

## Londonderry School Board meeting

A concurrent meeting of the School Administrative Unit No. 12 School Board and the Londonderry School District School Board was held on **Tuesday, September 15, 2009**, at 7:00PM at the Londonderry Town Offices. In attendance were School Board members George Herrmann, John Robinson, Ben Parker, Ron Campo and Steve Young. Also in attendance were District Superintendent Nate Greenberg, Business Administrator Peter Curro, Teacher liaison Steve Iarrocchi and School Board Secretary Mary Wing Soares.

**1.0** Mr. Young called the meeting to order at 7:00

**2.0** Jenny Heffernan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3.0 Questions, Announcements and Presentations**

**3.1 Summer Robotics – Rich Levergood and Students**

Mr. Levergood gave an overview of the workshop which took place this past summer. There were sophomores to seniors in the group. The workshop covered the basics of circuits, signals, sensors and programming robot behaviors. The focus was on the breadth at the expense of depth so that the students could get a broad overview of the capabilities of their robot.

Jenny Heffernan, Mike Pappas, Matt Leonard, and Mike Darcey and Joe Lavalliere explained their individual projects and demonstrated them. The board was very impressed with all they were able to accomplish in one weeks time.

**3.2 Public Input on Proposed Charter Amendment**

The Board may wish to move deliberation (7.1) of this item to follow the Public Input discussion. “Shall the School District amend Section IV (C) of the Londonderry School District Charter by deleting ‘4% of registered voters, or’ and ‘whichever is less’ so that the section reads, ‘quorum of a meeting’ shall mean \_\_\_\_\_ registered voters at the first session of an annual or special meeting.” (This amendment if adopted would change the definition of a quorum for the first session to reduce the number of voters needed for action at the first session from 4% or 500 voters, whichever is less, to \_\_\_\_\_ voters.)

**Mr. Young** read the proposed Charter Amendment and explained the process should the board decide with public input to go forward with this. Mr. Clark (79 Stonehenge Road) said the number of people who show up should be the ones who represent the ‘quorum of a meeting’. He believes that the people who show up should be allowed to make the decision rather than the five sitting board members. He said this has worked for 290 odd years and could continue to work. He believes that people moving into the state should come to a meeting and try the way it has worked for many years in New Hampshire before they complain about the form of government and propose change.

Mr. Young said he said we currently need 500 members to make the quorum. He understood Mr. Clark to say that the number of people who showed up would make the quorum. Mr. Clark said in years past over 200 people showed up. Now there are many excuses for why people don’t show up. He would like to see the number lowered to people who show up or some number lower than 500. Mr. Robinson asked since the vote of the “will of the people” was to raise the number to 500 why Mr. Clark believes that has changed. Mr. Clark said it was because they were not educated to the way of New Hampshire and they haven’t tried it. If they had been educated they wouldn’t have voted to create the minimum. They haven’t tried the New Hampshire way. There should be more than five people making the decision at the final hearing (the deliberative session). Mr. Robinson wondered if the quorum had been 200 in the recent past, what changes Mr. Clark believes the people would have made. Mr. Clark said 200 people would have offered 200 opinions and perhaps changes would have been made. He is not sure specifically what would have been changed but the process would have allowed change and that is what he is asking for.

Mr. Young explained to the at home audience that currently if 500 people show up at the deliberative session they have the power to change the budget. If 500 people don’t show up the only people who can change the budget would be the five members of the school board.

Mr. Campo said in the past the numbers were larger before the charter change to SB2 which was originally proposed to allow more people to participate in the Tuesday election. The rescinding of SB2 was proposed the following year and the voters denied that. Mr. Campo said that if there is an issue people will come out. Mr. Campo would like to see the voters making the decision on Friday night but that is not what the people in the past have said. Mr. Clark said the problem comes when we have people moving in from other states who don’t understand the NH way and who should be educated.

Mr. Clark said SB2 is the worst thing in the world for both sides of the town. He believes that people tend to become lazy when they don't have to do anything. SB2 was voted in for the school district in 1996.

5 Tom Freda, 30 Buckingham Dr. said he did a little research of his own. He wondered of the board if they know how many school districts in NH have SB2. He answered 62 have it out of the 200+ school districts. Mr. Freda said his understanding is that the reason for the quorum is so that a small number of voters will not come in to the meeting and change the budget. 62 other towns get along without it. Mr. Young said the quorum was decided by the charter commission and mandated by the voters. Mr. Freda said what is it about Londonderry that we can't trust those coming in.

10 Mr. Robinson asked what evidence there is that the residents of Londonderry want this change. Mr. Freda said he can only speak for himself and bring himself to a meeting. Why should his rights be compromised because he can't bring 500 others to the meeting? Mr. Robinson asked again if there is a groundswell of people who want this to change. Mr. Freda asked if this change will go before the voters. Mr. Robinson said he needs to know that there are citizens who indicate that they would like it changed. Mr. Freda wondered if he is concerned that there is a group that would come and alter the budget. Mr. Robinson said he does not.

15 Mr. Young said he could get 500 people at the meeting by eliminating the band director, increasing class sizes to 40, failing to implement the math program. Mr. Freda countered that to do that would only be to get people to come and wouldn't be a serious proposition. Mr. Freda recalled the previous town meeting when the budget was altered by an increase of \$10,000. Since Londonderry is in the minority of types of towns who have this form of government, he argued that the number should be those who show up.

20 Mr. Robinson said the same opportunities are available during the plethora of budget hearings that are held. Mr. Freda said the people currently have the opportunity to make the change at the time of the town meeting and that is the different. He believes that the people should be treated the same on both sides of the table. He is concerned that there would be an unrealistically high number of signatures needed on a petition for a charter change. Mr. Young said he believes it is 25 signatures. Mr. Freda said in the town side they need a percentage of the voters with their form of government.

25 Sean O'Keefe, Mammoth Road, thanked the board for this opportunity to express his opinion and to gauge the interest that the school board had in this change. The majority of the people he has spoken to would like the SB2 opportunity in the town side. He is trying to understand why people wouldn't want to change. He wondered what the big deal is about giving the people the opportunity to vote.

30 Mr. Parker said he is willing to drive one hour to and from work to have a quality education for his children. He is not going to be dragged into a town vs. school conversation.

35 Mr. O'Keefe said he believes there is no reason for fear of a quorum. He believes all people should have their opportunity for input. Mr. Herrmann is fine with the way the system works now. In his experience there are only five people who have brought this subject forward. Should there be a groundswell he would be the first to add it to a ballot.

40 Mr. Robinson asked of Mr. O'Keefe to indicate a minimum number for the quorum since he didn't believe the board would be willing to change it to no minimum. Mr. O'Keefe said he doesn't have a minimum. Mr. Robinson wondered why if on the town side Mr. O'Keefe would like to see it more in the hands of the people with all the voting on Tuesday why he would be a proponent of changing the Deliberative session to what is currently on the town side with the budget voted on by those present at town meeting on Saturday. Mr. Robinson added "Wouldn't the rational be not to change this?" Mr. O'Keefe said he would leave it up to the School Board.

45 Mr. Young said this was discussed before and personally he believes he would rather have it be a town meeting style school board meeting but the charter has changed this. There is not even one person on the board now who is willing to go back to that. In looking at a compromise Mr. Young asked for a minimum number. He believes even a number of 200 would be a representative number of people for our town and the town beliefs, needs and wants would be heard.

50 Todd Joncus - 11 Robinhood Dr believes it is very important to have a minimum (significant) number of people required to be there to prevent having all kinds of changes from special interests groups or persons. He believes the system works as it is now. He likes that this would allow a diverse number of people in the room making the decisions.

55 Bob Lincoln, 4 Justin Circle said he served on the board and believes the quorum should stay where it is. There are about 2100 people who vote on Tuesday. Should the quorum be lowered only 10% of the people could change the budget. He presented a potential scenario which would end up giving us

less money. Mr. Robinson asked what changed in the past. There were specific examples he gave of items in the past that might have caused an addition to the budget. At the deliberative session, should a person or group make a good argument the school board has taken appropriate action. The quorum serves a purpose. It is only 25% of the average number of people who come out on Tuesday to vote. He believes the process is fine the way it is. He doesn't want to see items "smuggled" into the budget.

Mr. Parker said the five of the board members who are elected to office are accountable for the budget as opposed to a small number who might come forward to make a change. There is no redress for this group whereas if the board makes a decision the people are unhappy about they are held accountable. They could be voted out.

(Mr. Greenberg interjected here to let those in the audience know that items 6.1, 6.2 and 7.6 of the agenda will be postponed until next meeting.)

Mr. Glenn Douglas, 6 Overlook Ave said he didn't plan to speak. He expects that there will be many people at the town meeting wanting to dump the town meeting and SB2. In 2001 he began to pay attention and get involved. Every single year he believes this subject has come up, the Londonderry Tax Payer Association brought it up. He believes that people are afraid to come before the school board because of the recriminations that might happen including the perceived notion that they are "wasting the board's time" with public comment. Mr. Douglas believes the old fashioned town meeting is the way to go but in our society today it cannot work. NO one believes it matters so they don't show up. Mr. Robinson wondered what he would like to see happen. Mr. Douglas said that if we have SB2 there should be no quorum. The people that show up would make the decisions. Those who pay attention make the decisions. Mr. Robinson asked if the quorum number was at 200 did Mr. Douglas believe the number would drive up attendance. Mr. Douglas believes this is the games of small town politics. People are not informed; they do not know what to do. Mr. Robinson asked what could be done to change that. Mr. Douglas said that most people don't care, they are only here for the school system and they are gone in 12 years. He only spoke because he couldn't stand hearing the board members continually say that that no one has brought this topic up.

Mr. Margolin thanked the board for allowing the conversation to take place. He's had two students who have been through the school system and one who is a junior (our current student council member). He appreciates that deliberative sessions and budget meetings are not well attended and this has been a good number who have come forward. He said if the board has data points where the public is dissatisfied then there would be something to talk about. But if nothing is broken than there is no reason for things to be changed. He doesn't believe we should lower the quorum number. He believes there is general satisfaction among the public and this doesn't need to be changed.

Mr. Young thanked everyone who came out to speak. Some would say the robots are still here (meaning the board). Mr. Robinson said he doesn't believe a quorum of 0 is going to pass the board. As a small "d" democrat he doesn't see a problem putting the question on the ballot. He doesn't see a groundswell asking for a change but that doesn't mean there isn't something out there. He would put forth a number of 250 to 300. Mr. Young said he's been asked how this relates to the changes that are being discussed on the town side. His concern is that there will be two questions on the ballot discussing a change of the town government and he believes there would need to be a huge amount of educational effort to explain the differences.

**Mr. Campo made the motion to lower the number of the quorum requirement to 350. Mr. Robinson seconded the motion for discussion.** Mr. Campo said he believes this is a compromise on the number. He said there is no reason that the number is 5% or 500. Mr. Robinson asked if Mr. Campo would get to 300. He said it depended if anyone else would agree to 300. He would like to see the percentage eliminated. **Motion passed as stated 3-2-0. Mr. Herrmann and Mr. Parker dissented.**

Mr. Greenberg explained that a report that has to be filed that would explain the reasons for proposing the change. These would include attendance, protecting the petitioners' rights and increasing public participation. Mr. Robinson asked if there are standard reasons. Mr. Parker asked if there is a minority report on this. Mr. Greenberg replied that he does not believe there is a minority report.

Mr. Young said the reasons should include the school deliberative session has never reached a quorum of 500 people and the desire is to increase public participation. Mr. Young explained it will go to public hearings after the School District Secretary takes it to the Secretary of State's office. After the public hearings it will go to the deliberative session where it will be moved to the ballot. Mr. Young recalled that this has been addressed before, the board changed it at the deliberative session and it was put

on the ballot and it passed creating the system we have now. Mr. Young asked Mr. Curro find out what the number of signatures would be needed for the citizen's petition.

#### 4.0 Consent Agenda

##### 5 4.1 Minutes: September 1, 2009

##### 4.2 Resignation:

Pamela Walsh Special Ed. Assistant Middle School

##### 4.3 Meetings:

Oct. 6, 2009 7:00PM Regular Meeting Town Office

Oct. 20, 2009 7:00PM Regular Meeting Town Office

10 **Mr. Campo made the motion to accept the consent agenda as amended. Mr. Herrmann seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

Mr. Parent announced that Londonderry has two National Merit Finalists in the district. Mr. Beaulieu presented the board with a CD of the Jazz ensemble's work. The art work was created by the students. Mr. Beaulieu pointed out that the pieces the students played on the CD are challenging and amazing. Mr. Robinson concurred.

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#### 5.0 Committee Reports

**5.1 Student Council – Erin Margolin** - On September 12 the Student Council hosted a dance. There was a good turnout with about 360 kids attending. The football team lost their game last Friday to Salem. They have a home game coming up this Friday. The freshman girl's soccer team won their game against Spaulding. On Thursday September 17 is Picture Day and Parent's Night. The Student Council has organized volunteers to help parent's around the school to meet the teachers of their children. Since most teachers won't have a lot of time that day to go home and come back, the Student Council is also sponsoring a Teacher's Supper in the Cafeteria. Many other clubs are starting up this week and the next.

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**5.2 Teacher Liaison – Stella Skoropowski** - Moose Hill School kindergarten students are looking forward to their field trip next week to Mack's Apples to pick apples and a small pumpkin from the patch near the school.

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At North School, fifth grade students led the first grade orientation PBIS Assembly on Friday.

At Matthew Thornton, PAWS assemblies are going on to review behavioral expectations at all grade levels. Next week for grades 3, 4 and 5, Matthew Thornton will be having a 10,000 Sticker Pyramid Game. The MT Wellness Committee is working hard on plans for the first annual Fitness Fair which will advocate for healthy lifestyles for students and their families. It will be held October 21<sup>st</sup>. MT is also starting up a wellness club for kids and a writing club—both will be held after school. Cross country has started for 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Chorus and Band are starting up as well.

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**HS** - Constitution Day is celebrated throughout the Country on September 17. As he has for the past few years, Casey Roop will provide Constitution Day Facts and Trivia for prizes over the morning announcements during the week of Constitution Day. Added this year, students can pick up a crossword puzzle downloaded from the official Constitution Day website. There are different levels from basic to advance to include all students. If they complete the puzzle, they will also receive a Constitution Day pen. The spirit of this week is to get students thinking about the Constitution, what its significance is, and how it affects today's students. If this raises anyone's awareness Constitution week has done its job. Pens will be for anyone who gets an answer correct. Pocket constitution guides will be for those students who can fully explain their answers.

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The teachers in the elementary schools who received Next Generation grants have been providing Smart Board demonstrations for their peers. Mrs. Skoropowski said she is very excited about the demonstrations and she will get to see one soon.

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**5.3 School Board Liaison Reports – Mr. Robinson** today is Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup> – the answer was pocket video. Middle School PTO meets tomorrow night at 7PM. Mr. Robinson was at North School and got buzzed in, signed in and was asked by a teacher if she could help him indicating that teachers are watchdogs for their students and are taking the initiatives to make sure the students are safe. **Mr. Herrmann** had nothing to report. **Mr. Campo** said that the three year technology report has been sent to the state for review. They spoke about ongoing action research and about reorganizing the board to allow curriculum to drive technology as opposed to technology driving curriculum. He was invited to the dedication of the Track and Field dedication ceremony on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Mr. Parker** attended a middle school open house. Mr. Corey did a wonderful job explaining the trip to Washington. He attended an extracurricular activity and he was very impressed with the number of students and parents involved in the schools. **Mr. Young** will attend the Moose Hill PTA on Thursday and he is looking forward to that. He

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would like to commend the school district, Goffstown trucking, Mr. Curro and Mr. Greenberg for their actions on the 8<sup>th</sup> when the buses were hit by rocks in the windshields. If anyone has any knowledge of this please call the police at 432-1118. He appreciated the skill the bus drivers showed.

**6.0 Curriculum Report**

5 **6.1 LHS Summer School Recap and Adult Education Update** - Greg Warren Moved to next meeting

**6.2 2008-09 District Assessment Presentation/Summary Report** - Mark Blount – Moved to next meeting

**7.0 Deliberation**

10 **7.1 Proposed Charter Amendment –**

See action taken under item 3.2.

**7.2 LHS Overnight Field Trip Requests - Master Schedule – Jason Parent**

15 Mr. Parent presented a master trip on field trips. Mr. Herrmann and Mr. Campo appreciated the presentation but would like to see the number of students, number of chaperones and number of school days out of school added to the form.

Mr. Robinson asked what he indicated his standard question is - the cost of these trips to the tax base. Mr. Parent replied that the only funding that comes out of the budget is ½ of the cost of the trip to Camp Dakota which has been previously approved.

20 *Mr. Parker made the motion to approve the field trips with the changes in the master schedule. Mr. Herrmann seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0-0.*

**7.3 LMS Washington, DC Trip Request – Andy Corey-**

Mr. Corey explained that the school would like to add a stop in Philadelphia on the way down to Washington. This is at an increase of \$4 per student. Eighth graders will no longer go to the zoo and would pick up some of the memorials during the night tours.

25 *Mr. Parker made the motion to approve the trip. Mr. Campo seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0-1 Mr. Robinson recused himself since he has a child in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.*

Mr. Campo asked if there is a student attendance number that the school would get to and consider not going. Mr. Corey responded that there are only about 40 students on average who do not choose to go on the trip. Finances are not a consideration as there are scholarships available.

30 **7.4 AARA Stimulus IDEA Grant Allocation Approval Request Kimberly Carpinone –**

35 Mrs. Carpinone said she previously asked for permission to accept the money and has come forward to ask permission on how to spend it. She asked for funds to cover Work Opportunities, a vendor that would take the 19-20 year old ACT/FLEX population out into the community as part of their comprehensive transition services programming in their IEP. The vendor would follow them (literally until they are independent) and figuratively during the lifetime of the grant allowing students to age out and have this experience before they are lost from the school district.

40 Mr. Campo asked about the expenditures. Mrs. Carpinone said we don't have the relationships established that Work Opportunities have, nor do we have the manpower to shadow the students in the beginning trial of the programs. Mr. Campo's concern is that the cost will have to be absorbed into the budget in the future. Mrs. Carpinone said this is a cost we have occurred in the past but not with this large number of students. Mr. Campo would like to see a projection of students coming from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to age 21.

45 Mr. Robinson wondered if there is something we could be using this money to create jobs in Londonderry. Mr. Greenberg explained it is not from the pool of money that was designed to create jobs. The state put some of that money to adequacy. The IDEA money is strictly regulated and has specific reporting requirements that the vendor Work Opportunities are well situated to do. This program will hopefully give some students experience that might translate into jobs beyond their 21<sup>st</sup> year. He believes this will address an immediate need for the students and give them some experience in the job market. It is a phenomenal investment opportunity in our students. These programs will be sustainable for us in the future with current staff. Mr. Robinson pointed out that the source of the funds comes from the stimulus package and wondered if this will meet the goals of that package. Mr. Greenberg said it will meet the goals of the IDEA directives. He said the district is trying to provide for the students without adding to the budget additional staffing to do something that our current staff can be trained to take over when the grant money runs out.

50 Mr. Young clarified that this is not a program that will drop a child when the funding runs out.  
55 Mrs. Carpinone explained there are 8 children who will age out in 2013-2014 school year, one this year and

3 next year. The district will follow the model that Work Opportunities provides and continue the program with the current staff once the grant money ran out.

5 Mrs. Carpinone also presented the proposal to spend \$8,800 for an outside vendor to provide training and consultation to North School staff in creating written material in Braille. Mr. Robinson wondered if other staff at different schools should also be trained. Mrs. Carpinone responded that they are 3-5 years off needing someone at the middle school and their concern is that they would train someone who may not be there.

10 Mrs. Carpinone also went through the three other requests: Equipment at \$7,000, Math curriculum materials \$1,450 and Assessment Battery \$2,000. Mr. Curro asked if there is any program that we have out of district that could be brought back into the district using the funds we have seed money and using the savings from not having them out of district to pay for the program in the future. Mrs. Carpinone said no one comes to mind as the out of district population is low but she is willing to have a discussion and look into the possibility.

15 Mrs. Carpinone said she has spent many hours working with communities to be sure that the language was common and they are also looking into it.

Mr. Campo pointed out we are ahead of the curve since we already have programs in house. **Mr. Campo made the motion to approve the purchases. Mr. Parker seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-1-0 with Mr. Robinson dissenting.**

#### 20 7.5 Mini-Bus Proposal – Howard Sobolov and Peter Curro

Mr. Curro reminded the board of the request to purchase two mini busses with 24 passenger busses. They realized they cannot use general license drivers on busses that size. They have looked at 15 passenger mini buses. Mr. Sobolov explained that there is only one van that is suitable to carry students for golf and tennis. These are the only teams that could travel should only one bus be purchased. But using basketball as an example the two mini busses could be used allowing the JV and/or V to return early rather than having to wait until the other team finishes. This would allow the team members to get home and get their homework done, etc. Additionally the varsity team wouldn't have to leave as early.

25 In looking at the need Mr. Sobolov said they take about 100 trips. Average cost is \$250, which translates into \$25,000 savings in cost avoidance over the course of the year. Going on longer trips i.e. the baseball team trip to Cape Cod in the spring, vans are rented. This purchase would allow them to avoid this.

30 Games would not have to be moved since the district would control the vans and wouldn't have to depend on the busses. Mr. Campo wonders how much we would save in the budget. He would like to see that cost avoidance figure added to the budget allowing the district to buy one van outright and they could put the second in the lease. Mr. Curro said he is beginning the year \$160,000 in the hole due to the retirement deficit. Mr. Robinson likes the fact that teams wouldn't have to wait for other teams. He is concerned that it will not happen. Mr. Sobolov assured him it would and said as an educator his job will be to help the students learn to prioritize but he is not able to force them. Mr. Robinson also wondered if the JV bus would always leave after the game. Mr. Young asked about the busses. Mr. Sobolov explained that the bus has 14 passenger seats with a seat for the driver for a total of 15. The vans we own now are not suited for long trips and Mr. Sobolov said would not allow them to go. They are maintained but the age is older. Mr. Curro said the bus company is required to provide a minimum of buses but it is at a per bus cost basis. He has not come up with a maintenance estimate but will be speaking with local vendors to see if a contract could be created for maintenance and road side assistant. **Mr. Campo made the motion to take the cost of one bus out of the 2010 budget and put one in the capital lease. Mr. Herrmann seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

#### 35 7.6 Local Government Center's Proposed Article 28-a Lawsuit against the State (Retirement) moved to next meeting

#### 40 8.0 Non-Public Session

50 **Mr. Campo made the motion to go into non-public under RSA 91:A:3, Section II (a) through (i). Mr. Parker seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

Meeting adjourned to non-public at 10:11PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wing Soares

School Board Secretary

Londonderry School Board  
Non-Public Minutes  
Tuesday, September 15, 2009

PRESENT: Board Members: Mr. Campo, Mr. Herrmann Mr. Parker, Mr. Robinson and Mr. Young  
Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Greenberg  
Assistant Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Blount  
5 Director of Human Resources: Mrs. Swenson  
Business Administrator: Mr. Curro

10 Ron Campo moved, seconded by Ben Parker and passed unanimously (5-0) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, Section II (a) through (i) at 10:12PM.

Ron Campo moved, seconded by Ben Parker and passed in the majority (4-0-1 [Mr. Robinson abstained]) to support the administration's recommendation for Adult Education.

15 Ron Campo moved, seconded by Ben Parker and passed unanimously (5-0) to support the administration's recommendation for a Special Education Assistant.

Ron Campo moved, seconded by Ben Parker and passed unanimously (5-0) to support the administration's recommendation for Food Service worker.

20 Ron Campo moved, seconded by Ben Parker and passed unanimously (5-0) to exit non-public session at 10:17PM.

Ron Campo moved, seconded by George Herrmann and passed unanimously (5-0) to adjourn at 10:18PM.

25 Meeting adjourned at 10:18PM.

Respectfully submitted,

30 Nathan S. Greenberg  
Superintendent of Schools