by all parties that Jill Fichter's appointment should be approved.

Resolved that the Board of Education of the Bridgehampton UFSD approves the recommendation of the Audit Committee to appoint Coughlin Foundotos Cullen & Danowski. LLP as External Auditors with a five year contract with renewable clauses each year at a cost of \$32,200 for the first year, \$33,500 for the second year, \$34,700 for the third year, \$35,900 for the fourth year and \$37,200 for the fifth year.

Motion: Kalish Seconded: Hiscock Vote: 5-0

III. USE OF BUILDING

1) **Resolved** that the Board of Education of the Bridgehampton UFSD approves the use of the Middle School Building, submitted by Nicki Hemby PTO for Movie Night on Friday, November 30, 2007 between the hours of 5 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Motion: Kalish Seconded: Hiscock Vote: 5-0

Addition To The Agenda:

1) **Resolved** that the Board of Education of the Bridgehampton UFSD approves the use of classrooms K-3 and the gym for teachers/parent meeting, on Thursday, October 25, 2007 between the hours of 6:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Motion: Hiscock Seconded: Kalish Vote: 5-0

Mr. Walker read an e-mail from Mr. Joseph Berhalter regarding some concerns. It was decided that these discussion items should be represented and held when Mr. Berhalter is at the meeting.

Resolved, that the Board of Education convenes into an executive session to discuss personnel and negotiations issues at 8:08 PM.

Motion: Kalish Seconded: Hiscock Vote: 5-0

Resolved, that the Board of Education adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Motion: Walker Seconded: Kotz Vote: 5-0

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Manigo, District Clerk