**MEMBERS PRESENT: DEIRDRE BURNS**

**MARK FLEISCHHAUER**

**KAREN HATTER**

**ELISSA CASCIO**

**DEAN VALLAS**

**DIANE KANTAROS**

**MEMBERS ABSENT: PAUL SLAYTON**

**OTHERS PRESENT: JOSEPH PHELAN, TOM BURNELL, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

## Call to Order

President Burns called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.

## 2.0 Approval of Minutes

**2.1** **Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2012 Regular Meeting\*

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

# **3.0 Public Comment**

A parent in the District addressed the Board regarding a letter sent by her and two other parents regarding policy and procedures addressing complaints. The parent stated that she found that there was confusion about how and to whom a complaint should be addressed in cases when a situation involves either one’s own student or a group of students.

A parent in the District addressed the Board to express concerns about class size for the incoming 1st Grade students. Noting that the numbers of students per section were similar to those in a nearby district, situated in a city environment, the parent expressed concern that students in Rhinebeck would be faced with similar crowding and asked that the Board consider the issue of class size for the 1st Grade.

A parent in the District seconded the concerns already expressed about class size and referenced research by the US Department of Education reflecting the importance of reducing class size.

A community member who is involved with the LEGO League congratulated the Board for including LEGO Robotics as part of the elementary school program and hopes that it will continue and involve the Middle School as well. The LEGO League is a community organization that focuses on engineering through involving the students in projects. The projects not only depend on math and science principles, but require teamwork and team building and involve the students in exciting competitions that are not athletic. The students get involved, and they really like it. The League is interested in a relationship with the schools, but not to establish LEGO Robotics as an extracurricular activity. However, it would be good if a way could be found to continue LEGO Robotics in the High School. The projects become progressively more difficult as the students grow older.

A parent addressed the Board as part of a parent group that met in November to talk about communications. She characterized the discussion as helpful in assisting the parents to understand how the Board works. She believes that there are parents such as herself who could be helpful with communications and asked if the Board could put together a committee to help communications.

A parent addressed the Board to comment about class size at the Elementary School, noting that a group has been working with the Principal and thanked Mr. King for being so engaged with the group. Hopefully, there will be something concrete to talk about at the next Board meeting.

A parent addressed the Board to express support for the previous speakers on the topic of a clearer process for complaints. Since her son was called into an administrator’s office to talk about an incident, she was unsure herself as a parent if this was something that was supposed to happen. She expressed hope that the Policy Committee will review what is there and clarify by setting forth a Step 1 and Step 2 for a complaint process and indicating how many days complainants should wait for a response in between the steps.

A parent addressed the Board on the same topic of complaints, explaining that when her children relate something and she wants to speak up, her children become afraid to tell her things. She asks for reassurance that it is okay to come to the school and say something to a teacher without her children being nervous about the outcome.

President Burns thanked the members of the community for attending and sharing their comments and concerns. President Burns assured the community members that their concerns about class size relate to the budget, which the Board is working on now, and that information about the budget in development is posted on the website, which is one avenue for keeping informed. The property tax cap is something that must be reckoned with and makes it hard to expand the program. The Board will be talking about the letter regarding the complaint process later on during the meeting, under “Other.”

# **4.0 Reports and Discussion**

**4.1 2012-13 Proposed Budget Under Development\***

Mr. Phelan reviewed the budget process to date, noting that due to the new budget requirements, the timetable has been moved up. This is a back-and-forth process, as estimated costs are revised once more definitive figures are known. As an example, the original estimate for the increase in health insurance premium payments was about 8%, which compares with increases of some entities in the private sector. Information has recently been received indicating that costs would be significantly lower, and the District is now budgeting for an estimated 4% increase. Required contributions to the Teachers Retirement System also will be lower than originally projected. On the other hand, the number of students who will be attending BOCES Occupational Education programs has increased so that expense is greater than previously anticipated.

Discussion followed concerning: 1) the maximum allowable tax levy increase per the state formula, 2.11%; 2) the amount needed to be trimmed from the budget to reach that figure, $435,138; and 3) the amount of state aid the District is likely to receive as foundation aid and expense-driven aid.

Discussion then focused on Interscholastic Sports, in terms of participation and costs, which information will be posted on the website.

Discussion then turned to the lists of tiered options for reducing the budget. Tiers 1 and 2, if enacted, would bring the District close to the dollar figure for needed cuts to the budget. Tier 3 is in response to the Board’s request for suggested reductions should the District have to enact a contingency budget with a 0% tax levy increase. Tier 1 affects primarily supplies and equipment, Tier 2 involves more staffing, and Tier 3 includes a number of additional staffing cuts.

The Budget Workshop is scheduled for March 10.

**4.2 BOCES Board Nominations and Elections\***

The Board members briefly discussed the qualifications for service on the BOCES Board, noting that membership on a component District Board is not a requirement. The suggestion was made that perhaps someone from the community might be willing to stand for election next year. The District will have to schedule a Special Meeting for April 17 in order to vote for a BOCES Board member and vote on the BOCES Administrative budget.

**4.3 Board Committee Reports**

**Finance**: President Burns reported that the Committee reviewed budget development and the Gateway to Technology grant, particularly the practices for communicating with the grantor, noting that procedures and processes will have to be refined. Messrs. Slayton and Burnell will be working on those improvements.

**Curriculum**: President Burns reported that Dr. Davenport has requested that the District establish a requirement of four years of Math and Science for graduation. The current State requirement is for only three years of each. The change in program would be cost-neutral since the District already provides those classes. Mr. Phelan will likely make a recommendation in early March. Dr. Kantaros added that the expectation is that this new requirement will reduce the amount of post-secondary remedial classes our graduates have to take and would also address the numbers of students who have significant numbers of study halls and permission to arrive late and leave early because they have no class scheduled for first or last period. Mrs. Cascio will be talking to the BLPT about the importance of speaking to parents about this change.

Mr. Vallas then opened a discussion concerning the foreign language program and the exploration of alternative ways to introduce a new language at the High School level if there are not enough students interested to justify hiring a new faculty member. Mr. Phelan and others noted that online learning has been discussed as a possibility, along with looking at a class that would focus on culture rather than strictly language.

**Communications:** Mrs. Hatter reported that the Committee discussed the revised informational video on the school district and hopes it will be available for posting on PANDA sometime in March. At present, the District website does not have the capability of hosting video, but that is a matter under investigation. The District is also investigating going paperless for Board meetings. With the recent amendment to the Open Meetings Law, the Clerk now has to scan the documents for posting on the website, so that we are compliant. A portion of the technology is in place, but it is difficult to say that there are cost savings. Mr. Phelan added that it would likely be cost-neutral, with Board members receiving used laptops the District already has. It would save time and paper, as well as transportation for delivery. It can be tried as a pilot. A brief discussion followed about whether this was a subject for consideration by either the Finance or Policy Committees rather than the Communications Committee. Mrs. Hatter then reported on the attendance by President Burns and Mr. Phelan at the Rhinebeck Chamber of Commerce dinner, and that there was discussion about the District making a presentation to the Chamber at their April breakfast meeting to inform them about the budget. A brief discussion followed about the need to keep postings on the website updated, despite the lack of a tech person, the resulting burden on the Superintendent, with mention of various items that need updating and the possibility of using a clerical individual who might not be full-time.

**CDEP**: President Burns noted that her comments would be from her personal notes, and did not represent official minutes. Noting the importance of Race to the Top (RTTT), she encouraged anyone who had not already done so to visit the EngageNewYork.org website. Regarding the CDEP meeting, there was discussion about the existence of good tests that are usable as assessments of what students are learning. Mr. Kreps is beginning to incorporate the goals of RTTT in the CDEP plan. The staff will have access to a Moodle to incorporate their comments. Discussion followed about the various deadlines mentioned for the APPR, the weight of the different components, the use of outside evaluators, and the ongoing discussion between NYSUT, SED and the Governor.

## 5.0 Comments

**5.1 Good News**

President Burns reported that the first-ever Spirit Week, held at the High School, along with a pep rally, went well.

Mrs. Cascio reported receiving positive feedback from a parent who attended the girls basketball game at which the pep band performed.

President Burns drew everyone’s attention to the student art projects on display in the Library.

### 5.2 Old Business

President Burns is in the process of composing her remarks for the video and hopes to have the project completed by the end of March. Mr. Phelan added that the video is not a budget video but is intended to show the community the educational value to students and the community that is provided through the funding contributed to education.

President Burns reported on lobbying efforts, including efforts to arrange meetings with Senator Saland and Assemblyman Cahill, and suggested that the District bring specific lobbying points to the table in the discussions. The ideas that were mentioned included encouraging the legislators to forgo competition for grants and provide relief from the Taylor Law and Triborough amendments.

### 5.3 Public Comment

None

### 5.4 Other

President Burns formally acknowledged receipt of a letter from community members regarding the policies, procedures and processes for complaints. It was suggested that the Communications Committee review the concerns. Additional comments addressed the need to clarify the significance of emailed complaints, confidentiality concerns, and concerns over retaliation. Mention was also made about a lack of information regarding what administrators can and cannot discuss with parents when they do complain, given the privacy issues about what can be said and what parents can’t be told after they complain, leading to misinterpretation of this inability to communicate.

Discussion followed about the process as dependent on which building was involved and lack of clarity about the format for a complaint, for example, whether a chance encounter with an administrator in a hallway with a concern expressed is received as a complaint, and if so, when should a response be expected. The age of the current policies was briefly discussed. The need for better-defined avenues of communication was noted, with a repeat of the suggestion that the Communications Committee review the issue. Agreement was expressed with this proposal, with the understanding that the issue would be reviewed by the Policy Committee following the Communications Committee’s work.

Regarding the new Open Meetings Law. Mr. Phelan noted that the District was in compliance. A brief discussion followed about paperless Board meetings. Mr. Phelan commented that guidelines would have to be developed clarifying that the used laptops must be dedicated to this function and not for personal purposes. Since they are old machines, they have limited capabilities in any event, but would suffice for downloading the documents and for use in reviewing the documents during Board meetings. A pilot program, testing the process both from the equipment and software points, would be needed. Sufficient interest was expressed and a pilot program will be developed.

A request was made to have the District issue a Rhinebeck CSD email address to each of the Board members. This possibility will also be pursued.

## 6.0 Action Items

### 6.1 Motion by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve the following consent items:

* + 1. **Motion** upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools to approve the CSE and CPSE recommendations.\*
    2. **Motion** upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools to approve the Treasurers’ Report (General Fund, December 2011; Extra Classroom Fund, December 2011).\*
    3. **Motion** upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools to declare the attached items as surplus for disposal.\*
    4. **Motion** upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools to approve the selection of Out of Many – A History of the American People (6th edition) (Faragher, Buhle, Czitrom, Armitage, 2011, Prentice Hall) as the textbook for the AP U.S. History course.\*

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

* 1. **Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve an extension of the leave request from Jennifer Famiglietti, having commenced on December 12, 2011, through June 22, 2012, with such leave to be taken as paid medical leave through the period of disability as certified by a physician in writing, to the extent of her accrued sick leave.\*

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

* 1. **Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve an extension of the appointment of Sara Touri as a long-term substitute in the position of Art teacher at Bulkeley Middle School, having commenced on December 12, 2011, to conclude on or about June 22, 2012, at the pleasure of the Board, at the salary of Step 1 BA ($49,900**+** - pro-rated), in accordance with the 2010-11 RTA Salary Schedule. This appointment is to fill the vacancy created by the leave of absence granted to Jennifer Famiglietti, Art Teacher at the Bulkeley Middle School, and extended accordingly.\*

**[+typo corrected]**

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

* 1. **Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve the extension of the appointment of Marla Ulrich as the substitute LLL team leader at Bulkeley Middle School, having commenced on December 12, 2011 through the duration of the extension of the below-referenced leave of absence, at the stipend of $4,531 - pro-rated, in accordance with the 2010-11 RTA Salary Schedule. This appointment is to fill the vacancy created by the leave of absence granted to Jennifer Famiglietti, Art Teacher at the Bulkeley Middle School, and extended accordingly.\*

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

* 1. **Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve an extension ofthe appointment of Sara Touri as the substitute BMS Art Club Advisor at Bulkeley Middle School, having commenced on January 11, 2012 through the duration of the extension of the below-referenced leave of absence, at the stipend of $1,041 - pro-rated, in accordance with the 2010-11 RTA Salary Schedule. This appointment is to fill the vacancy created by the leave of absence granted to Jennifer Famiglietti, Art Teacher at the Bulkeley Middle School, and extended accordingly.\*

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

* 1. **Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve as a final reading and adoption new Board Policy #4329 – Homeless Children and Youth.\*

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

* 1. **Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve the establishment of a Rhinebeck High School Spanish Club and Book Club, to be implemented during the 2011-12 school year. (See attached.)\*

Prior to the vote, Dr. Kantaros commented that these are great additions in the face of the District’s difficult budget situation, and President Burns added that it was good to see the enthusiasm of the students in establishing these activities.

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6.8 Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to modify the 2011-12 school calendar by rescheduling the Superintendent’s Conference Day previously scheduled for Friday, April 20, 2012 to Friday, March 23, 2012 and holding a regular day of school on April 20, 2012, due to a change in the State test make-up and scoring schedule, and by scheduling school vacation days on Monday, April 9, 2012 and Tuesday, May 29, 2012, pending the availability of unused emergency closing days.\*

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

* 1. **Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted toaccept a grant award from the Rhinebeck Science Foundation in the total amount of $400, as stipulated, in support of the implementation of the 2nd Grade Nature Walk, in October 2011. (See attached.)\*

Prior to the vote, President Burns thanked the Rhinebeck Science Foundation for their support in making this activity possible and noted that the cost had been kept low by having the naturalist come to the school so student transportation was not needed.

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6.10 Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to accept the donation of a six string electric guitar, at an estimated value of $200, to the Rhinebeck High School Band from Mr. Richard Zipp.\*

Prior to the vote, President Burns thanked Mr. Zipp for his donation.

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6.11 Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve the appointment of Alison Vaccarino as Adult Education Coordinator (Spring), at a salary of $2,400 for the Spring Semester of the 2011-12 school year.

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6.12 Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve Spring coaches/advisors for the 2011-12 school year:\*

**Softball: Varsity Jennifer McCracken $3,757**

**Junior Varsity Justin Wiesenthal $2,743**

**Modified Henry Frischknecht $2,286**

**Baseball: Varsity William Carney $3,757**

**Junior Varsity Andrew Sheldon $2,743**

**Modified George Nikolatos $2,286**

**Tennis: Varsity David Jutton $2,846**

**Track: Varsity Jason Grady $3,898**

**(distance, hurdles, throwing)**

**Varsity Jeremy Perotta $3,898**

**(sprinting, jumping, pole vault)**

**Modified Marc Burg $2,395**

**(distance, throwing)**

**Modified Matthew Grande $2,395**

**(sprinting, jumping)**

**Crew: Boys Varsity Ralph Bosco $4,381**

**Girls Varsity Nichole Washburn $4,381**

**Lacrosse: Boys Club TBA $2,286**

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6.13 Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve the appointment of Michelle Korfhage to the position of Teacher Aide (.93 FTE), at a salary of Step 4 ($21,638 – pro-rated), in accordance with the ANIE Salary Schedule for 2010-11, effective December 13, 2011 through June 22, 2012.\*

Prior to the vote, Mr. Burnell corrected the figure given for the FTE attached to the position, from 1.0 to .93.

**VOTE ON THE MOTION AS CORRECTED: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros); 0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6.14 Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve the list of additional emergency conditional substitute teachers and substitute non-instructional staff for the 2011-12 school year. (See attached.)\*

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros);**

**0 NAY; 0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

## 7.0 Proposed Executive Session

## Motion by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to move into executive session at 10:00 pm for the purpose of discussion of collective negotiations pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law and the discussion of the employment history of particular person.

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros); 0 NAY;**

**0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, the Board voted to return to Regular Session at 10:44 pm.

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros); 0 NAY;**

**0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, the Board voted to appoint Joseph Phelan as Clerk Pro Tempore.

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros); 0 NAY;**

**0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6.15** **Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board voted to approve the following resolution:

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Education hereby grants to Employee No. 2011-12-01T an extension of paid administrative leave, effective March 1, 2012 through March 30, 2012.

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros); 0 NAY;**

**0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**8.0 Adjournment**

**Motion** by Fleischhauer, seconded by Vallas, the Board voted to adjourn at 10:45 pm.

**VOTE: 6 AYE (Burns, Cascio, Vallas, Fleischhauer, Hatter, Kantaros); 0 NAY;**

**0 ABSTAIN; 1 ABSENT (Slayton)**

**MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Todisco

District Clerk

Joseph Phelan

Clerk Pro Tempore