

SOUTH COUNTRY CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
189 No. Dunton Avenue, East Patchogue, New York 11772
MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER (7:05 p.m.)

Call to Order

Board President Victor Correa called a Budget Workshop Meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:05 p.m. The meeting took place at the Bellport Middle School Auditorium, 35 Kreamer St, Bellport, NY.

Board of Education Members Present:

Victor Correa	Marian McKenna
Owen Durney (arrived 7:13pm)	Julio Morales
Lisa Di Santo Grossman	Jeannette Mistler (arrived 7:21 pm)
Kevin Kirk	Rob Powell
	Barbara Schatzman

Roll Call

Others Present: Superintendent of Schools, Joseph L. Cipp Jr., Asst Superintendent for HR, Nelson Briggs, Asst Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Technology, Linda Rozzi, Asst Superintendent for Business, Alan Phillips, Business Administrator, Charles Delargy, Director of Student Support Services, Jack Colombo, Athletic Director, Robert McIntyre, Principals Bernie Soete, Brian Ginty, Stefanie Rucinski, Travis Davey, Kathy Munisteri, Department Chairpersons Suzette Fandale, James Uzzi, Patricia McCallum, School Attorney Douglas Spencer, other guests and members of the community.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Carl Moodt leads all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Pledge

2. PRESENTATION

Business Administrator, Charles Delargy, gave a presentation on the 2012-2013 budget, focusing on the Schools, Technology Media, Music & Fine Arts, Athletics, Physical Education, Pupil Personnel Services and retirement systems and benefits.

Budget Presentation

A question and answer period followed with the Board. Grant funded positions, insurance costs, MTA tax, and Special Education were among the areas discussed. It was noted that the budget must be solidified by April 4th, which left four remaining Board meetings for the Board to pass the budget.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Alan Kusa (resident): Commented on budget items
Daniel Garisto and Samuel Hoff (resident): Commented on the budget for The Clipper and stronger presence on internet.
Anne Hayes (resident): Questioned previous budget and transportation items.
Rocco DeVito (resident): Questioned Guidance and Psychological services.
Antoinette Huffine (resident): Commented on 2012-2013 budget.
Carl Moodt (resident): Had questions regarding Caithness funds.
Regina Seltzer (resident): Questioned budget items regarding legal costs.
James Merrill (resident): Commented on *The Clipper*, budget, Guidance Department and District reputation.
James Vaughan (resident): Expressed concerns of budget passing.
Dee LaBalbo-Kempf (resident): Questioned transportation numbers.
Leslie O'Connor (resident): Questioned if a contingency budget will be available.
Joanne Long Merrill (resident): Spoke of petition she has circulated for resignation of Board members.
Ron Kinsella (resident): Spoke in support of District administration for taxpayers like him.

Public Participation

BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT DISCUSSION ITEMS

Discussion ensued between Board members regarding recent statements sent to the media and the overall conduct of the Board. Board President Correa read the following statement in response to the community:

**Board / Supt
Discussion**

To the South Country Community:

“This letter is in response to the outrageous and unsubstantiated charges leveled against the South Country Board of Education by three of our own trustees. President Victor Correa, and Vice-President Kevin Kirk, as well as the “majority of the Board” have come under attack by trustees, Lisa Grossman, Rob Powell, and Jeanette Mistler. They have committed a deliberate and overt violation of the “Code of Ethics For Board of Education” which states, “In an effort to maintain public trust, members will make every effort to protect the integrity of the Board and promote a positive image of one another in the community.”

**Letter to
Community**

Instead of discussing their concerns with the whole board in person, they went to the press. Not one of us received a copy of their “letter to the majority of the Board of Education” directly from any of the three members who signed it. We learned about it in the press. The result of this cowardly act is the formation of a kangaroo court in the media that has attempted to convict some of us of withholding information. This is completely untrue. We have operated honestly and above board in dealing with information when we learn it.

We have no doubt that this is nothing more than grandstanding to start the election campaign of two of the accusatory members. People running for trustee should be illuminating their own qualities and track record, not denigrating others so that they look good. Our school community is faced with many challenges at this time, namely the crafting of a difficult budget while dealing with controversies surrounding central office. This was an opportunity for the three members to “move beyond personalities and pre-conceived notions”. (As one of them put in an op-ed piece). That would have been a characteristic of true leadership. Ultimately, they did not attempt to resolve differences with dignity and respect for the rest of us and the school community we proudly live in.

Being a Board member is a time consuming and a stressful volunteer position. Every one of us puts in a lot of hours. We should all be working as a team to move this district forward. When we don’t, the students and taxpayers lose. It seems everyone in the district has reached their own frustration levels. However, there are more productive ways that board members can resolve their frustrations than secretly targeting and attacking other board members. This is certainly not a quality of strong character.

We are committed to do the best we can for the South Country Community. As well, we are also committed to protecting ourselves from false attacks and public misconceptions.”

Sincerely,

Victor Correa, President
Kevin Kirk, Vice President
Owen Durney, Trustee
Marian McKenna, Trustee
Julio Morales, Trustee
Barbara Schatzman, Trustee

A motion was made by Kevin Kirk, seconded by Owen Durney, to adjourn the meeting at 11:26pm.

**Meeting
Adjourns**

The minutes are respectfully submitted by Nancy Poulos, based upon notes taken from Sara Cioffaletti, District Clerk Pro-tem, who served in her absence.

Respectfully,

Nancy Poulos

District Clerk
Attachments