

A special meeting of the Board of Education of South Huntington Union Free School District was held on Monday, July 20, 2009, in the Board Room of the Administration Building, 60 Weston Street, Huntington Station, New York.

Present: **Board Members:**

President
Vice President

Mr. Kaden
Mr. Teresky
Mr. Ciappetta
Mrs. LaCara
Mr. Lupinacci
Mr. Nitkewicz
Mrs. Vassallo

Staff:

Superintendent of Schools
Asst. Supt. for Personnel & District Services
Asst. Supt. for Business
District Clerk

Dr. Shea
Mr. Romanelli
Mrs. Occhiogrosso
Mrs. Hammond

Absent: Asst. Supt. for Instruction & Curriculum
Asst. Supt. for Student Services

Mrs. Rogers
Ms. Harris

Call to Order: Mr. Kaden opened the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Location of Butler Building: Mrs. LaCara stated that she would like to reconsider a vote that was taken on July 1, 2009, with regard to the placement of the Butler building. Mrs. LaCara stated that she recently looked at the two sites. The Walt Whitman High School site is pushed back against the fence out of the way. Mrs. LaCara stated that she felt that the site at the Teen Center looked very crowded. She noted that she called Mr. Kaden and asked him if she would be able to change her vote. Mrs. LaCara reiterated that she felt it would be much better at Whitman because it is out of the way.

Mrs. LaCara moved, with a second from Mrs. Vassallo, to locate the Butler building at Walt Whitman High School in the vicinity of the North Gymnasium.

Mr. Teresky stated that he felt the Butler building should be placed at the Teen Center. Mr. Lupinacci agreed, stating that he would continue to support locating the Butler building at the Teen Center. Mr. Ciappetta stated that he would continue to vote to have the building at Walt Whitman High School.

Mr. Nitkewicz stated that this is the third time the Board is voting on this matter. Mr. Nitkewicz stated that he had originally voted to place the building at Walt Whitman High School. He noted that he read the letter from Dr. Beroza that was handed out to the Board and he is troubled.

**Location of Butler
Building:
(Continued)**

Mr. Nitkewicz stated that he also looked at the graduation photos and photos of a traffic accident taken in May that Dr. Beroza provided. Mr. Nitkewicz noted that these photos are not a help in his decision. He is very concerned about the contents of Dr. Beroza's letter. He stated that he wanted to hear from Dr. Beroza and ask him the reasons why he provided the photographs. Mr. Nitkewicz stated that he is also troubled about the complaint about the short notice for this meeting. Mr. Ciappetta stated that he is also upset with Dr. Beroza's letter.

Mrs. Vassallo stated that she felt very strongly from the beginning that the location of the Butler building should be at Walt Whitman High School. She stated that she felt there is less traffic at Whitman. She stated that she felt that the students at the Teen Center needed advocates to look out for them. Mrs. Vassallo noted that she spoke to the Teen Center administrator, the custodians and the grounds people and they all agreed that the building should be at Whitman.

Mr. Nitkewicz stated that he didn't want the Board to get into the habit of revoting. It was noted by several Board members that different groups on various topics have approached the Board to try to continue to sway them. Mrs. LaCara noted that she had e-mailed Mr. Kaden to ask him if she could change her vote. She felt it was important enough once she saw where the building would be placed at the Teen Center.

Mr. Kaden stated that this was the concern he raised. He stated that he felt it was in the Board's best interest to make a decision once. He noted that all residents would not be happy with some of the decisions that must be made by the Board. Mr. Kaden stated that the reason for the short notice of the meeting is that Mr. Kaden called for a special meeting because he felt this should be a public vote and time to act on this matter is running out.

Dr. Beroza stated that at the last Board meeting most people voiced their opposition. The residents were not given an opportunity to vote. Dr. Beroza noted that he found a better location. He had suggested a lease at Derry Springs. Dr. Beroza stated that he located the owner of Derry Springs so that the Board could negotiate a lease. Dr. Beroza stated that the Board had their point of view but there are two sides. He stated that he felt the photos were worth a thousand words. Dr. Beroza stated that most of the residents felt that they had not been heard. The Teen Center is a heavy traffic area. Dr. Beroza also felt that there are major advantages to the Walt Whitman High School location. Mr. Kaden noted that the situation could get worse because the district would lose parking spaces at Whitman.

Another resident was present at the meeting and stated that he had spoken with *Newsday* about this. He stated that he felt this meeting was a travesty and a sham and the Board had already made up their minds. The resident was informed that the Board had voted on this matter at the last

**Location of Butler Building:
(Continued)**

Board meeting. Mr. Nitkewicz stated that he has spent the last seven years sitting in the audience addressing the Board. Mr. Nitkewicz stated he felt that the residents had been listened to and had been given an opportunity to speak. He encouraged all in the audience to continue to attend Board meetings.

Dr. Beroza stated that he apologized if he had offended anyone. He stated that he felt that the Board was making a tremendous mistake.

After further discussion, the Board took the following action on the motion.

Motion carried 4-3, with Mr. Kaden, Mr. Teresky and Mr. Lupinacci opposed.

Confidential Personnel Resolutions:

Motion by Mr. Lupinacci, seconded by Mr. Ciappetta, be it Resolved that the Board of Education of the South Huntington School District hereby approves the confidential personnel resolutions, a copy of the resolutions made part of these legal minutes, p. 110.
Motion carried unanimously.

Comments from Board Members and Staff:

Mrs. Vassallo noted that she has been walking the track at Walt Whitman High School and is amazed at how many residents are using the track and enjoying the "sand box."

Mr. Nitkewicz noted that he received a call from former Board member, Bob Keen. Mr. Keen would like to speak with the Board regarding how to change the educational system.

Voice of the Residents:

Visitors were invited to participate.

Adjournment:

Motion by Mr. Lupinacci, seconded by Mrs. LaCara, be it Resolved that the meeting be adjourned.
Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was declared adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Jim Kaden, President

Judith A. Hammond, District Clerk