

New York State Retired School Administrators and Supervisors

Meeting of the Executive Board –December 11, 2019

Western Suffolk BOCES –Wheatley Heights, NY

Present: Sherry Alessandro, Edward Bellomo, Pat Galaskas, Gene Goldwasser, Roberta Hopkins, Elliott Kigner, Ned Price, Lois Small, George Pincus, Marty Mandelker, John Wallace, Seth Weitzman

1.0 Welcome: Gene Goldwasser, President-Gene called the meeting to order at 10:15 am. to provide time for members to arrive due to inclement weather. He asked that everyone introduce themselves since we had two new members in attendance, Roberta Hopkins and Seth Weitzman.

2.0 Minutes: The minutes of the September 4, 2019 Executive Board Meeting were distributed for all to review. Pat noted that a correction needed to be made in 3.0 Treasurer's Report. The word "confidentially" needed to read "confidently". Ed said he would make the necessary change. Gene complimented Ed on the writing of the minutes. The motion to accept them was moved by Pat Galaskas and seconded by Ned Price. It carried unanimously.

3.0 Treasurer's Report: Account balances as of 9/1/19 were reported as follows:

Share checking - \$2,439.48
Savings - \$474.30
Money Market - \$877.42
Certificate of Deposit - \$4,878.21
Total = \$8,669.41

The decreased balance reflects the cost for our newsletter and the mailing. We added just one new member and a miniscule increase in interest earned on our savings account were the only other changes. Gene asked if we will have enough in our checking account to cover our next newsletter and mailing. Ned said we should have enough, but we can move monies around if needed. Gene explained that each year we give our secretary, Demetria Marino, a gift as a token of our appreciation for her work for the organization, He proceeded to

explain exactly what she does. Ned moved a motion to give Demetria \$200 for the holiday as a token of our appreciation. It was seconded by Pat Galaskas. It carried unanimously. Acceptance of the Treasurer's Report was moved by Pat Galaskas and seconded by Sherry Alessandro. It carried unanimously.

4.0 Announcements: Gene shared that several members were not able to come to the meeting for a variety of reasons.

5.0 Correspondence: None

6.0 Committee Reports:

6.1 Membership: A letter will be going out in mid-January for membership renewals. Lifetime members will receive a letter asking them to update their information. Pat asked for a list of those who do not renew to be given to members, so they could reach out to those they know, for a personal request. Lois raised the possibility of asking Lifetime members to make a donation to the organization to boost our income. Pat suggested including this in the letter to go home in mid-January asking for a donation to help pay for the newsletter. This will be considered.

6.2 Newsletter: Pat reported on this in Corine's absence. Responses are needed for the Quarterly Query, which was distributed to everyone. Pat, Seth and Sherry agreed to send a response. At least one more is needed. The deadline is January 3, 2020. Our next newsletter will include articles from Gene, Mel, Corine, and Joe. The Query for that issue will be related to the Career/Tech issue we have been discussing.

7.0 Old Business

7.1 Focus Group meetings

7.1.1 Career and Technical Education-10/10/19: Ellen Palazzo, CTE Field Team Associate, was the guest speaker. They discussed support for the Multiple Pathways Initiative. She invited them to a CTE conference at Hofstra on 11/22/19 entitled, CTE: Bridging the Gap, Reaching the WhY Generation. Gene distributed comprehensive notes from the conference written by Mel. He also distributed an

article from Ned entitled, “For Many Young People, H.S. Diploma Enough for Success.” A packet from the conference was also passed around for all to review. After a report from the focus group, and a review of the notes and article, a productive, spirited, lengthy conversation ensued. Everyone contributed to the discussion which covered a plethora of issues. Gene initiated the thought provoking session with the question, “What’s our purpose here?” It was suggested that we write a position paper which clearly states our support for CTE and that we go beyond just writing to lobbying Albany, the Board of Regents and local legislators to get behind this initiative. It was noted that this is not an issue for everyone, especially here on L.I., where every child is expected to go to college and those who do not are considered “failures”, or less than successful. In fact, N.Y.S. Education Dept. pushes districts to strive for increased graduations rates and college attendance for all kids including those with special needs. While this may seem noble, all agreed that this isn’t always the best path for every child. Members raised several key factors that make this a complex issue to tackle; cultural biases against those who pursue career/vocational/tech careers, stereotypes/stigmas about those “types” of workers, racial biases which lie beneath the surface, lack of adequate and balanced guidance services, ineffective or limited college alternatives, need for parental and community education about CTE, and increased funding to support multiple pathways to success. After exploring the issues and acknowledging the complexity and enormity of the CTE challenge, Gene posed the key question, “What are we advocating for? We agreed that the first thing needed is to educate our members and then move forward. The CTE Focus Group will meet on 1/22/20 to draft a position paper. Gene, Pat, Elliot, Lois, Roberta, Mel and Vince have agreed to participate.

7.1.2 Elections Focus Group-11/12/2019: Gene distributed the minutes from the November Focus Group meeting. Time was given to review them and Gene explained the positions for endorsement, criteria for endorsement and timeline.

See below:

Positions to endorse: President., U.S. House of Reps., districts 1,2,3,4, and N.Y. State Senate districts 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9.

Criteria for endorsement: After extensive discussion considering previous criteria used, membership concerns, current political climate, and our desire to serve the membership well we agreed upon the following issues:

Federal Issues

- Medicare/Social Security-maintaining or increasing benefits, funding
- Immigration
- Restore full SALT deductions
- Gun safety
- Climate/environmental concerns

State Issues

- Education-standards, funding, Universal Pre-K, Career/Tech Path, Charter Schools
- Free 2 year community college, perhaps 4 if fundable.
- Homeless problems
- Senior Care-Long Term/Medical

Timeline for process: Election Day November 3, 2020-

- 12/19-Focus Group reports to Executive Board
- 6/20-Individual members assigned candidates to be researched. Research will be based on websites, campaign material, voting records and any other means of gathering helpful information.
- 9/20-Members make recommendations for endorsements. Executive Board votes to support candidates based on consensus, if no consensus 2/3 majority vote of those present.
- 10/20-Newsletter distributed to members

The membership wholly supported the work of the Focus Group. Seth suggested that a rubric be developed to assess the responses of the candidates thereby creating a more objective decision process. Seth, Sherry and Pat agreed to work on it and will bring back ideas at our 4/22 meeting. Pat voiced a formal thank you to the Focus Group which was very much appreciated. All agreed with the contents of the minutes including candidates to support, criteria and timeline.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Push to make sure people vote: the newsletter will remind everyone to vote and participate in the census. At this point we broke for lunch.

8.2 Additional Focus Group: Tabled

9.0 Next Executive Board Meeting: April 22, 2020

10.0 Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Ned Price and seconded by Ed Bellomo. It passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Edward Bellomo